

LECTURE XLIII.

NATURE OF CHRIST'S SACRIFICE.—Continued.

SYLLABUS.

6. Refute the Socinian and Semi-Pelagian Objections to the Doctrine of vicarious satisfaction; viz:

- (a). That Satisfaction and Remission are inconsistent.
- (b). That our theory makes out the Father a vindictive being.
- (c). That the only thanks are due to Christ.
- (d). That either the divine Nature must have been the specific seat of the suffering; or it else must have been eternal.
- (e). That Imputation is immoral and a legal fiction.

See Turretin, Loc. xiv, Qu. 11, and Vol. iv. Disputations, 20, 21, de satisf. Chr. A. A. Hodge on Atonement, ch. 20, pt. i. Dr Ch. Hodge, Theo. pt. iii ch. 7, § 7. Dick, Lect. 58. Ridgley, Qu. 44, § 5. Watson's Theo. Inst. ch. 20.

7. What was the Design of God in Christ's satisfaction, and the extent of that design? State hereon, (a). The Pelagian. (b). The Wesleyan. (c). The Hypothetic Universalist, or "Armyraut-View." (d). The Calvinist.

Turretin Qu. 14. Hodge on Atonement, pt. ii. Hill, bk. iv. ch. 6. Whitby's Five Points. Hodge's Theo. pt. iii, ch. 8. Cunningham's Hist. Theol. ch. 20, § iv. Watson's Theo. Inst. especially; ch. 25-38. Bellamy Works, Vol. i, pp. 382, &c. Baxter's Works.

OBJECTIONS to our view of vicarious Atonement are chiefly of Socinian and Pelagian origin. 1. It is objected

that we represent the Father in an odious light, as refusing to remit anything till His vindictiveness is satiated, and that to suppose full satisfaction made to the penal demands of law, leaves no grace in the remission of sin. It is not of grace, but of debt.

The answer to the former part of this objection is suggested in the lecture on Necessity of Atonement. Add, that Christ's atoning work did not dispose the Father to be merciful; but the Father sent Him to make it, because He was eternally disposed to be merciful. The objection is Tritheistic. There is no mercifulness in the Son that was not equally in the Father.

To the latter part of the objection the answer is plain: Satisfaction to Law is not incompatible with gracious remission; unless the same person pays the debt who receives the grace. Does the Socinian rejoin: that still, the debt is paid, (we Calvinists say, fully,) and no matter by whom paid, it can not be remitted? The answer is three-fold: (a) There is grace on the Father's part, because He mercifully sent His Son to make the Satisfaction. (b) The distinctions made in the last lecture, in defining Satisfaction, answer the whole cavil. As Satisfaction does not release *ipso facto*, the creditor's grace appears also, in his optional assent.

In fine: The Father's grace on our scheme is infinitely

higher than on Socinian or semi-Pelagian. According to them, redemption only opens the door for the sinner to work out his own salvation. He may thank God and Christ somewhat, for being so kind as to open the door; and himself more for doing the work! But on our scheme, God, moved *a priori* by His own infinite mercy, gives us Christ, to reconcile vicariously the divine attributes with our pardon; and gives us in Him, a complete justification, new heart, sanctification, perseverance, resurrection, and eternal life.

The Socinians object, that on our scheme, since Christ fully pays the Father, and He remits nothing, the redeemed have only Christ to thank. The answer to this is contained in the preceding.

2. Father's Grace to be Praised.

It is a favourite objection of the Socinians, that if Christ is God, we Calvinists represent Him as placating Himself, by His own vicarious offering; which involves the absurdity of supposing Him so angry as to demand penalty, and so merciful as to pay it, all in one breath. The answer is: (a) This difficulty concerning God's wrath only exists, when we view it *anthropopathically*.

(b) Such a state of mind, though contradictory in a private person, who had nothing but personal considerations to govern him, is not inconsistent in a public Person, who has government interests to reconcile in pardoning. (c) It is His humanity which suffers the penal satisfaction, His divinity which demands it. (d) The objection is an argument *ab ignorantia*. We do not know all the mystery of the persons in the Trinity, but have good reason to believe that the Son acts economically in the Covenant of Grace, as man's representative, and the Father as that of all three persons.

4. Socinians object, that since an infinite number of sins are to be atoned, Christ must have paid an infinite penalty; and therefore you must either make His humanity suffer forever, or else make His proper divinity suffer. If the latter alternative is taken, there are two absurdities. God is impassible. But 2d, if He can suffer at all, one single pang of pain was of infinite value (according to Calvinistic principles), and hence all the rest was superfluous cruelty in God.

The answers are: First. Infinite guilt demands an infinite punishment, but not therefore an everlasting one; provided the sufferer could suffer an infinite one in a limited time. We do not view the atoning value of Christ's sacrifice, as a quantity, to be divided out by pound's weight, like some material commodity. We do not hold that there must be an arithmetical relation between the quantity of sacrifice, and the number and size of the sins to be satisfied for; nor do we admit that, had the sins of the whole body of elect believers been greater, the suffer-

How Could Temporal Suffering Satisfy for Infinite Guilt.

ings of the substitute must also have been increased; as when the merchant buys more pounds of the commodity, he must pay more money for his purchase. The compensation made to justice is not commercial, but moral. A piece of money in the hand of a king is worth no more than in the hands of a servant; but the penal sufferings of a king are. One king captive would exchange for many captive soldiers. Hence, Christ paid, not the very total of sufferings we owed, but like sufferings, not of infinite amount, but of infinite dignity.

Christ's sufferings were vast; and the capacity for feeling and enduring conferred on His humanity by the united divinity, enabled Him to bear, in one life-time, great wrath. Second. It is the great doctrine of hypostatical union, according to Heb. ix : 14, which grounds the infinite value of Christ's sufferings. (See that doctrine, Lect. 39th.) As the infinite nature of the God, against whom sin is committed, makes it an infinite evil, although the act of finite creature, so the acts of Christ's human nature in suffering, have infinite value, because of the dignity of His person. As to the latter part of the Socinian objection, the answer is, that one pang, or one drop of blood, would not suffice; because the law demanded a penalty of similar kind to that incurred by man; a bodily death and a spiritual death.

The 5th, and most radical objection is, that imputation is at best a legal fiction; and vicarious punishment intrinsically immoral. They say, God has pronounced it so; (Deut. xxiv : 16; Ezek. xviii : 4, 20,) and the moral sense of civilized commonwealths, banishing laws about hostages and *αντιψυχοι*. They argue that the immorality of the act is nothing but that of the agent; that desert of punishment is nothing but this intuitive judgment of immorality in the agent, when brought into relation with law; and therefore when penalty is separated from personal immorality, it loses its moral propriety wholly. Hence guilt must be as untransferable as immorality.

To the scriptural arguments, we answer: God forbids imputation of capital guilt by human magistrates; or on special occasion, (Ezek. 18th.) foregoes the exercise of it for a time Himself; but that He customarily claims the exercise of it in His own government, See in Josh. vii : 15; Matt. xxiii : 35. The differences between God's government and man's, fully explain this. Human magistrates are themselves under law, in common with those they rule; God above law, and His will is law. They shortsighted; He infinitely wise. They cannot find one who is entitled to offer his life for his neighbor, it is not his property; God's substitute could dispose of His own life. (Jno. x : 18.) They, if the *αντιψυχοι* were found, could not ensure the repentance and reform of the released criminal; without which his enlarge-

Imputation not Unjust.

God not to be Measured here by Men.

ment is improper; God does. (Acts v: 31.) The human *αντιψυχος*, having sacrificed his life, could never resume it, and his loss to the community would be irreparable; so that the transaction would give to society an injurious member, at the expense of taking from it a righteous and useful one. But Christ resumes the life laid down, and His useful position in the universe. For such reasons as these, it may be improper to have substitutes for capital guilt in man's government; and yet very proper in God's.

This, of course, implies that it is only made with the free consent of the substitute. This Christ gave.

To the rational argument I reply:

If the objection be (a.) It proves too much, viz: that there True, then Pardon is can be no remission in God's government Immoral.

at all. For, when pardon is asserted on the general plan of the Socinian and rationalist, the elements of guilt and immorality are distinguished and separated. i. e., the guilt is alienated from the sinning agent, while the bad character remains his, so far as the pardoning act is concerned. Is not his own compunction the same as before? Hence his repentance; and the human reason apprehends that no state of soul is so appropriate to the pardoned man, as one that abounds in the heartfelt confessions of his ill desert. But we have proved irrefragably that God's rectoral justice includes the disposition to give appropriate penalty to sin, as truly, and in the same way, as His disposition to bestow appropriate reward on obedience. The two are correlative. If the one sort of legal sanction is not righteously separable from the personal attribute of the agent, even with his own consent, then the other sort (the penal) is not. But when God treats the holy Surety as guilty, (not immoral,) He makes the same separation of elements, which is made, if He should, (without vicarious satisfaction, as the rationalists say He does,) treat the guilty sinner as guiltless (not holy) by remitting a penalty of which he continues to confess himself personally deserving, (as God knows very well he is.)

(b.) If imputation of guilt (without personal immorality) to Christ is unjust, even with His own consent; then *a fortiori*, laying of sufferings upon Him without even imputed guilt, is still more unjust. This for the Socinian.

God, in His providential rule over mankind, often makes this separation between the personal bad character and penal consequences; for the punishments incurred in the course of nature by vice, descend to posterity; while so far is He from imputing the personal unworthiness always along with the penalty, the patient and holy enduring of it is counted by Him an excellent virtue. So, too, the whole law of sympathy (Rom. xii: 15; Gal. vi: 2,) makes the sympathizer suffer

(c) Penal Consequences Transferred by Providence and Society.

the penalty along with the sufferer, and yet, so far from treating him as personally defiled with him, regards it as an excellent virtue.

(d.) Man's own practical judgment habitually makes the separation of elements, which the rationalistic objection declares impossible, and we feel that the separation is right. Thus, when the voluntary security relieves the bankrupt debtor, it is only at the cost of what is to him a true mulct (precisely the penalty of the debtor's prodigality), and we feel the security is rightly made to pay; but so far is this from being due to his personal demerit in the transaction, we feel that he is acting generously and nobly. So, we feel that we justly insist on maintaining certain social disabilities against children, incurred by parents' crimes, at the very time we approve the former, as personally, deserving people.

Thus, by indirect refutation, we prove that the objection of the rationalist to imputation, and the analysis on which he founds it, cannot be true, whether we are able to specify its error or not.

But I think we can specify it. It is in ignoring the broad distinction which divines make between potential and actual guilt—i. e., between the quality of ill-desert, and the obligation to punishmet. Consider the objector's process (fairly stated above), and it will be seen that it is this: Because the judgment we have of the ill-desert of the bad agent is nothing else than the judgment we had of his badness, viewed in its relation to law, therefore his guilt (obligation to penalty) is as personal and inseparable to him, as his quality of badness. This is sophism. The true analysis is this.

The badness of the act is nothing else than the badness of the agent; and is his personal quality or attribute. The judgment of ill-desert arises immediately therefrom, when his quality is viewed in relation to law. True. But what is law? Religion's law is nothing else than God's will, which is its source and measure. So that, as our judgment of the attribute of badness takes the form of a judgment of ill-desert, it passes into a judgment of relation—i. e., between two persons, the sinner and God. So that even potential guilt is rather a relation than an attribute. But when we pass to actual guilt (which is merely obligation to penalty, a moral obligation, as I grant, and not one of force only), this is not the sinner's attribute at all; but purely a relation. And although its rise was mediated by the personal attribute of badness, expressed in the guilty acts, it is not a relation of that attribute, abstracted, to something else, but of his person to the will of God—i. e., to God willing. And in this obligation to penalty, this sovereign will is obligator. It is God's sovereignty, which, though moral, is absolute, that imposes it. Now, without teaching that God's will is the sole

source of moral distinctions, or retracting anything that I have said against that error, I remark, that far too little weight is attached, in the objection, to this great fact that this obligation to penalty, which we denominate guilt, is one imposed by the sovereign and omnipotent will of our Maker and Proprietor. Let the mind take in this fact properly, and it will appear how rash is the assertion that even He may not, without immorality, separate from the person qualified by the attribute of badness, this relation to penalty, which His own holy will imposes, even though the party to whom the guilt is transferred freely assents; and the divine ends in the transaction are those of holiness.

But to return: It appears that the agent's badness is his attribute, his guilt is his relation; and that, a relation to another Person and will. The two elements belong to different categories in logic! But did any sound mind ever admit this as a universal and necessary law of logic (which it must be, to make the objection conclusive): that relations are as untransferable as attributes; as inseparable from the things related? Is it so in geometry? But it is better to show, in analogous cases, that it is not so in metaphysics; e. g., A. expresses, by acts of beneficence towards me, his quality of benevolence, which institutes between us, as persons, the relation of an obligation to gratitude from me to him. A. is succeeded by his son; and this obligation, in some degree, transfers itself and attaches itself to that son, irrespective of, and in advance of, his exhibiting the quality of benevolence for me, in his own personal acts. I present another illustration which is also an argument, because it presents an exact analogy—the obligation to recompense—resting on me by reason of A's benefactions to me. I say we have here a true, complete analogy; because this title to recompense from the object of beneficent acts is a fair counterpart to the obligation to bear a penalty from the ruler, who is the object (or injured party) of the bad act. Now, I ask—e. g.: In 2 Sam. xix; 31–38, was it incompetent for Barzillai, the Gileadite, to ask the transfer of King David's obligation to recompense to his son Chimham, on the ground of his own loyalty? Did not David's conscience recognize his moral right to make the transfer? But it is made irrespective of the transfer of Barzillai's attribute of loyalty to his son, which, indeed, was out of the question. Here, then, is the very separation which I claim, as made, in the case of imputation, between the sinner's personal attribute (badness), and his personal relation to God's sovereign will, arising upon his badness (guilt).

This discussion is of fundamental importance also, in the doctrines of original sin and justification.

The question of the "extent of the atonement," as it has been awkwardly called, is one of the most difficult in the whole range of Calvinistic Theology. That man who should profess to

2. Theories of extent of the Atonement.

see no force in the objections to our views, would only betray the shallowness of his mind and knowledge. There are three grades of opinion on this subject.

The theory of the Semi-Pelagian denies any proper imputation of any one's sins to Christ, makes His suffering a mere general exhibition of God's wrath against sin, having no relation to one person's sin in particular; and of course it consistently makes the atonement perfectly general and indefinite.

1st. Semi-Pelagian.
Refuted.

The refutation of this view is found in the facts already argued; that there was a substitution, a vicarious suffering of penalty, and a purchasing of the gracious gifts for the redeemed which make up the application of redemption.

The Wesleyan view is, that there was a substitution and an imputation; and that Christ provided a penal satisfaction for every individual of the human race, making His sins remissible, provided he believes in Christ; and that He also purchased for every man the remission of original sin, and the gift of common grace, which confers a self-determining power of will, and enables any one to believe and repent, provided he chooses to use the free-will thus graciously repaired aright; God's purpose of election being conditioned on His foresight of how each sinner would improve it.

2nd. Wesleyan.

The fatal objections to this scheme are, particularly, that it is utterly overthrown by unconditional election, which we have proved, and that the Scriptures and experience both contradict this common grace. But of this, more hereafter.

The view of the Hypothetical Universalists was professedly Calvinistic, and was doubtless, and is, sincerely held in substance by many honest and intelligent Calvinists, (e. g., Richard Baxter, R. Hall, Belamy) although Turretin and Dr. Hodge condemn it as little better than Arminianism in disguise. It presents the divine plan in redemption thus: God decreed from eternity, to create the human race, to permit the fall; then in His infinite compassion, to send Christ to atone for every human being's sins, (conditioned on his believing); but also foreseeing that all, in consequence of total depravity and the bondage of their will, would inevitably reject this mercy if left to themselves, He selected out of the whole a definite number of elect, to whom He also gave, in His sovereign love, grace to "make them willing in the day of His power." The non-elect, never enjoying this persuasive grace, infallibly choose to reject the provided atonement; and so, as its application is suspended on faith, they fail to receive the benefit of it, and perish.

3d. Amyraut's.

This theory, if amended so as to say that God sent His Son to provide a vicarious satisfaction for the sin of all whom His Providence intended to

Refuted.

place under the Gospel offers, would be liable to less objection than the others. But several objections lie against it. In the first place, the advantage proposed to be gained by it appears illusory. It was hoped that this view would meet the cavils urged by Arminians against the seeming lack of candour in offering Christ's sacrifice for reconciliation, to those for whom God never designed it. But I submit that this cavil is not in the least dissolved by saying, that God designed Christ's sacrifice to provide satisfaction for every non-elect man's guilt, which would avail for his atonement only on condition of his true faith, while the omniscience of God showed him that this sinner would certainly refuse this faith, in consequence of his total depravity, and God's purpose was distinctly formed not to remove that depravity by His effectual grace. To say that God purposed, even conditionally, the reconciliation of that sinner by Christ's sacrifice, while also distinctly proposing to do nothing effectual to bring about the fulfillment of the condition He knew the man would surely refuse, is contradictory. It is hard to see how, on this scheme, the sacrifice is related more beneficially to the non-elect sinner, than on the strict Calvinist's plan. Second: The statement of Amyraut involves the same vice of arrangement pointed out in the supralapsarian and sublapsarian plans: it tends towards assigning a sequence to the parts of the decree, as it subsists in God's mind. He thinks and purposes it as one cotemporaneous, mutually connected whole. The student is referred to the remarks already made upon this error. Third, and chiefly, Amyraut has to represent the graces which work effectual calling, while free and unmerited, indeed, as yet the free gift of the Father's electing love, irrespective of Christ's purchase, (for that is represented as made in common for all) and not mediated to the elect sinner through Christ's sacrifice. Since Christ's intercession is expressly grounded in His sacrifice, we shall have to conceive of the benefit of effectual calling as also not mediated to the sinner by Christ's intercession. But this is all contrary to Scripture; which represents Christ as the channel, through which all saving benefits come, and the very graces which fulfil the instrumental conditions of salvation as a part of His purchase for His people. See, for instance, Acts v: 31; Rom, viii: 32; Eph. i: 3, 4; 2 Tim. i: 9; Titus. ii: 14; 2 Pet. i: 2, 3.

The view of the strict Calvinist is as follows: God decreed to create the race, to permit the fall, and then, in His infinite compassion, He elected out of the fallen an innumerable multitude, chosen in Christ, to be delivered from this ruin; and for them Christ was sent, to make full penal satisfaction for their unrighteousness, and purchase for them all graces of effectual calling and spiritual life and bodily resurrection, which make up a complete redemption, by His righteousness and intercession founded thereon.

4. Strict Calvinistic.

It represents the Atonement as limited only by the secret intention of God as to its application, and not in its own sufficiency for, or adaptation to all. Symmetrical theory, but attended with some difficulties.

In proof of the general correctness of this theory of the extent of the Atonement, we should attach but partial force to some of the arguments advanced by Symington and others, or even by Turretin. e. g. That Christ says, He died "for His sheep," for "His Church," for "His friends," &c., is not of itself conclusive. The proof of a proposition does not disprove its converse. All the force which we could properly attach to this class of passages is the probability arising from the frequent and emphatic repetition of this affirmative statement as to a definite object. Nor would we attach any force to the argument, that if Christ made penal satisfaction for the sins of all, justice would forbid any to be punished. To urge this argument surrenders virtually the very ground on which the first Socinian objection was refuted, and is incompatible with the facts that God chastises justified believers, and holds elect unbelievers subject to wrath till they believe. Christ's satisfaction is not a pecuniary equivalent; but only such a one as enables the Father, consistently with His attributes, to pardon, if in His mercy He sees fit. The whole avails of the satisfaction to a given man is suspended on His belief. There would be no injustice to the man, if he remaining an unbeliever, his guilt were punished twice over, first in his Saviour, and then in Him. See Hodge on Atonement, page 369.

Real Proofs of Calvinistic Theory.

But the irrefragable grounds on which we prove that the redemption is particular are these:

(a) From the doctrines of unconditional election, and the Covenant of Grace. (Argument is one, for Covenant of Grace is but one aspect of election). The Scriptures tell us that those who are to be saved in Christ are a number definitely elected and given to Him from eternity, to be redeemed by His mediation. How can anything be plainer from this than that there was a purpose in God's atonement, as to them, other than that it had as to the rest of mankind? See Scriptures.

(b) The immutability of God's purposes. (Is. xlvi : 10 ; 2 Tim. ii : 19). If God ever intended to save any soul in Christ, [and He has a definite intention to save or not to save towards every soul], that soul will certainly be saved. Jno. x : 27, 28 ; vi : 37-40. Hence, all whom God ever intended to save in Christ will be saved. But some souls will never be saved; therefore some souls God never intended to be saved by Christ's atonement. The strength of this argument can scarcely be over-rated. Here it is seen that a limit as to the intention of the

From God's Immutability and Power.

atonement must be asserted to rescue God's power, purpose and wisdom.

(c) The same fact is proved by this, that Christ's intercession is limited. (See Jno. xvii : 9, 20). We know that Christ's intercession is always prevalent. (Rom. viii : 34 ; Jno. xi : 42). If He interceded for all, all would be saved. But all will not be saved. Hence there are some for whom He does not plead the merit of His atonement. But He is the "same yesterday, to-day and forever." Hence there were some for whom, when He made atonement, He did not intend to plead it.

(d) Some sinners (i. e., elect), receive from God gifts of conviction, regeneration, faith, persuading and enabling them to embrace Christ, and thus make His atonement effectual to themselves ; while other sinners do not. But these graces are a part of the purchased redemption, and bestowed through Christ. Hence His redemption was intended to affect some as it did not others. (See above).

(e) Experience proves the same. A large part of the human race were already in hell before the atonement was made. Another large part never hear of it. But "faith cometh by hearing." (Rom. x), and faith is the condition of its application. Since their condition is determined intentionally by God's providence, it could not be His intention that the atonement should avail for them equally with those who hear and believe. This view is destructive, particularly, of the Arminian scheme.

(f) "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." But the greater includes the less ; whence it follows, that if God the Father and Christ cherished for a given soul the definite electing love which was strong enough to pay for him the sacrifice of Calvary, it is not credible that this love would then refuse the less costly gifts of effectual calling and sustaining grace. This is the very argument of Rom. v : 10, and viii : 31—end. This inference would not be conclusive, if drawn merely from the benevolence of God's nature, sometimes called in Scripture, "his love ;" but in every case of his definite electing love, it is demonstrative.

Hence, it is absolutely impossible for us to retain the dogma, that Christ, in design, died equally for all. We are compelled to hold that He died for Peter and Paul in some sense in which He did not for Judas. No consistent mind can hold the Calvinistic creed, as to man's total depravity towards God, his inability of will, God's decree, God's immutable attributes of sovereignty and omnipotence over free agents, omniscience and wisdom, and stop short of this conclusion. So much every intelligent opponent admits, and in disputing par-

ticular redemption to this extent, at least, he always attacks these connected truths as falling along with the other.

In a word, Christ's work for the elect does not merely put them in a salvable state; but purchases for them a complete and assured salvation. To him who knows the depravity and bondage of his own heart, any less redemption than this would bring no comfort.

But the difficulties which beset the subject are great; and unless you differ from me, you will feel that the manner in which they are dealt with by some Calvinistic writers, is unsatisfactory. The objections are of two classes: From the universal offer of atonement through Christ, and from Scripture. The fact that God makes this offer literally universal, cannot be doubted, nor must we venture to insinuate that He is not sincere therein. (Matt. xxviii: 19; Mark xvi: 16, 17). The usual answer given by Calvinists of the rigid school to this objection is, that God may sincerely offer this salvation to every creature, because, although not designed for all, it is in its nature sufficient for, and adapted to all. They say that since Christ's sacrifice is of infinite value, and as adequate for covering all the sins of every sinner in the universe, as of one; and since Christ bears the common nature of all sinners, and God's revealed, and not His secret, decretive, will is the proper rule of man's conduct, this satisfaction may be candidly offered to all. Arminians rejoin, that this implies an adoption of their conception of the nature of the atonement, as a general satisfaction for human guilt as a mass and whole; that the punishment of gospel-hardened sinners for unbelief (which we admit will occur), would be unjust on our scheme, since by it they would be punished for not believing what would not be true, if they had believed it; and that since, on our scheme the believing of a non-elect sinner is not naturally, but only morally impossible, it is a supposable case for argument's sake, and this case supposed, God could not be sincere, unless such a sinner should be saved in Christ, supposing He came. The honest mind will feel these objections to be attended with real difficulty. Thus, in defining the nature of Christ vicarious work, Calvinists assert a proper substitution and imputation of individuals' sins. On the strict view, the sins of the non-elect were never imputed to Christ. The fact, then, that an infinite satisfaction was made for imputed guilt, does not seem to be a sufficient ground for offering the benefits thereof to those whose sins were never imputed.

The student should understand fully the ingenious pertinacity, with which this line of objection is urged, and re-inforced; from the command which makes it all sinners' duty to believe on Christ for their own salvation; from the alleged impossibility of their reaching any appropriating faith by the Calvin-

But the Subject Difficult. (a) From Universal Offer of Atonement.

istic view, and from the various warnings of Scripture, which clearly contemplate the possible destruction of one for whom Christ died. Our opponents proceed thus. God commands every man to believe on Christ. But since only an appropriating faith saves, and since God of course calls for a saving faith, and not the faith of Devils: God commands every man to appropriate Christ by his faith. But the man for whom Christ did not die has no right to appropriate Him: it would be erroneous presumption, and not faith. Again: both Romanists and Arminians object, that the strict Calvinistic scheme would make it necessary, for a man's mind to pass through and accept a paralogism, in order to believe unto salvation. This point may be found, stated with the utmost adroitness, in the works of Bellamy, (*loco citato*). He argues: if I know that Christ died only for the elect, then I must know whether I am elect, in order to be sure that He died for me. But God's election is secret, and it is mere fanaticism to pretend that I know my own election by direct revelation. My name is nowhere set down specifically in the Bible. That book directs me to find out my election *a posteriori*, by finding in my own graces the results of the secret decree towards me. Thus I am shut up to this sophism, in order to obey God's command to believe: I must assume, in advance of proof, that I am elected, in order to attain through faith the Christian traits, by which alone I can infer that I am elected. The third argument is that founded on the warnings against apostasy. In Rom. xiv : 15, for instance, the Apostle cautions strong Christians "not to destroy, with their meat, those for whom Christ died." Hebrews x : 29, the apostate "counts the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing." 2 Peter ii : 1, heretics "even deny the Lord that bought them." Here, it is urged, Calvinists must either hold that some of the elect perish, or that Christ died for others than the elect.

The other class of objections is from the Scriptures; e. g.:

[b] From Texts Teaching a Seeming Universality. Those which speak of Christ as having compassion for, or dying for, "the whole world," "all," "all men," "every man," &c. Jno. i : 29; Jno. iii : 16; iv : 42; vi : 51; 2 Cor. v : 19; 1 Jno. ii : 1, 2; Jno. xii : 32; 1 Cor. xv : 22; 2 Cor. v : 14, 15; 1 Tim. ii : 6; 1 Tim. iv : 10; Heb. ii : 9, &c. The usual explanation, offered by the strict Calvinists, of these texts is this: that terms seemingly universal often have to be limited to a universality within certain bounds by the context, as in Matt. iii : 5; that in New Testament times, especially when the gospel was receiving its grand extension from one little nation to all nations, it is reasonable to expect that strong affirmatives would be used as to its extent, which yet should be strained to mean nothing more than this: that persons of every nation in the world were given to Christ. Hence, "the world," "all the world," should be taken

to mean no more than people of every nation in the world, without distinction, &c. There is a certain amount of justice in these views; and many of these passages, as 1 Cor. xv : 22; Jno. i : 29, and xii : 32, may be adequately explained by them. The explanation is also greatly strengthened by this fact, too little pressed by Calvinists, that ultimately, the vast majority of the whole mass of humanity, including all generations, will be actually redeemed by Christ. There is to be a time, blessed be God, when literally all the then world will be saved by Christ, when the world will be finally, completely, and wholly lifted by Christ out of the gulf, and sink no more. So that there is a sense, most legitimate, in which Christ is the prospective Saviour of the world.

But there are others of these passages, to which I think, the candid mind will admit, this sort of explanation is inapplicable. In Jno. iii ; 16, make "the world" which Christ loved, to mean "the elect world;" and we reach the absurdity, that some of the elect may not believe, and perish. In 2 Cor. v : 15, if we make the all for whom Christ died, mean only the all who live unto Him—i. e., the elect—it would seem to be implied that of those elect for whom Christ died, only a part will live to Christ. In 1 Jno. ii : 2, it is at least doubtful whether the express phrase, "whole world," can be restrained to the world of elect as including other than Jews. For it is indisputable, that the Apostle extends the propitiation of Christ beyond those whom he speaks of as "we," in verse first. The interpretation described obviously proceeds on the assumption that these are only Jewish believers. Can this be substantiated? Is this catholic epistle addressed only to Jews? This is more than doubtful. It would seem then, that the Apostle's scope is, to console and encourage sinning believers with the thought, that since Christ made expiation for every man, there is no danger that He will not be found a propitiation for them who, having already believed, now sincerely turn to him from recent sins.

Having made these candid admissions, I now return to test the opposing points above recited. I take them in reversed order. The language of Peter, and that of Hebrews x : 24, may receive an entirely adequate solution, without teaching that Christ actually "bought," or "sanctified" any apostate, by saying that the Apostles speak there "*ad hominem*." The crime of the heretic is justly enhanced by the fact, that the Christ, whose truth he is now outraging, is claimed by him as gracious Redeemer. It is always fair to hold a man to the results of his own assertions. This heretic says Christ has laid him under this vast debt of gratitude : so much the worse then, that he should injure his asserted benefactor. But there is another view : The addressing of hypothetical warnings of apostasy or destruction to believers is wholly compatible with the efficacy of Christ's work, and the

Answers.

immutability of God's counsel for them. For that counsel is executed in them, by moral and rational means, among which the force of truth holds the prime place. And among these truths, the fact that if they are not watchful and obedient, professed believers may fall, is most reasonably calculated to produce watchfulness. But naturally speaking, they may fall; for the impossibility of destroying the elect is only moral, proceeding from the secret purpose of God. This important view will be farther illustrated and defended when we argue the perseverance of the saints: where it will be found to have a similar application.

The second and first objections really receive the same solution. That the process described by Dr. Bellamy is a paralogism, we freely admit. But Calvinists do not consider it as a fair statement of the mode in which the mind of a believer moves. Turretin (Loc. xiv : Qu. 14, § 45, &c.) has given an exhaustive analysis of this difficulty, as well as of its kindred one. He had distinguished the reflex, from the direct actings of faith. He now reminds the objector, that the assurance of our own individual interest in God's purposes of mercy is reached only *a posteriori*, and by this reflex element of faith. The reflex element cannot logically arise, until the direct has scriptural place in the soul. What then is the objective proposition, on which every sinner is commanded to believe? It is not, that "Christ designed His death expressly for me." But it is, "whosoever believeth shall be saved." This warrant is both general and specific enough to authorize any man to venture on Christ. The very act of venturing on Him brings that soul within the whosoever. It is only voluntary unbelief which can ground an exclusion of any man from that invitation, so that it is impossible that any man, who wishes to come to Christ, can be embarrassed by any lack of warrant to come. But now, the soul, having believably seen the warrant, "whosoever believeth shall be saved," and becoming conscious of its own hearty faith, draws, by a reflex act, the legitimate deduction; "Since I believe, I am saved." Unless he has first trusted in the general invitation, we deny that he has any right, or that God makes it his duty, to draw that inference. Hence, we deny that God commands the sinner to believe himself elected, or to believe himself saved, by the primary act of his faith. The Arminian asks: Does not God, in requiring him to believe, require him to exercise all the parts of a saving faith? I reply: He does; but not out of their proper order. He requires the lost sinner first to accept the general warrant, "whosoever will," in order that he may, thereby, proceed to the deduction; "Since I have accepted it I am saved." Thus it appears, that in order for the sinner to see his warrant for coming to Christ, it is not necessary for him presumptuously to assume his own election; but after he embraces Christ, he learns his

election, in the scriptural way pointed out by Peter, from his calling.

This seems, then, to be the candid conclusion: that there is no passage in the Bible which asserts an intention to apply redemption to any others than the elect, on the part of God and Christ; but that there are passages which imply that Christ died for all sinners in some sense, as Dr. Ch. Hodge has so expressly admitted. Certainly the expiation made by Christ is so related to all, irrespective of election, that God can sincerely invite all to enjoy its benefits, that every soul in the world who desires salvation is warranted to appropriate it; and that even a Judas, had he come in earnest, would not have been cast out.

But the arguments which we adduced on the affirmative side of the question demonstrate that Christ's redeeming work was limited in intention to the elect. The Arminian dogma that He did the same redeeming work in every respect for all, is preposterous and unscriptural. But at the same time, if the Calvinistic scheme be strained as high as some are inclined, a certain amount of justice will be found against them in the Arminian objections. Therefore, *In mediis tutissime ibis*. The well known Calvinistic formula, that "Christ died sufficiently for all, efficaciously for the Elect," must be taken in a sense consistent with all the passages of Scripture which are cited above.

I will endeavor to contribute what I can to the adjustment of this intricate subject in the form of a series of remarks.

The difficulty which besets this solemn subject is no doubt in part insuperable for finite minds. Indeed, it is the same difficulty which besets the relation of God's election to man's free agency, (and not a new one), re-appearing in a new phase; for redemption is limited precisely by the decree, and by nothing else. We shall approximate a solution as nearly as is perhaps practicable for man, by considering the same truths to which we resort in the seeming paradox arising from election. There are in the Bible two classes of truths; those which are the practical rule of exertion for man in his own free agency; and those which are the recondite and non-practical explanations of God's action towards us; e. g., in Jno. v : 40 is the one; in Jno. vi : 44 is the other. In Jno. 3: 36 is one; in 2 Thess. ii : 13 is the other. In Rev. xxii : 17 is one; in Rom. ix : 16 is the other. These classes of truths, when drawn face to face, often seem paradoxical; but when we remember that God's sovereignty is no revealed rule for our action, and that our inability to do our duty without sovereign grace arises only from our voluntary depravity, we see that there is no real collision.

Now Christ is a true substitute. His sufferings were penal

2. Christ's Satisfaction
not Commercial.

and vicarious, and made a true satisfaction for all those who actually embrace them by faith. But the conception charged on us seems to be, as though Christ's expiation were a web of the garment of righteousness, to be cut into definite pieces, and distributed out, so much to each person of the elect; whence, of course, it must have a definite aggregate length, and had God seen fit to add any to the number of elect, He must have had an additional extent of web woven. This is all incorrect. Satisfaction was Christ's indivisible act, and inseparable vicarious merit, infinite in moral value, the whole in its unity and completeness, imputed to every believing elect man, without numerical division, subtraction or exhaustion. Had there been but one elect man, his vicarious satisfaction had been just what it is in its essential nature. Had God elected all sinners, there would have been no necessity to make Christ's atoning sufferings essentially different. Remember, the limitation is precisely in the decree, and no where else. It seems plain that the vagueness and ambiguity of the modern term "atonement," has very much complicated the debate. This word, not classical in the Reformed theology, is used sometimes for satisfaction for guilt, sometimes for the reconciliation ensuing thereon; until men on both sides of the debate have forgotten the distinction. The one is cause; the other effect. The only New Testament sense the word atonement has is that of *καταλλαγή*, reconciliation. But expiation is another idea. *Καταλλαγή* is personal. *Εξιλασμος* is impersonal. *Καταλλαγή* is multiplied, being repeated as often as a sinner comes to the expiatory blood: *εξιλασμος* is single, unique, complete; and, in itself considered, has no more relation to one man's sins than another. As it is applied in effectual calling, it becomes personal, and receives a limitation. But in itself, limitation is irrelevant to it. Hence, when men use the word atonement, as they so often do, in the sense of expiation, the phrases, "limited atonement," "particular atonement," have no meaning. Redemption is limited, i. e., to true believers, and is particular. Expiation is not limited.

There is no safer clue for the student through this perplexed subject, than to take this proposition; which, to every Calvinist, is nearly as indisputable as a truism; Christ's design in His vicarious work was to effectuate exactly what it does effectuate, and all that it effectuates, in its subsequent proclamation. This is but saying that Christ's purpose is unchangeable and omnipotent. Now, what does it actually effectuate? "We know only in part;" but so much is certain:

(a.) The purchase of the full and assured redemption of all the elect, or of all believers.

(b.) A reprieve of doom for every sinner of Adam's race who does not die at his birth. (For these we believe it has pur-

3. God's Design and
Result Exactly Co-extensive.

chased heaven). And this reprieve gains for all, many substantial, though temporal benefits, such as unbelievers, of all men, will be the last to account no benefits. Among these are postponement of death and perdition, secular well-being, and the bounties of life.

(c.) A manifestation of God's mercy to many of the non-elect, to all those, namely, who live under the Gospel, in sincere offers of a salvation on terms of faith. And a sincere offer is a real and not a delusive benefaction; because it is only the recipient's contumacy which disappoints it.

(d.) A justly enhanced condemnation of those who reject the Gospel, and thereby a clearer display of God's righteousness and reasonableness in condemning, to all the worlds.

(e.) A disclosure of the infinite tenderness and glory of God's compassion, with purity, truth and justice, to all rational creatures.

Had there been no mediation of Christ, we have not a particle of reason to suppose that the doom of our sinning race would have been delayed one hour longer than that of the fallen angels. Hence, it follows, that it is Christ who procures for non-elect sinners all that they temporarily enjoy, which is more than their personal deserts, including the sincere offer of mercy. In view of this fact, the scorn which Dr. William Cunningham heaps on the distinction of a special, and general design in Christ's satisfaction, is thoroughly shortsighted. All wise beings (unless God be the exception), at times frame their plans so as to secure a combination of results from the same means. This is the very way they display their ability and wisdom. Why should God be supposed incapable of this wise and fruitful acting? I repeat; the design of Christ's sacrifice must have been to effectuate just what it does effectuate. And we see, that, along with the actual redemption of the elect, it works out several other subordinate ends. There is then a sense, in which Christ "died for" all those ends, and for the persons affected by them.

The manner in which a volition which dates from eternity, subsists in the Infinite mind, is doubtless, in many respects, inscrutable to us. But since God has told us that we are made in His image, we may safely follow the Scriptural representations, which describe God's volitions as having their rational relation to subjective motive; somewhat as in man, when he wills aright. For, a motiveless volition cannot but appear to us as devoid both of character and of wisdom. We add, that while God "has no parts nor passions," He has told us that He has active principles, which, while free from all agitation, ebb and flow, and mutation, are related in their superior measure to man's rational affections. These active principles in God, or passionless affections, are all absolutely holy and

4. God's Volitions Arise out of a Complex of Motive.

good. Last: God's will is also regulated by infinite wisdom. Now, in man, every rational volition is prompted by a motive, which is in every case, complex to this degree, at least that it involves some active appetency of the will and some prevalent judgment of the intelligence. And every wise volition is the result of virtual or formal deliberation, in which one element of motive is weighed in relation to another, and the elements which appear superior in the judgment of the intelligence, preponderate and regulate the volition. Hence, the wise man's volition is often far from being the expression of every conception and affection present in his consciousness at the time; but it is often reached by holding one of these elements of possible motive in check, at the dictate of a more controlling one. For instance a philanthropic man meets a distressed and destitute person. The good man is distinctly conscious in himself of a movement of sympathy tending towards a volition to give the sufferer money. But he remembers that he has expressly promised all the money now in his possession, to be paid this very day to a just creditor. The good man bethinks himself, that he "ought to be just before he is generous," and conscience and wisdom counterpoise the impulse of sympathy; so that it does not form the deliberate volition to give alms. But the sympathy exists, and it is not inconsistent to give other expression to it. We must not ascribe to that God whose omniscience is, from eternity, one infinite, all-embracing intuition, and whose volition is as eternal as His being, any expenditure of time in any process of deliberation, nor any temporary hesitancy or uncertainty, nor any agitating struggle of feeling against feeling. But there must be a *residuum* of meaning in the Scripture representations of His affections, after we have guarded ourselves duly against the anthropopathic forms of their expression. Hence, we ought to believe, that in some ineffable way, God's volitions, seeing they are supremely wise, and profound, and right, do have that relation to all His subjective motives, digested by wisdom and holiness into the consistent combination, the finite counterpart of which constitutes the rightness and wisdom of human volitions. I claim, while exercising the diffidence proper to so sacred a matter, that this conclusion bears us out at least so far: That, as in a wise man, so much more in a wise God, His volition, or express purpose, is the result of a digest, not of one, but of all the principles and considerations bearing on the case. Hence it follows, that there may be in God an active principle felt by Him, and yet not expressed in His executive volition in a given case, because counterpoised by other elements of motive, which His holy omniscience judges ought to be prevalent. Now, I urge the practical question: Why may not God consistently give some other expression to this active principle, really and sincerely felt towards the object, though His sovereign wisdom judges it not

proper to express it in volition? To return to the instance from which we set out: I assert that it is entirely natural and reasonable for the benevolent man to say to the destitute person: "I am sorry for you, though I give you no alms." The ready objection will be: "that my parallel does not hold, because the kind man is not omnipotent, while God is. God could not consistently speak thus, while withholding alms, because he could create the additional money at will." This is more ready than solid. It assumes that God's omniscience cannot see any ground, save the lack of physical ability or power, why it may not be best to refrain from creating the additional money. Let the student search and see; he will find that this preposterous and presumptuous assumption is the implied premise of the objection. In fact, my parallel is a fair one in the main point. This benevolent man is not prevented from giving the alms, by any physical compulsion. If he diverts a part of the money in hand from the creditor, to the destitute man, the creditor will visit no penalty on him. He simply feels bound by his conscience. That is, the superior principles of reason and morality are regulative of his action, counterpoising the amiable but less imperative principle of sympathy, in this case. Yet the verbal expression of sympathy in this case may be natural, sincere, and proper. God is not restrained by lack of physical omnipotence from creating on the spot the additional money for the alms; but He may be actually restrained by some consideration known to His omniscience, which shows that it is not on the whole best to resort to the expedient of creating the money for the alms, and that rational consideration may be just as decisive in an all-wise mind, and properly as decisive, as a conscious impotency to create money in a man's.

This view is so important here, and will be found so valuable in another place, that I beg leave to give it farther illustration. It is related that the great Washington, when he signed the death-warrant of the amiable but misguided Audre, declared his profound grief and sympathy. Let us suppose a captious invader present, and criticising Washington's declaration thus: "You are by law of the rebel congress, commander-in-chief. You have absolute power here. If you felt any of the generous sorrow you pretend, you would have thrown that pen into the fire, instead of using it to write the fatal words. The fact you do the latter proves that you have not a shade of sympathy, and those declarations are sheer hypocrisy." It is easy to see how impudent and absurd this charge would be. Physically, Washington had full license, and muscular power, to throw the pen into the fire. But he was rationally restrained from doing so, by motives of righteousness and patriotism, which were properly as decisive as any physical cause. Now, will the objector still urge, that with God it would have been different,

The Motive not Ex-
ecuted may be Ex-
pressed.

in this case ; because His omnipotence might have enabled Him to overrule, in all souls, British and Americans, all inconvenient results that could flow from the impunity of a spy caught *in flagrante delicto* ; and that so, God could not give any expression to the infinite benevolence of His nature, and yet sign the death-warrant, without hypocrisy ? The audacity of this sophism is little less than the other. How obvious is the reply : That as in the one case, though Washington was in possession of the muscular ability, and also of an absolute license, to burn the death-warrant, if he chose ; and yet his wisdom and virtue showed him decisive motives which rationally restrained him from it ; so God may have full sovereignty and omnipotence to change the heart of the sinner whose ruin He compassionates, and yet be rationally restrained from doing it, by some decisive motives seen in His omniscience. What is it, but logical arrogance run mad, for a puny creature to assume to say, that the infinite intelligence of God may not see, amidst the innumerable affairs and relations of a universal government stretching from creation to eternity, such decisive considerations ?

The great advantage of this view is, that it enables us to receive, in their obvious sense, those precious Scriptures Ascribe to God Pity Towards Lost. declarations of Scripture, which declare the pity of God towards even lost sinners. The glory of these representations is, that they show us God's benevolence as an infinite attribute, like all His other perfections. Even where it is rationally restrained, it exists. The fact that there is a lost order of angels, and that there are persons in our guilty race, who are objects of God's decree of pre-terition, does not arise from any stint or failure of this infinite benevolence. It is as infinite, viewed as it qualifies God's nature only, as though He had given expression to it in the salvation of all the devils and lost men. We can now receive, without any abatement, such blessed declarations as Ps. lxxxix : 13 ; Ezek. xviii : 32 ; Luke xix : 41, 42. We have no occasion for such questionable, and even perilous exegesis, as even Calvin and Turretin feel themselves constrained to apply to the last. Afraid lest God's principle of compassion (not purpose of rescue), towards sinners non-elect, should find any expression, and thus mar the symmetry of their logic, they say that it was not Messiah the God-man and Mediator, who wept over reprobate Jerusalem ; but only the humanity of Jesus, our pattern. I ask : Is it competent to a mere humanity to say : " How often would I have gathered your children ? " And to pronounce a final doom, " Your house is left unto you desolate ? " The Calvinist should have paused, when he found himself wresting these Scriptures from the same point of view adopted by the ultra-Arminian. But this is not the first time we have seen " extremes meet." Thus argues the Arminian :

“Since God is sovereign and omnipotent, if He has a propension, He indulges it, of course, in volition and action. Therefore, as He declares He had a propension of pity towards contumacious Israel, I conclude that He also had a volition to redeem them, and that He did whatever omnipotence could do, against the obstinate contingency of their wills. Here then, I find the bulwark of my doctrine, that even omnipotence cannot certainly determine a free will.” And thus argues the ultra-Calvinist: “Since God is sovereign and omnipotent, if He has any propension, He indulges it, of course, in volition and action. But if He had willed to convert reprobate Israel, He would infallibly have succeeded. Therefore He never had any propension of pity at all towards them.” And so this reasoner sets himself to explain away, by unscrupulous exegesis, the most precious revelations of God’s nature! Should not this fact, that two opposite conclusions are thus drawn from the same premises, have suggested error in the premises? And the error of both extremists is just here. It is not true that if God has an active principle looking towards a given object, He will always express it in volition and action. This, as I have shown, is no more true of God, than of a righteous and wise man. And as the good man, who was touched with a case of destitution, and yet determined that it was his duty not to use the money he had in giving alms, might consistently express what he truly felt of pity, by a kind word; so God consistently reveals the principle of compassion as to those whom, for wise reasons, He is determined not to save. We know that God’s omnipotence surely accomplishes every purpose of His grace. Hence, we know that He did not purposely design Christ’s sacrifice to effect the redemption of any others than the elect. But we hold it perfectly consistent with this truth, that the expiation of Christ for sin—expiation of infinite value and universal fitness—should be held forth to the whole world, elect and non-elect, as a manifestation of the benevolence of God’s nature. God here exhibits a provision, which is so related to the sin of the race, that by it, all those obstacles to every sinner’s return to his love, which his guilt and the law presents, are ready to be taken out of the way. But in every sinner, another class of obstacles exists; those, namely, arising out of the sinner’s own depraved will. As to the elect, God takes these obstacles also out of the way, by His omnipotent calling, in pursuance of the covenant of redemption made with, and fulfilled for them by, their Mediator. As to the non-elect, God has judged it best not to take this class of obstacles out of the way; the men therefore go on to indulge their own will in neglecting or rejecting Christ.

But it will be objected: If God foreknew that non-elect men would do this; and also knew that their neglect of gospel-mercy would infal-

libly aggravate their doom in the end, (all of which I admit), then that gospel was no expression of benevolence to them at all. I reply, first; the offer was a blessing in itself; these sinners felt it so in their serious moments; and surely its nature as a kindness is not reversed by the circumstance that they pervert it; though that be foreseen. Second; God accompanies the offer with hearty entreaties to them not thus to abuse it. Third; His benevolence is cleared in the view of all other beings, though the perverse objects do rob themselves of the permanent benefit. And this introduces the other cavil: That such a dispensation towards non-elect sinners is utterly futile, and so, unworthy of God's wisdom. I reply: It is not futile; because it secures actual results both to non-elect men, to God and to the saved. To the first, it secures many temporal restraints and blessings in this life, the secular ones of which, at least, the sinner esteems as very solid benefits; and also a sincere offer of eternal life, which he, and not God, disappoints. To God, this dispensation secures great revenue of glory, both for His kindness towards contumacious enemies, and His clear justice in the final punishment. To other holy creatures it brings not only this new revelation of God's glory, but a new apprehension of the obstinacy and malignity of sin as a spiritual evil.

Some seem to recoil from the natural view which presents God, like other wise Agents, as planning to gain several ends, one primary and others subordinate, by the same set of actions. They fear that if they admit this, they will be entrapped into an ascription of uncertainty, vacillation and change to God's purpose. This consequence does not at all follow, as to Him. It might follow as to a finite man pursuing alternative purposes. For instance, a general might order his subordinate to make a seeming attack in force on a given point of his enemy's position. The general might say to himself: "I will make this attack either a feint, (while I make my real attack elsewhere), or, if the enemy seem weak there, my real, main attack." This, of course, implies some uncertainty in his foreknowledge; and if the feint is turned into his main attack, the last purpose must date in his mind from some moment after the feint began. Such doubt and mutation must not be imputed to God. Hence I do not employ the phrase "alternative objects" of His planning; as it might be misunderstood. We "cannot find out the Almighty unto perfection." But it is certain, that He, when acting on finite creatures, and for the instruction of finite minds, may and does pursue, in one train of His dealings, a plurality of ends, of which one is subordinated to another. Thus God consistently makes the same dispensation first a manifestation of the glory of His goodness, and then, when the sinner has perverted it, of the glory of His justice. He is not disappointed, nor does He change His secret purpose. The muta-

tion is in the relation of the creature to His providence. His glory is, that seeing the end from the beginning, He brings good even out of the perverse sinner's evil.

There is, perhaps, no Scripture which gives so thorough and comprehensive an explanation of the design and results of Christ's sacrifice, as Jno. iii : 16-19. It may receive important illustration from Matt. xxii : 4. In this last parable, the king sends this message to invited guests who, he foresees, would reject and never partake the feast. "My oxen and my fatlings are killed: come, for all things are now ready." They alone were unready. I have already stated one ground for rejecting that interpretation of Jno. iii : 16, which makes "the world" which God so loved, the elect world, I would now, in conclusion, simply indicate, in the form of a free paraphrase, the line of thought developed by our Redeemer, trusting that the ideas already expounded will suffice, with the coherency and consistency of the exposition, to prove its correctness.

Verse 16: Christ's mission to make expiation for sin is a manifestation of unspeakable benevolence to the whole world, to man as man and a sinner, yet designed specifically to result in the actual salvation of believers. Does not this imply that this very mission, rejected by others, will become the occasion (not cause) of perishing even more surely to them? It does. Yet, (verse 17,) it is denied that this vindictory result was the primary design of Christ's mission: and the initial assertion is again repeated, that this primary design was to manifest God, in Christ's sacrifice, as compassionate to all. How then is the seeming paradox to be reconciled? Not by retracting either statement. The solution, (verse 18,) is in the fact, that men, in the exercise of their free agency, give opposite receptions to this mission. To those who accept it as it is offered, it brings life. To those who choose to reject it, it is the occasion (not cause) of condemnation. For, (verse 19,) the true cause of this perverted result is the evil choice of the unbelievers, who reject the provision offered in the divine benevolence, from a wicked motive; unwillingness to confess and forsake their sins. The sum of the matter is then: That Christ's mission is, to the whole race, a manifestation of God's mercy. To believers it is means of salvation, by reason of that effectual calling which Christ had expounded in the previous verses. To unbelievers it becomes a subsequent and secondary occasion of aggravated doom. This melancholy perversion, while embraced in God's permissive decree, is caused by their own contumacy. The efficient in the happy result is effectual calling: the efficient in the unhappy result is man's own evil will. Yet God's benevolence is cleared, in both results. Both were, of course, foreseen by Him, and included in His purpose.