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J. A. Alexander

- ART. I.—1. *The English Bible.* A sermon by the Rev. John W. Nevin, of the Western Theological Seminary. Published in the Presbyterian Preacher for Jan. 1836.
2. *The History, Character, and Importance of the received English version of the Bible.* A sermon by the Rev. William Adams, New York. Published in the National Preacher for Oct. 1835.

IT is now three centuries since Miles Coverdale completed his great plan of translating and publishing the entire Bible in the English language. The sermons before us are in commemoration of this interesting event. They are sensible, well written discourses, on an important topic, and richly merit the pains that have been taken to give them an extensive circulation. From the celebration of the first English version, the authors have taken occasion to direct the attention of the public to the history and merits of the one now in use. Though very unlike in their style, they are equally admirers of this noble monument of the learning and piety of our fathers, and have done a valuable service to the cause of truth by presenting in such a forcible manner its claims to the confidence of the community. The ripe scholarship evinced by one of these sermons, the earnestness of the other, and the good sense and piety of both, will cause them, we

by whose means, this benefit was conferred. As yet the language was in a gradual process of formation. Ductile, various, and manly, confined within no acknowledged rules and checked by no fear of criticism, it was in a state admirably fitted to become the faithful mirror of the national character, which the publication of that great work was calculated so deeply to effect." Indeed when we reflect that it has been regarded as a model of correct expression by the ablest critics, that it has been more read than any other English book, that the nature of its subjects and the character of the people have given it more than any other book a hold upon the imagination and the feelings, we do not wonder at the extent to which its language has become the basis both of prose and verse, and even to some extent of common conversation. The Bible is not subject to the fluctuations of taste. Shakspeare may become unfashionable, as Milton is now except in theory. But the Bible will always be read, and read by the multitude who are the great corrupters of language. Its words will always be those most upon the popular lip. Not only therefore will it remain "a well of English undefiled," but there is a certainty that its pure waters will be resorted to by all the hundreds of millions who shall be born within the reach of British and American influence till the end of time.

Samuel Miller

ART. II.—*Toleration : a Discourse delivered in St. John's Church, Brooklyn, on Thanksgiving day, December 10, 1835. By Evan M. Johnson, Rector. Published by request of the Vestry. New York: Protestant Episcopal Press. 8vo. pp. 16; 1835.*

WE seldom think it proper to take notice of single sermons, unless the subjects of them be peculiarly important, or their execution peculiarly able and happy. No one, however, who reads the discourse before us will imagine that we have been prompted to the present notice by either of these considerations. On the contrary, we have rarely had the misfortune to peruse a sermon more strongly marked by puerility and ignorance. But as it was delivered in a Church connected with a respectable denomination; as it was published by the request of the Vestry of that Church; as it has

received the *imprimatur* of the Protestant Episcopal Press in New York; as we learn that unusual means have been resorted to for extending its circulation; and as it contains a number of statements, which, although both weak and unfounded, are likely to be believed by superficial readers, we think it not improper to offer some remarks on a few of the more striking of its crudities and misrepresentations.

The very title page of Mr. Johnson speaks a man utterly immature in regard to the subject which he undertakes to discuss. Here, as well as in subsequent parts of the pamphlet, he uses the word *toleration* in a sense which is utterly out of place in this country. This word carries with it the idea of something being *allowed* which is not entirely *approved*. Applied to religion, it imports, in all correct use, the *permission* of religious opinions and modes of worship in a state, which are different from those of the established Church. *Toleration* implies a right in the government to *control* men in their opinions and worship. Where no power exists, or is assumed, to establish a creed and a mode of worship, there can be no *toleration*, in the correct sense of the word, for one religious denomination has as good a right as another to the free enjoyment of its belief and its worship. Now every one knows that in our country no Church is established. All denominations, in the eye of the law, are upon a level. Of course, no denomination can be said, by a correct speaker, to enjoy its rights by the *allowance* of the government or of the law, or, in other words, by *toleration*. The government has no power to interfere in the case. It cannot *hinder*, and, by consequence, cannot be said to *permit* or *allow*, the exercise of the rights of conscience. The most shockingly erroneous system of religious belief that exists in our country, has just as good a right, in most of the States of our Union, and certainly so far as the general government is concerned, to the plenary enjoyment of its appropriate privileges, as the most rational and pure system that can be imagined. Mr. Johnson might just as well say that the trade of the carpenter, the shipbuilder, the blacksmith or the glass blower, is *tolerated* in the United States. Has the government the *power* to forbid the pursuit of any of these trades? Does the right to pursue them hang upon the *permission* or the *allowance* of a despotic individual, or a despotic government? Quite as much out of place, is applying the word *toleration* to any sect which belongs to the religious community. In *Holland*, the *Remonstrants* are tolerated; in

France, the *Protestants*; in England, the *Dissenters*; and in Ireland, the *Roman Catholics*. But in our happy country, both the *name* and the *thing* are unknown. No sect holds by *sufferance*; none can, with propriety, be said to be above or below another. Of all this, our author appears to be utterly unaware. And though he substantially states the fact as it is, again and again; still he seems to be incapable of understanding it, and expresses himself, in the next breath, with the strangest crudeness of thoughts and language.

But may not a particular denomination, in spite of the equal legal standing of all, be maltreated, abused, and even hunted down by fierce bigots, in seasons of ungoverned prejudice and passion? Certainly it may; just as the body of *lawyers* or *merchants*, in a season of great excitement, may be attacked with malignity and violence by incensed politicians. There may be great ferocity and wickedness in such attacks; the characters of those whom they assail may be grossly defamed, and their rights temporarily infringed; but would any correct speaker think of representing lawyers or merchants as not *tolerated* in such a community? No; he would refer their maltreatment to the same category with the brutal violence of a *mob*; but the laws, and the courts of justice remaining as before, the violence would, of course, be regarded, not as a governmental act; but as an act of ruthless individuals, in spite of the constitution and the laws. Surely if this popular violence were to fall upon a suspected individual, of either sex, it would not be a just charge to say that, in that community, *men* or *women* were not *tolerated*.

In page sixth of this sermon, Mr. Johnson seems very much disposed to give great credit to the Roman Catholic Colonists of Maryland, for opening the door freely for other denominations of Christians to settle within their limits. Had he known the terms of the *charter* under which these colonists effected the settlement of Maryland, he would have withheld the greater part, if not all his praise. The fact is, the royal charter which gave them all their powers, rendered it impossible for them to exclude Protestants from their colony. So that when their colonial acts presented an aspect of great religious hospitality, they did no more than carry into execution the spirit of the fundamental law which had been prescribed for them by the government in England. Did Mr. J. know this? Did he understand the character of their charter before he undertook to characterize their colony? If he *did*, what must be thought of his candour? If

he did *not*, what must be thought of his good sense and discretion? But, truly, it is with the same half-formed ideas of his subjects that Mr. J. undertakes to discuss almost every matter with which he ventures to intermeddle.

By the way, there is a calumny circulating against Presbyterians, in relation to this very Roman Catholic colony, which we may as well take the present opportunity, over Mr. Johnson's back, to notice and refute. The calumny which has been circulated, is this—That soon after the Popish colony in Maryland published its willingness to receive Protestants into its bosom, a body of Presbyterians availed themselves of the hospitable offer; went and settled in the colony; and, soon afterwards, having prospered and increased, ungratefully entered into a conspiracy to invade and take away the privileges of the original colonists, in which they are represented as having succeeded.

A statement to this amount is made by *James Graham*, Esquire, in his "*History of the Rise and Progress of the United States of North America, prior to the British Revolution in 1688.*"—His account is as follows—

"It had been happy for the credit of the Protestants, whose hostility perhaps enforced the moderation of the Catholics of Maryland, if they had imitated the virtue, which their own apprehended violence may have tended to elicit. But, unfortunately a great proportion, even of those who were constrained to seek refuge among the Catholics, from the persecutions of their own Protestant brethren, carried with them into exile the same intolerance of which they themselves had been the victims; and the *Presbyterians* and other dissenters, who now began to flock in, in considerable numbers, from *Virginia to Maryland*, gradually formed a Protestant confederacy against the interests of the original settlers; and with ingratitude still more odious than their injustice, projected the abrogation, not only of the Catholic worship, but of every part of that system of toleration under whose shelter they were enabled to conspire its downfall. But though the Catholics were thus ill requited by their Protestant guests, it would be a mistake to suppose that the calamities that subsequently desolated the Province were produced by the toleration, which her assembly now established, or that the Catholics were really losers by this act of justice and liberality. From the disposition of the prevailing party in England, and the state of the other colonial settlements, the catastrophe that overtook the liberties of the Maryland Catholics, could not possibly have been evaded: and if the virtue they now displayed was unable to avert their fate, it exempted them, at least, from the reproach of deserving it; it redoubled the guilt and scandal incurred by their adversaries; and achieved for themselves a reputation more lasting and honourable than political triumph or temporal elevation. What Christian, however sensible of the errors of Catholic doctrine, would not rather be the descendant of the Catholics who established toleration in Maryland, than of the Protestants who overthrew it?" Vol. i. p. 23, 25.

This passage is quoted at length by the editors of a contemporary Journal,* in a review of Graham's work, without

* *Christian Spectator*, of New Haven, Vol. iv. p. 268.

one apparent doubt of its truth, and mourned over as a mortifying instance of the ingratitude and faithlessness of Presbyterians. Now, what will the reader think when he is assured, that, so far as *that denomination* is concerned, *there is not one word of truth in the statement?* It is a pure fabrication. The facts are these. The charter of Maryland was granted by *Charles I.*, a Protestant king, to *Cecilius Calvert*, a Roman Catholic, in 1632. This charter formally included and expressed the right of any of the liege subjects of Great Britain, who thought proper to "transport themselves and their families to said Province, and therein to settle, dwell and inhabit." When, therefore, the Proprietor issued his edict of hospitable invitation, it was nothing more, as we have already said, than carrying into effect the express provisions of the charter. In 1636, the Lord Proprietor prescribed an oath to his Governors of the province, of which the following is an extract—"That he would not, by himself or another, directly or indirectly, trouble, molest or discountenance any person professing to believe in Jesus Christ, for or in respect of religion." In 1647, the following enactment by the colonial legislature, was published—"No person professing to believe in Jesus Christ, shall be molested or disturbed in respect of his religion, nor in the exercise thereof, nor in any way compelled to the belief or exercise of any other religion."

In 1654, during the Commonwealth, the Proprietor of Maryland was displaced—not because he was a Papist, but because of his real or supposed adherence to the cause of *Charles II.*, then in exile. Ten Commissioners were appointed by the Protector, to administer the government of the province; and an act of the provincial legislature was passed, in the same year, *prohibiting the profession and exercise of the Catholic religion.*

Now, it is not known to us that a single Presbyterian existed in the province of Maryland, from 1632, when the charter was given, till 1654, when the Proprietor was displaced by the existing government of the parent state. We have never heard of a single family or individual of that denomination inhabiting the colony during that period. And it is certain that there was no Presbyterian Church, or worshipping assembly—not even the smallest or weakest, during that period, nor for nearly half a century *after* Cromwell displaced the Proprietor! What becomes, now, of the story of "Presbyterians and other dissenters," who, after being

kindly received and entertained, ungratefully and treacherously turned against their benefactors, and destroyed the government which had sheltered them? No such guests had ever been received into the province, and none, of course, acted such an ungrateful part. We do not venture, indeed, to affirm, that during the period in question, no sailor, day-labourer, merchants' clerk, or even mechanic or merchant, from *Scotland*, who had been bred a Presbyterian, settled in Maryland; but we can confidently affirm that we have never heard of so much as even this, much less of a worshipping assembly. But it will be asked—Did not Cromwell displace the Proprietor? And was not Cromwell a Presbyterian? The answer is ready, as every intelligent reader knows—Cromwell was *not* a Presbyterian, but an *Independent*, who hated and opposed the Presbyterians, as unfriendly to his usurpation; and during the whole period that was marked by that act, the Independents bore sway. But even if Cromwell and his counsellors had been Presbyterians, is it not well known to all who understand the history of that day, that his treatment of the Proprietor of Maryland was dictated entirely by political, and not by ecclesiastical considerations? Besides, even admitting the whole transaction to have been a *Presbyterian act*, which was, in no sense, the case; had these actors ever been in Maryland? Had they ever enjoyed its hospitality, and ungratefully requited its favours to them? The whole story is a base calumny.

On the restoration of Charles II., in 1660, the act of the Commonwealth, in 1654, displacing the Proprietor, was repealed, and Lord Baltimore regained his province; on which he immediately restored the act of 1647, inviting other denominations to settle in the colony. On the accession of William and Mary in 1688, a revolution took place in the province, called the "Protestant Revolution;" and soon afterwards Sir Lionel Copley, a Protestant, received the appointment of Governor immediately from the crown of England. In 1692, under the administration of Copley, an act was passed, by which the *Church of England* was formally established, and continued to be the established Church of the province, until the American Revolution, in 1776, happily put an end to that as well as to every similar establishment in the United States. Here we see that they were not Presbyterians, but *Episcopalians*, who thus ungratefully returned evil for good, and conspired against the rights

and privileges of the original colonists. And this was so thoroughly done, that, in 1716 and 1718, the colony, then under the most bigotted Episcopal influence, passed severe laws against the Roman Catholics, taking away from them the privilege of voting at elections, and declaring them incapable of holding any office in the province! It was, surely, an ingenious act of generalship to father all this, or, at least, the most prominent share of it, on "Presbyterians and other dissenters." Presbyterians might with quite as much justice have been charged with being the principal actors in the great Papal massacre, in France, on St. Bartholomew's day, in the 17th century. If there was, even at this late period, that is, in 1716, a single small, feeble, worshipping assembly, or at most two, of Presbyterians in the whole colony, it was as much as the bargain. We know not that there were even so many. But that there was ever any movement, or attempt on the part of the handful of Presbyterians in the colony, even then, to seize on the power of the colony, or oppress the Catholics, we never heard the least surmise or suggestion. In Annapolis, the ancient capital of the colony, we never heard, even to this day, of an attempt to found a Presbyterian Church; and even in Baltimore there was only one of that denomination until a very late period. Did Presbyterians conspire to oppress and exclude themselves?

But, to return from this digression. Mr. Johnson seems to be incapable of distinguishing between Independents or Congregationalists, and Presbyterians. He would have us believe that every thing that was done in England, in the time of Cromwell, was done by Presbyterians. He represents that denomination which, in New England, is called Congregational, as the *same* with that which, in the middle and southern states, is called Presbyterian. No intelligent observer was at a loss to distinguish between these two denominations in the days of Cromwell. The line of distinction between them was broad and strongly marked. Nor was any one at a loss to make this distinction during the first hundred years of our puritan fathers in New England. The unwillingness which they constantly manifested to encourage any Presbyterians, who might be so disposed, to settle among them, plainly showed that *they* thought there was a wide, and, to them, an important and interesting difference between the two denominations. We advise Mr. J. to study ecclesiastical history and polity a little more carefully than

he seems to have yet done, before he undertakes, either from the pulpit or the press, to speak of these branches of the Christian Church.

But while we utterly disclaim the imputation of identity with Independents or Congregationalists, as a departure both from ecclesiastical accuracy, and moral justice, we know how to honour and to defend the character of the great and good men who, at different periods, have belonged to those denominations respectively. The Puritans, who adorned the Church of God in England, in the seventeenth century, and some of whom came to this country, were a noble race of men, "of whom the world was not worthy." They were not free from mistakes, either there or here; but their services to the cause of evangelical truth, of piety, of virtue, and of civil and religious liberty, were beyond estimate. The testimony of Mr. Hume, a decided enemy, in their favour, often as it has been repeated, will bear indefinite repetition, as long as there shall be writers so prejudiced or so ignorant as to be capable of holding them up to scorn. "To the Puritans," says this eloquent infidel, "whose principles appear so frivolous, and whose habits so ridiculous, the English owe the whole freedom of their constitution." We would much rather confide in Mr. Hume's estimate of their character in relation to religious liberty, than in Mr. Johnson's.

Our author seems entirely to forget that the principles of religious liberty were understood by very few, of any religious denomination, in the seventeenth century; and that, much as we may deplore the fact, the want of just views on the subject, ceases to be the peculiar reproach of any class of religionists. Many persons can never cease to censure and ridicule the Puritans of Massachusetts for their treatment of the *Quakers*; and we may well weep over it. But let it never be forgotten, by those who ever knew it, that scenes of nearly similar character were enacted in England about the same time. When Charles I. died, he left about *fifteen hundred Quakers in prison*. And so of their melancholy proceedings in relation to *witchcraft*. A degree of the same mania reigned, about the same time, in the mother country. Even the wise and benevolent Lord Chief Justice *Hale* condemned to death two women at Norwich, for the same alleged crime of *witchcraft*. Every enlightened and candid mind will know how to make allowances for the mistakes of such

a man, and for the hallucinations of such an age, in other respects so strongly marked by piety and moral grandeur.

But the part of this discourse which has given us the most offence, is that which seems to be its main object, viz. its censure of the efforts which have been made, in various parts of our country, to counteract the influence and the extension of Romanism. So far as Mr. Johnson is scandalized at all the coarseness, indecorum, and violence which have been indulged by any of the public opponents of the Papists, we entirely concur with him both in judgment and feeling. We have groaned in spirit over much that we have read in some vehicles of public intelligence and instruction on this subject. Still more strongly do we abhor the lawless violence of infuriated mobs, in destroying the property of Catholic institutions, and exposing the lives and health of those who are connected with them. Such weapons are never justifiable. They are contrary to the spirit of the gospel. They discredit our common Christianity. And they never fail to do more harm than good to the cause in behalf of which they are employed. The sooner they are banished from all controversy which claims to be decent, the better. But, if we understand Mr. Johnson, he would not stop here. He disapproves, and would discountenance, all united, systematic, public efforts to inform and disabuse the public mind in reference to Popery, and to put the people on their guard against the arts of their propagandists, and especially against the dangers of their public seminaries. He does not blame the opponents of Popery for entertaining very unfavourable opinions of the Papal system. He declares that his own opinions concerning that system are of this character. But he appears to think that all societies and publications, and formal efforts to apprise the public of the evil and danger of their errors, and to prevent their obtaining greater authority and power, are not only unwise, but morally wrong, and contrary to the spirit of religious freedom. No matter how erroneous the doctrines of the Romanists, how subtle their arts, how corrupting their influence, or how unwearied their labours to beguile the unwary, and to poison society in its very fountains; they must not be unitedly and systematically exposed in their true character; they must not be held up distinctly to public view, and the people openly put on their guard against their plausible delusions. These views we consider as both weak and erroneous; and feel constrained to enter our protest against them, for the following reasons.

1. We believe the system of Popery is not at all essentially better *now* than it was three hundred years ago, when the noble-minded Reformers came out from it, and lifted up a standard against its enormous errors. We are aware that some believe and allege, that the Papal system is greatly improved in modern times; that it is in a great measure divested of what were formerly some of its most revolting and dangerous features; and that there is now little that ought to excite the apprehension of sober-minded, candid people. We utterly disbelieve this statement. We are firmly persuaded that it has no solid foundation in fact. We do not doubt, indeed, that in a Protestant country like this, where there is an overwhelming majority of anti-popish population; where the public mind, and the prevailing laws are equally unfriendly to their known claims and practices in other situations; they find it convenient to make disclaimers, to employ glosses, and to pursue a course adapted and intended to turn away the public mind from the most odious parts of their system. But the question is, what aspect does the Papal system wear *at this hour*, in Spain, in Portugal, in Italy, in Austria, where public sentiment fully sustains it, and where it is at full liberty to enforce its claims, and to act out its spirit, without fear or restraint? Does not the Church of Rome, in those countries, still pertinaciously deny the Bible in the vernacular tongue to the common people? Does she not continue to assert the infallibility of the Pope, and his right to pronounce what is the will of Christ, without appeal to the scriptures, because the scriptures themselves are to be interpreted by the Church? Does she not still maintain the doctrine of human merit, as the foundation of hope toward God; of works of supererogation; and of indulgences to sin purchased by the payment of money? Does she not still hold fast to auricular confession, that system which opens a door to almost every species of licentiousness and oppression? Does she not continue to insist as much as ever on the celibacy of the clergy, with all the appalling mass of abominations with which that system has been, if history be true, every where and always connected? Does any one who has risen above the age of babyhood doubt that the monasteries and nunneries of the countries just named, are, generally, sinks of the most awful profligacy and pollution? Can it be believed that all classes of witnesses, both Popish and Protestant, who have borne testimony on this subject, should have conspired to deceive us? Has the Church of Rome ceased to

pay idolatrous worship to the Virgin Mary, and to other saints, as intercessors with God for us? And, finally, can any reflecting man doubt that the mental thralldom under which it is the tendency, the aim, and the manifest effect of this system to hold its votaries, is, in the highest degree, unfriendly to both civil and religious liberty? Can any one who has eyes to see, and ears to hear, hesitate for a moment to admit all these as melancholy *facts*? We do not doubt that there are many pious Romanists. We do not deny that there are many individuals of that denomination who can honestly say, that they do not acknowledge or approve a number of things which are justly imputed to the Papacy as a system. We should consider ourselves as grossly uncandid and unjust to represent *all* the votaries of this system as deliberately receiving and practising all its corruptions. We take for granted that there have been some honest *Jesuits*, although the *system* of their order, as *Robertson* the historian observes, was one of "lax and pliant morality; which accommodated itself to the passions of men, which justified their vices, which tolerated their imperfections, which authorized almost every action that the most audacious or crafty politicians would wish to perpetrate;" and, notwithstanding, it is admitted by Mr. *Hume*, that that far-famed society "were engaged, by the very nature of their institution, to pervert learning, to refine away the plainest dictates of morality, and to erect a regular system of casuistry, by which prevarication, perjury, and every crime, where it served their ghostly purposes, might be justified and defended." We say, notwithstanding this, we are inclined to think there were some honest Jesuits. The truth is, the society *needed* some such for special branches of service. Such were very imperfectly, if at all, aware of the profligate arts which were essentially interwoven with their system. Honest, pious souls, who mean nothing wrong, will be apt to suspect nothing, and to close their eyes against that which, to others, is perfectly visible.

2. When we examine that united opposition to the Papists, which Mr. Johnson condemns, we cannot forbear to ask, what side he would have taken in the days of Luther, Cranmer, &c. in the sixteenth century? Every one who knows any thing of the history, the writings, and the doings of those noble minded men, whom God honoured and employed as the Reformers of his Church, knows that their opposition to the Papacy and its enormous corruptions was

united, systematic, and strongly marked. They were banded together for this purpose; and in conversation, in the pulpit, and from the press, they denounced the tyranny and the superstitions of the "Man of Sin;" tore off the veil from his enormities; warned the people against his dishonesty and profligacy, as well as his errors; and thus, by the grace of God, became instrumental in delivering the Church from the thralldom of ages. Were those good men right in taking this course, and in coming out from a corrupt Church; or were they wrong? The Romanists were the established Church every where, and the Reformers were not even a "tolerated" body in the outset; and yet they took a course, and employed language, which our author would not allow even in these days of liberty. We ask, what would Mr. J., with his present sentiments, have done in that day? Would he have joined with the Reformers; or would he have refused to separate from the corrupt body, and relied on mild, and gentle, and soothing language, instead of that which they employed? If all had been of the mind to take the latter course, there would have been no Reformation; and we might not now have been rejoicing in "that liberty, wherewith Christ hath made us free." Our author's brother, Bishop Smith, of Kentucky, has told us that he would *not* have separated from the Catholic body; but would have contented himself with efforts to effect reformation *within the Church*. The Episcopal succession, it seems, is too precious in his eyes to be jeopardized even for the sake of ecclesiastical purity. We are not surprised that even a pious mind should come to this conclusion. In fact, if we adopted some of the sentiments which enter into the creed of modern high-church prelatists, we could not consistently stop short of taking refuge in the bosom of the "Holy mother Church." We know that more than one minister of the Episcopal body have judged and acted thus within a few years, having actually gone over to the Papists. It has not astonished us to see it. We thought then, and we think still, that they did nothing more than legitimately follow out their own fundamental principles. And if a certain young Episcopal preacher in West Jersey, who has publicly taken ground with regard to the interpretation of the Scriptures, which, in substance, agrees with that of the Papists, does not finally cast in his lot with them, it will certainly not be because consistency does not demand it of him. Nor can we forbear to add, that we are much mistaken if a growing tendency to homologate

with some of the principles of Romanism, has not an influence in directing the spirit and course of some high-church men in regard to the proper treatment of the Roman Catholics at the present day.

3. As a further reason for differing from our author, we ask whether the *facts*, in regard to the Papists, are not really such, and to the full as bad, as the strongest of the representations which he condemns, declares them to be? It is well known to every intelligent reader, that, ever since the era of the Reformation, hundreds of Protestant writers, of different countries, of the soundest reputation for piety and learning, and living in the midst of Roman Catholics, have undertaken, at full length, to unfold their fundamental errors; to describe their moral profligacy; and to delineate those principles of ghostly dominion by which they blind the eyes of men, and hold their consciences in abject slavery. Some of these men have been among the most venerable dignitaries that ever adorned the Church of England, and others, men of equal reputation, in other communions on the continent of Europe. Among all the charges brought against the Papists, as a body, by American Protestant writers, within the last ten years, there is scarcely a specification which has not been found, exhibited in its blackest colours, in the books of those venerable men. Now, did those men speak the truth, or did they malign the Papists? Did Bishop Hall, Bishop Bilson, Dr. Fulke, Bishop Gibson, and his coadjutors in the "Preservative against Popery," Bishop Bull, Archbishop Usher, Archbishop Tillotson, and a host of similar men since their day—really understand "what they said, and whereof they affirmed?" Or were their statements "railing accusations," which "they could not prove?" We have generally supposed that their statements were true history; that they alleged what were really matters of fact. And have not more modern writers, and all late travellers, who had resided in, or passed through, those countries where Papacy holds an uncontrolled reign, substantially confirmed every jot and tittle of their statements? But if this be really so; if, while we acknowledge the honesty and piety of some individual Papists, it be a *fact* that the *system* sustained by the Romanists, as a body, wherever it can act itself out without restraint, is, substantially, the very same which those authors have represented,—ought not our people to know it? Ought not those who read little, and who are peculiarly liable to be deceived, to be faithfully warned? Surely the blacker the

picture that *facts* will warrant us in delineating, the more necessary that a knowledge of it be distinctly imparted to the community. We say again, that we utterly disapprove of all coarseness, indecency and violence in conducting the controversy against the Romanists; and we cordially lament over every thing of this kind that has appeared. But we wish the public fully to understand what the Papacy really is. We wish *facts* to be faithfully disclosed. We are not afraid of *truth*; and we are not aware that any portion of it, the disclosure of which is not contrary to good morals, ought to be kept back.

4. The author of the sermon before us is greatly scandalized at some of the *language* which he finds in some of the late American writers against the Papists. We will not attempt to conceal, we emphatically repeat, that *some* of the language referred to has offended us also. But we cannot join Mr. J. in the whole extent of his condemnatory sentence against *all* the expressions which he quotes. Two, at least, of these expressions are taken from the *word of God*; and one of them is considered, by many sound divines, as applied expressly, by the Holy Spirit, to the Church of Rome. This escaped his recollection; or perhaps he is not well enough read in the Popish controversy even to have known it. But if *precedent* may be admitted as any mitigation of the offence committed by these American writers, we think it would not be difficult to find language in some of the old English divines just referred to, quite as severe, and quite as questionable on the score of *delicacy*, as some of the coarsest quoted by Mr. Johnson. Nay, in the *Homilies* of the Church of England, "appointed to be read in Churches," and expressly ratified and recommended by the Episcopal Church in the United States, will be found language quite as liable to exception as almost any that our author has arrayed and condemned. Whoever will be at the pains to look over the *third* Homily "Against Peril of Idolatry," will find expressions which will convince him that all coarseness is not confined to America, or to Presbyterians. The grave framers of the Homily not only call the Church of Rome "idolatrous," "unchristian," and "antichrist," but take far greater license. Some of their language, indeed, we cannot prevail on ourselves to insert in the body of our page, but have thrown a specimen of it into the retirement of a *note*, which those who think proper

may peruse.* Let it be remembered that the language referred to, was deliberately framed by venerable, pious men, by Episcopal dignitaries, who lived in the midst of the Papacy; who knew it well; and who were willing to have language of this kind publicly read from the sacred desk, for the instruction of the people. Surely Mr. J. forgot that when he was penning some of his severest sentences, he was inflicting a heavy blow on his own Homilies!

5. Is it not manifest that a large part of the population of the United States really need instruction in regard to the true character and tendency of Romanism? Do we not see Protestants of intelligence and wealth contributing largely, almost every day, towards the erection of mass houses for the Papists, not one of whom will ever give a cent in return for bearing forward *our* religious enterprizes? Do we not see, after all the information and warning that have been given to the public on this subject, Protestant parents, and even Protestant parents professing piety, sending their children to Roman Catholic seminaries, thus exposing their tender and inexperienced offspring to all the seductive and proselyting arts, known to be familiar with that denomination? The Papists themselves speak without scruple of their proselyting projects by means of their seminaries. Archbishop Whitefield, of Baltimore, in a late report to an association in Vienna, formed for the express purpose of spreading Romanism in America, says—"I cannot omit mentioning, that in this school, as in *all* the Catholic institutions for education, A LARGE PORTION OF THE CHILDREN ARE PROTESTANTS; a

* "For she (the Church of Rome) being indeed not only an harlot (as the Scripture calleth her) but also a foul, filthy, old withered harlot; (for she is indeed of ancient years) and understanding her lack of natural and true beauty, and great loathsomeness which of herself she hath, doth, after the eustom of such harlots, paint herself, and deck and tire herself with gold, pearl stones, and all kind of precious jewels, that she, shining with the outward beauty and glory of them, may please the foolish fantasy of fond lovers, and so entice them to spiritual fornication with her; who, if they saw her, (I will not say naked) but in simple apparel, would abhor her as the foulest and filthiest harlot that ever was seen, according as appeareth by the description of the garnishing of the great strumpet of all strumpets, the mother of whoredom, set forth by St. John in his Revelation." And again; "It is most evident by their deeds that they make of them no other books nor scriptures than such as teach most filthy and horrible idolatry, as the users of such books daily prove by continual practising of the same. O books and scriptures, in the which the devilish schoolmaster, Satan, hath penned the lewd lessons of wicked idolatry, for his dastardly disciples and scholars, to behold, read, and learn, to God's most high dishonour, and their most horrible damnation." *Homilies*, p. 216. 8vo. Oxford edition, 1802. Large portions of the same Homily are in a similar style.

circumstance which contributes not a little to the spread of our holy doctrine, and the removal of prejudices." Surely, when they themselves boast of their plan, and of its success, there can be no want of charity in supposing that there is danger. And if there be real danger, where is Christian fidelity, if there be no public and explicit warning given?

6. We have only one more remark to offer in the way of protest against the spirit of this discourse. It is, that we never supposed before, that the statement of *facts*, and the array of legitimate *arguments* against any creed or sect, deserved to be called "persecution" or "intolerance," in any warranted sense. Has it come to this, that the friends of truth cannot be permitted to unite in opposing, refuting, and, if possible, discrediting and putting down, in public estimation, any system of gross error which may claim public regard, but which is in the highest degree unfriendly to the best interests of the community? We do not so interpret the principles of that civil and religious liberty which we are so happy as to enjoy. Is it "persecution," or "intolerance," to expose in every possible form the errors, the immoral tendency, and the actual profligacy of infidelity, and to endeavour to induce the people to despise and abhor it, as long as infidelity is left as free to defend itself, as Christianity is to make the attack? Are not Romanists at full liberty to make their counter statements, and to fortify them with the strongest authority they can produce? Besides, Roman Catholics have been, undoubtedly, in some cases, the aggressors in this controversy. In one region of the Church, to our certain knowledge, it was dragged on by their boastful and offensive challenges. Was it wrong for Protestants to defend themselves, and, in doing this, to carry the war into the enemy's country? That honour and fairness, and the strictest Christian principle ought to be regarded, even in war, no one can doubt; and so far as any have transgressed these laws, let them be severely rebuked. But that the shock of battle with the enemies of Christ, should be declined through either timidity, or false delicacy, we cannot for a moment admit. *We* are very sure that neither the inspired apostles, nor the valiant witnesses of the truth in any age, have ever taught such an ignoble doctrine.

We owe an apology to our readers for devoting so many of our pages to a production so little worthy of notice. The truth is, it was the most convenient peg we could think of, on which to hang a few remarks which we felt desirous of

making. We have now accomplished our purpose; and, in bidding adieu to Mr. Johnson, we would only venture to suggest to him, that the next time he meets his flock on a day of "public thanksgiving," he may find topics of instruction and address quite as appropriate, and quite as edifying, as the censure of others for opposing the Romanists.

ART. III.—*On the Atonement and Intercession of Jesus Christ.* By the Rev. William Symington. First American Edition. New York; 1836. pp. 396.

Archibald Alexander

WE are pleased with this volume on the Atonement, because such a work on this cardinal subject was needed; and because we are of opinion that the author has exhibited the true Calvinistic view of the atonement, as to its necessity, nature, and extent. This work is more comprehensive than any work on this subject, with which we are acquainted; it embraces every point which it is proper to have discussed in a popular treatise. We consider it also a high recommendation that it is not written in a controversial spirit. The author attacks no one, but goes straight forward to his object. The style is characterized by vivacity and perspicuity. It would be difficult to find an involved or obscure sentence in the whole book. On every point the discussion is as concise as most readers will desire, and in our opinion, is conducted with admirable judgment and good temper. Where the reader may differ from the sentiments of the author, he will never have occasion to censure him as deficient in Christian candour.

Mr. Symington's plan is also very judicious. He begins by an explication of the principal terms which relate to this subject. He then undertakes to answer the most common and popular objections to the doctrine. This part of his work is executed with great clearness and force. Nothing seems to be omitted which is proper to be said, and yet these objections are answered within a very moderate space. The necessity of an atonement comes next in order, which he argues logically, and conclusively, from the PERFECTIONS OF GOD—FROM THE NATURE OF MORAL GOVERNMENT—FROM THE INEFFICACY OF OTHER MEANS TO OBTAIN PARDON—AND FROM THE EXPRESS TESTIMONY OF SCRIPTURE. The proof

our judicatories have already taken this position. Should the general assembly adopt it, the church is ipso facto, divided. If the opinion in question is correct, it must be maintained, whatever are the consequences. We are no advocates of expediency in morals. We have no more right to teach error in order to prevent evil, than we have a right to do evil to promote good. On the other hand, if the opinion is incorrect, its evil consequences render it a duty to prove and exhibit its unsoundness. It is under the deep impression that the primary assumption of the abolitionists is an error, that its adoption tends to the distraction of the county, and the division of the church; and that it will lead to the longer continuance and greater severity of slavery, that we have felt constrained to do what little we could towards its correction.

We have little apprehension that any one can so far mistake our object, or the purport of our remarks, as to suppose either that we regard slavery as a desirable institution, or that we approve of the slave laws of the southern states. So far from this being the case, the extinction of slavery, and the amelioration of those laws are as sincerely desired by us, as by any of the abolitionists. The question is not about the continuance of slavery, and of the present system, but about the proper method of effecting the removal of the evil. We maintain, that it is not by denouncing slaveholding as a sin, or by universal agitation at the north, but by the improvement of the slaves. It no more follows that because the master has a right to hold slaves, he has a right to keep them in a state of degradation in order to perpetuate their bondage, than that the Emperor of Russia has a right to keep his subjects in ignorance and poverty, in order to secure the permanence and quiet possession of his power. We hold it to be the grand principle of the gospel, that every man is bound to promote the moral, intellectual, and physical improvement of his fellow men. Their civil or political relations are in themselves matters of indifference. Monarchy, aristocracy, democracy, domestic slavery, are right or wrong as they are, for the time being, conducive to this great end, or the reverse. They are not objects to which the improvement of society is to be sacrificed; nor are they strait-jackets to be placed upon the public body to prevent its free development. We think, therefore, that the true method for Christians to treat this subject, is to follow the example of Christ and his apostles in relation both to despotism and slavery. Let them enforce as moral duties the great princi-

ples of justice and mercy, and all the specific commands and precepts of the scriptures. If any set of men have servants bond or free, to whom they refuse a proper compensation for their labour, they violate a moral duty and an express command of scripture. What that compensation should be, depends on a variety of circumstances. In some cases the slaveholder would be glad to compound for the support of his slaves by giving the third or half of the proceeds of his estate. Yet this at the north would be regarded as a full remuneration for the mere labour of production. Under other circumstances, however, a mere support, would be very inadequate compensation; and when inadequate, it is unjust. If the compensation be more than a support, the surplus is the property of the labourer, and cannot morally, whatever the laws may say, be taken from him. The right to accumulate property is an incident to the right of reward for labour. And we believe there are few slaveholding countries in which the right is not practically acknowledged, since we hear so frequently of slaves purchasing their own freedom. It is very common for a certain moderate task* to be assigned as a day's work, which may be regarded as the compensation rendered by the slave for his support. The residue of the day is at his own disposal, and may be employed for his own profit. We are not now, however, concerned about details. The principle that "the labourer is worthy of his hire" and should enjoy it, is a plain principle of morals and command of the bible, and cannot be violated with impunity.

Again, if any man has servants or others whom he forbids to marry, or whom he separates after marriage, he breaks as clearly a revealed law as any written on the pages of inspiration, or on the human heart. If he interferes unnecessarily with the authority of parents over their children, he again brings himself into collision with his Maker. If any man has under his charge, children, apprentices, servants, or slaves, and does not teach them, or cause them to be taught the will of God; if he deliberately opposes their intellectual, moral, or religious improvement, he makes himself a transgressor. That many of the laws of the slaveholding states are opposed to these simple principles of morals, we fully believe; and we do not doubt that they are sinful and ought to be rescinded. If it be asked what would be the conse-

* We heard the late Dr. Wisner, after his long visit to the south, say, that the usual task of a slave, in South Carolina and Georgia, was about the third of a day's work for a northern labourer.

quence of thus acting on the principles of the gospel, of following the example and obeying the precepts of Christ? We answer, the gradual elevation of the slaves in intelligence, virtue and wealth; the peaceable and speedy extinction of slavery; the improvement in general prosperity of all classes of society, and the consequent increase in the sum of human happiness and virtue. This has been the result of acting on these principles in all past ages; and just in proportion as they have been faithfully observed. The degradation of most eastern nations, and of Italy, Spain, and Ireland, are not more striking examples of the consequences of their violation, than Scotland, England, and the non-slaveholding States are of the benefits, of their being even imperfectly obeyed. Men cannot alter the laws of God. It would be as easy for them to arrest the action of the force of gravity, as to prevent the systematic violation of the principles of morals being productive of evil.

Besides the two methods mentioned above, in which slavery dies a natural and easy death, there are two others by which, as history teaches us, it may be brought to an end. The one is by the non-slaveholders, in virtue of their authority in the state to which the slaves and their masters belonged, passing laws for its extinction. Of this, the northern States, and Great Britain are examples. The other is by servile insurrections. The former of these two methods is of course out of the question, as it regards most of the southern states; for in almost all of them the slaveowners have the legislative power in their own hands. The south, therefore, has to choose between emancipation by the silent and holy influence of the gospel, securing the elevation of the slaves to the stature and character of freemen, or to abide the issue of a long continued conflict against the laws of God. That the issue will be disastrous there can be no doubt. But whether it will come in the form of a desolating servile insurrection, or in some other shape it is not for us to say. The choice, however, is between rapidly increasing millions of human beings educated under moral and religious restraints, and attached to the soil by the proceeds of their own labour, or hordes of unenlightened barbarians. If the south deliberately keep these millions in this state of degradation, they must prepare themselves for the natural consequences, whatever they may be.

It may be objected that if the slaves are allowed so to improve as to become freemen, the next step in their progress

is that they should become citizens. We admit that it is so. The feudal serf, first became a tenant, then a proprietor invested with political power. This is the natural progress of society, and it should be allowed thus freely to expand itself, or it will work its own destruction. If a tree is not allowed to grow erect and in its natural shape, it will become crooked, knotted and worthless, but grow it must. This objection would not be considered of any force, if the slaves in this country were not of a different race from their masters. Still they are men; their colour does not place them beyond the operation of the principles of the gospel, or from under the protection of God. We cannot too frequently remember, that it is our province to do right, it is God's to overrule results.* Let then the north remember that they are bound to follow the example of Christ in the manner of treating slavery, and the south, that they are bound to follow the precepts of Christ in their manner of treating their slaves. If both parties follow the Saviour of men, both will contribute to the promotion of human excellence and happiness, and both will have reason to rejoice in the result.

* If the fact that the master and slave belong to different races, precludes the possibility of their living together on equal terms, the inference is, not that the one has a right to oppress the other, but that they should separate. Whether this should be done by dividing the land between them and giving rise to distinct communities, or by the removal of the inferior class on just and wise conditions, it is not for us to say. We have undertaken only to express an opinion as to the manner in which the bible directs those, who look to it for guidance, to treat this difficult subject, and not to trace out a plan to provide for ulterior results. It is for this reason, we have said nothing of African colonization, though we regard it as one of the noblest enterprises of modern benevolence.

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