

THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

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THE worst errors of Orthodoxy, we believe, are traceable to a radical misconception of the mental structure of St. Paul, and especially to an oversight of the fact that his Epistle to the Romans is, in the noblest sense of that word, a *rhetorical*, rather than a logical or dogmatic, composition. It does not pretend to give truth cold-pressed into a formal treatise ; but it shows us truth jetting hot out of a passionate soul, for immediate practical effect, for the most efficient service against prejudices, that must be offended as little as possible, but which, for the honor of the gospel, must some way be stricken down. The positive and eternal principles of the gospel, therefore, are not set in a philosophical form, as though the apostle were drawing a creed for all ages, to be rigidly interpreted by the intellect ;—but they are interfused with rhetorical conceptions ; they are set in historical lights, that will make them most available for the practical crisis which the apostle would meet, without any damage to their spiritual authority and force. A great lawyer, arguing an important cause to a jury, whose habits of mind and prejudices he is familiar with, and whose favorable verdict is immediately necessary, puts truth in a different attitude, and uses other laws of impression, than would be proper if he sat on the judge's bench to write a decision in the same case, that must stand for all ages as part of public jurisprudence. The same truth might appear in both instances ; but if the same verbal methods were applied to

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