

no man has a right to assume that because sin is, therefore it could not but be. The doctrine that whatever comes to pass was decreed, that the disobedience of men is itself a *species of obedience*, that it is a *wise and holy ordinance of God*, that Jehovah willed it, is a most pernicious doctrine, and receives no countenance from reason, or scripture, but, on the contrary, is condemned by both. Men who can give utterance to such statements as these which we have just quoted, seem to us to utter language which borders on blasphemy though they know it not.

We shall only trouble you here with one other quotation on the doctrine of necessity. It is from Dr. John P. Smith, in Book III of his first lines to Christian Theology. In answer to the objection that *necessity* makes God the author of sin, he says:

The utmost that can be justly advanced in the objection is this,—that in the vastly and to us incomprehensibly extensive system of created existence and moral agency which the Deity has established, the existence of moral and natural evil to a certain extent was, all things considered and in reference to their final results, a necessary part of the Divine plan,—that plan which is necessarily the *wisest and best*. But this does not represent God as approving evil, or choosing it for its own sake.”*

Very true, we reply, it does not represent God as approving evil, or choosing evil for *its own sake*, but it most assuredly does represent God as *approving evil, and choosing evil* for the sake of something else. This theory, though sustained by great and learned divines, is, we apprehend, radically defective. It is a theory which indorses the principle that the end sanctifies the means,—the principle that it is right to do evil that good may come,—a principle which is condemned by reason, and by every enlightened conscience,—a principle with which the infinitely perfect Jehovah never had, and never can have any sympathy whatsoever.†

Sin then is no part of God's plan, it never could be in God's plan, it is no *species of obedience*, it is no *offspring of his decree*. We believe it to be just what the highest authority designates it, “a transgression of the law of God.” It is that abominable thing which he hates. It never was and never can be any thing else or

* Page 317.

† Dr. Wardlaw very justly and truly says, “Pollution cannot flow from a spring of purity. A principle that generates evil cannot have its origin in the blessed source of all good.” Lectures on the Epistle to the Romans. Vol. II, page 50.