

Reviews of Books.

THE LIFE OF HUGH HEUGH, D. D.

(Continued from page 283, and concluded.)

Whilst the great movement was proceeding in the national church of Scotland, which terminated in the Disruption, and in which, as we have seen, Dr. Heugh took a deep interest, a movement of a different kind was advancing in his own church. This was what is called the Morisonian Controversy,—by which the orthodoxy of the United Secession Church was brought to the test, and triumphantly established. The enemies of our church have indeed taken advantage of this movement by bringing gratuitous charges against the whole denomination, whereas, when properly understood, it presents our church as most faithfully and honorably adhering to those evangelical views of christian doctrine for which it has all along been distinguished, and the mournful departure from which, in the national church, was the principal cause in originating the Secession. We can only enter on this subject so far as Dr. Heugh was instrumental in vindicating the cause of gospel truth, and in harmonizing the sentiments of the church in its assertion and defence. For although he was ever averse to controversy, and could exercise forbearance with those who differed, to as great an extent as any of his brethren, yet he never shrunk from his post where the interests of christianity were at stake.

For a number of years the United Secession Church was considerably agitated by this controversy, which chiefly respected the extent of the atonement. The Rev. James Morison of Kilmarnock had been charged by his Presbytery with holding—That the death of Christ had no special relation to the chosen of God, but was equally, and in the same sense, intended as an atonement for the whole human race,—that this atonement did not secure saving benefits to any, but simply removed all obstructions, arising from the character and law of God, to the salvation of sinners of our race, thus rendering the salvation of all men possible without making it certain to any,—and that the only remaining obstructions to the salvation of every sinner were in his own heart, which it was in the power of the sinner himself to remove.

For holding these and other sentiments connected with them, Mr. Morison was suspended in 1841; but, refusing subinission, he withdrew from the church. A few ministers followed soon afterwards, and they formed themselves into a distinct body. The discussion, in new aspects, continued in the Synod for four years, during which time some parties, instead of applauding the Synod for their uncompromising orthodoxy, endeavored, ungenerously, to affix the stigma of heresy upon them.

In this doctrinal discussion Dr. Heugh took a prominent part, and he was at length the means of uniting the Synod in a motion which carried without opposition, and which was to the following purport:—‘That the death of Christ has a *special* relation to the elect from His being their Head and Representative, and its being designed to secure for them all saving blessings; and it has a *general* reference to mankind, as suited to all, sufficient for all, removing all legal obstacles to the salvation of all, and freely exhibited to all.’

The Synod further appointed a Committee to draw up a statement of their views on this subject, of which Dr. Heugh was Convener. This statement was prepared by himself. The following extracts from it are presented by the Bi-

*We acknowledge, as we are sure our readers will readily do, our great obligations to the contributor of the excellent review now drawing to a close. Another series of papers, however, might be written, exhibiting the social and private character of Dr. Heugh, so singularly charming to every one who had the privilege of his acquaintance. These would do no less credit to his memory and, we are persuaded would be no less interesting and useful.—Ed.