

universe. The constancy of the laws of nature is so insisted upon as to convey the impression that HE, by whom the worlds were made, sits in heaven, contemplating the arena of human action as an inert spectator, never making his operation, in any strict and proper sense, felt, nor at all determining the results which come to pass; but merely permitting the machine which he has set up to take its course, except in so far as its action may be modified by the uncertain passions of men. If the providence of God is thus disallowed by many as a matter of theory, by how many more is his connection with events practically forgotten! When individuals are prosperous in their temporal circumstances, how seldom do they feel that God has given them their prosperity; or, when unfortunate, that God had sent misfortune upon them! How few, when their children grow up like olive plants around their table, no breach happening in their number, habitually say, "This must be ascribed to the divine goodness;" or feel, on the other hand, when the angel of death enters their door, and with icy touch stops the beating of the pulse of life in some beloved and joyous member of the domestic circle, "This is the doing of the Lord!"

The denial of an overruling providence, whether speculative or practical, is little better than infidelity. If Scripture is to be believed, the hand of God is as certainly to be recognised in the events of life as in the works of nature. "Our God," the Psalmist writes, "is in the heavens, he hath done whatsoever he pleased." "Are not two sparrows," the Saviour said, "sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall to the ground without your heavenly Father." So likewise in our text it is affirmed that every thing in the world of events is made, fashioned, brought to pass, by God.

We do not, of course, doubt the invariable operation of second causes, nor suppose any miraculous interference