

REVIEWS AND NOTICES OF BOOKS.

THE EXTENT OF THE ATONEMENT, IN ITS RELATION TO GOD AND THE UNIVERSE. By the Rev. THOMAS W. JENKYN, D. D., late President of Coward College, London. Third Edition, carefully revised by the Author. Boston: Gould & Lincoln. 1859. Pp. 376.

THIS is the republication of an English work of ability and repute, with the last revision of the author specially obtained for this edition by the American publishers. It is not a work that we feel at liberty to recommend for general circulation, but it may be read with advantage by Divines and Students of Divinity, as a lucid and comprehensive discussion of the doctrine of the Atonement on the principles of New School Theology. The views propounded are similar to those of Dr. Beaman and Dr. Wardlaw, who have followed Amyraut, Daillé, and Baxter.

Though the book professes to discuss only the extent of the Atonement, it includes of necessity a statement of the nature and design of the Atonement also. With great pertinacity Dr. Jenkyn attacks and belabors the theory of a "commercial or limited atonement." He exclaims with warmth—"This is the principle that unnerves our ministerial addresses, that jaundices our view of Christian doctrines, that cramps and crushes missionary efforts, that drives its thousands to apostacy, and lulls its millions into a false and fatal security." These are heavy denunciations, and lead us to ask—Who are they that hold this "commercial" theory? We are unwilling to attribute to Dr. Jenkyn the controversial trick of caricaturing the views he wishes to condemn; but if he means by the "commercial theory of the Atonement" the notion that Christ endured exactly so much suffering for so much reward, so that if more were to be saved, He must have had more pain, and if fewer, less pain—we can only say, that however this notion may be detected in the writings of two or three incautious and injudicious Divines, it is not held by Calvinistic Theologians generally, and would fall into utter oblivion, if it were not continually set up as a target to be shot at by such controversialists as Dr. Jenkyn. The attempt to involve Dr. Owen in this theory, made at page 169, is an utter failure.

The theory of the Atonement propounded in this volume is that of a governmental demonstration, to maintain the honor of God's public justice, and deter men from going on in sin. In this view, there is no satisfaction rendered to the demands of the Divine law—or real substitution and suretyship of Christ for sinners—and no result secured by the atonement other than a grand impression on "the universe," and "an honorable ground for showing clemency to transgressors." We hope that all our readers are well enough grounded in the faith to perceive, without any words of ours, the grievous defects of such a representation of the import and effect of Christ's sacrifice on the cross.

If we regard the Atonement only in the light of the New School Theology, we care little for any controversy touching its extent. We concur in the statement, that its character as a "demonstration" is universal, but all its force as a demonstration arises out of its strictly vicarious and sacrificial nature, the very aspect of it which the New School Divines try to obscure. A great many plausible things may be said and are said, by Dr. Jenkyn, in favor of a universal atonement; but it will occur to thoughtful readers, that the universality of extent is maintained by a most costly and fearful argument—by under-stating the nature, and denying the saving efficacy of the great propitiation. The extent of the atonement is a favorite topic of written controversy and popular declamation among Arminians and New Schoolites generally; but the controversy turns in reality not on the extent, but on the very nature of the Great Sacrifice. So far as it was a demonstration of Divine perfections, no one denies that it was