

dispensations. Not indeed that He purposes to abolish it for ever; not that He has so controlled it in other parts of the universe as to save the fallen spirits from it. We have only to do with our own province of the created universe; and for ourselves we know that the lovingkindness of God is still over all His works. *He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good:* both His natural sun, as the symbol of His universal benevolence, and His spiritual Sun, the Friend of publicans and sinners. The history of this world is the history of unwearied benevolence for ever bringing good out of evil. However perilous it may be to speak of the ultimate happiness of the universe being heightened by the remembrance of the evil through which it has been reached, it is safe to say that the sin of man has given scope for the display of the Divine lovingkindness in forms and in resources which otherwise would never have been known. It is the glory of faith to believe that, in spite of the woful results of the Fall, *the goodness of God endureth continually.*

Matt. v
45.

Ps. lii. 1.

OBSERVATIONS.

Observations.

The attributes thus summarily exhibited are here regarded as intermediate between the first series, which belong to God regarded as Alone or without the creature, and a third order, to which we shall presently proceed. A few remarks will be appropriate at this point upon their relation to both.

Related to the Creature.

Omni-Attributes.

1. They must be understood to bring the absolute perfections of the Eternal Being into relation with the universe, and, in fact, to derive their character and name from that relation. Three illustrate this by the composition of the terms that define them: they are the OMNI-attributes, and imply the existence of all things to which they refer. The omniscience and omnipresence of the Deity especially have no meaning on any other supposition. But we must be careful not to assume that every absolute attribute has its creaturely form. The Divine all-sufficiency becomes omnipotence in the universe; but the infinity and eternity of God have no attributes of finite and temporal to correspond with them. On the other hand, when we speak of the lovingkindness and wisdom of the Creator, we cannot point to any absolute per-

fection on which these are founded, unless indeed we base them upon the perfection of the Divine Being generally.

2. Those attributes make prominent the personality of the Supreme: not indeed that the personality of God is in any sense originated by His relation to creatures whom He calls into a quasi-independent existence. There is no sound philosophical reason why the Eternal Spirit, contemplated before and apart from the creaturely universe, should not be a Person. With such a Being, however, we never have had, and never can have, to do in the nature of things. But every one of the attributes which we ascribe to the Creator, Director, and End of the universe belongs to a Person of Whose personality we may think as we think of our own limited and imperfect selves: saving, of course, the difference between a finite and an infinite subject.

Person-
ality.

3. It may seem arbitrary to separate this order of Divine attributes from a third having relation to moral beings. The distinction is not perhaps so clear as that between the former orders: still it serves an important purpose. With those which we have just considered the enumeration would cease were there no law of probationary trial, and no fall among the facts of the universe. Had evil not entered into the creation here the display of the Divine attributes would have closed. Wisdom and goodness would have provided for the eternal blessedness of all the intelligent worshippers of God. But the moral government of the Lord of all gives a new aspect, and in some respects a new name, with an application most affectingly enlarged, to these attributes. Our study must now be conducted in the light of redemption.

Relation
to Moral
Attri-
butes.

ATTRIBUTES RELATED TO MORAL GOVERNMENT.

Moral At-
tributes.

There are some attributes, hitherto unmentioned, which belong to the Divine Being as He is the Moral Governor of intelligent creatures. These are revealed especially in connection with the economy of redemption, and derive their names and characteristics mainly from that connection: though they are displayed in the relations of God to His probationary creatures universally, they must