Juſt before he expired, he ſaid, It is finished, intimating that the purpoſe was now fulfilled for which he had come into the world, and which, as he had formerly told his diſciples, “ was not to be miniſtered unto but to miniſter, and to give his life a ranſom for many@@\*.” For his blood, as he assured them at the inſtitution of the Euchariſt, “ was to be ſhed for the remission of sins.” That Chriſt died vo­luntarily for us, the juſt for the unjuſt, and that “ there is none other name under heaven given among men where­by we muſt be ſaved ;” is the uniform doctrine of the pro­phets who foretold his coming, of John the Baptiſt who was his immediate harbinger, and of the apoſtles and evangeliſts who preached the goſpel after his ascension into hea­ven. Thus Iſaiah ſays of the Meſſiah@@\*, that “ he was wounded for our tranſgressions, and bruised for our iniqui­ties ; that the chaſtiſement of our peace was upon him, and that with his ſtripes we are healed ; that we had all like ſheep gone aſtray, turning every one to his own way, and that the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all ; that he was cut off out of the land of the living, and ſtricken for the tranſgreſſion of God’s people ; that his ſoul or life was made an offering for sin ; and that he bore the sin of many, and made interceſſion for the tranſgreſſors.” The Baptiſt, “ when he ſaw Jeſus coming unto him, ſaid to the people, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world ;” plainly intimating that his death was to be a ſacrifice, ſince it it was only as a sacrifice that the Jews could form any conception of a lamb taking away sin. The epiſtles of St Paul are ſo full of the doctrine of Chriſt’s ſatisfaction, that it is needleſs from his writings to quote parti­cular texts in proof of it. He tells the Romans, that Jeſus Chriſt was let forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood ; that he was delivered for our offences, and “ rai­sed again for our juſtification ; that he died for the ungodly; and that God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet ſinners Chriſt died for us.” He assures the Corinthians that Chriſt died for all ; that they who live ſhould not henceforth live unto themſelves, but to him who died for them and rose again ; and that God made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousneſs of God in him.” He informs the Galatians, that Chriſt “ gave himſelf for our sins, that he might deli­ver us from this preſent evil world, according to the will of God and our Father ; and that he redeemed us from the curſe of the law, being made a curse for us.” St Peter and St John talk the very ſame language ; the former teaching us, that “ Chriſt ſuffered for us, and bare our sins in his own body on the tree @@\*; the latter, that the blood of Jeſus Chriſt cleanſeth us from all sin, and that he is the propiti­ation for our sins ; and not for our’s only, but alſo for the sins of the whole world @@\*.” That he came into the

world for the purpoſe of suffering, appears from his own words : for ‘‘ no man (ſaid he@@\*) taketh my life from me, but I lay it down of myſelf : I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received from my Father.” And that he volunta­rily laid it down for mankind, is evident from his calling himſelf the Good Shepherd, and adding, that “ the Good Shepherd giveth his life for the ſheep@@\*."

That Chriſt died for the benefit of the human race, is a truth ſo apparent from theſe texts, and from many others which might be quoted, that no man. profeſſing Chriſtianity has hitherto called it in queſtion. Very different opinions have been formed indeed concerning the nature and extent of that benefit, and the means by which it is applied ; but that the passion and death of the bleſſed Jeſus were essential parts of his miniſtry on earth, has never been controverted, unless perhaps by thoſe modern Unitarians who have cor­rected the errors of the apoſtles and evangeliſts, and with whoſe writings we acknowledge ourſelves to be very little acquainted. That on the croſs he made ſatisfaction to his Father for the sins of the world, is the general belief of Chriſtians ; but presumptuous men, aiming at being wire beyond what is written, have ſtarted a thousand idle queſtions concerning the neceſſity of ſuch ſatisfaction, and the manner in which it was made. Some limiting the power and mer­cy of the Omnipotent, have dared to affirm that God *could not* have pardoned man without receiving full ſatisfac­tion for his offences ; that nothing but the ſhedding of the blood of Chriſt could make that ſatisfaction ; that his death was indeed ſufficient to atone for a thousand worlds ; that, however, he did not die for all mankind, but only for a chosen few, ordained to eternal life by a ſecret decree be­fore the foundation of the world ; and that the reſt of the race are passed by, and doomed to eternal perdition, for the glory of God’s juſtice. Others, convinced by every thing around them that the Creator and Governor of the univerſe is a being of infinite benevolence, whoſe only end in giving life muſt have been to communicate happiness, have contend­ed, that no atonement whatever could be neceſſary to obtain from him the forgiveneſs of sin upon ſincere repentance ; that it is contrary to all our notions of juſtice to puniſh the innocent for the guilty ; and that therefore the death of Chriſt, though an essential part of his miniſtry, could not be neceſſary, but at the moſt expedient.

We enter not into theſe impious debates. The Scrip­tures have nowhere said what God could or could not do ; and on this ſubject we can know nothing but what they have taught us. That “ we are reconciled to God by the death of his Son,” is the principal doctrine of the New Teſtament ; and without preſuming to limit the power, the mercy, or the wiſdom, of him who created and ſuſtains the univerſe, we ſhall endeavour to ſhow that it is a doctrine worthy of all acceptation. In doing this, we ſhall ſtate im­partially the opinions which men really pious have held re­jecting the form or manner in which Chriſt by his death made ſatisfaction to God for the sins of the world ; and we hope that our readers, diſregarding what may be prejudices in us, will embrace that opinion which ſhall appear to them moſt conſonant to the general ſenſe of ſacred Scrip­ture.

The ſtricteſt adherents to the theological ſyſtem of Cal­vin, interpreting literally such texts of Scripture as ſpeak of his being *made sin for* us, of *his bearing our ſins in bis own body on the tree,* and of the Lord's *laying on him the iniquity of us all,* contend, that the ſins of the elect were lifted off from them and laid upon Chriſt by *imputation,* much in the ſame way as they think the sin of Adam is imputed to his poſterity. “ By bearing the ſins of his people (ſays Dr Gill @@\*), he took them off from them, and took them upon himself, bearing or carrying them as a man bears or carries a burden on his ſhoulders. There was no ſin *in* him inhe­rently, for if there had, he would not have been a fit perſon to make ſatisfaction for it ; but sin was *put* upon him by his Divine Father, as the ſins of the Iſraelites were put upon the ſcape-goat by Aaron. No creature (continues he) could have done this ; but the Lord hath laid on him, or made to meet on him, the iniquity of us all, not a ſingle ini­quity, but a whole mass and lump of ſins collected together, and laid as a common burden upon him ; even the ſins of all the elect of God. This phraſe of laying ſin on Chriſt is expressive of the *imputation of* it to him ; for it was the will of God not to impute the tranſgreſſions of his elect to them­ſelves, but to Chriſt, which was done by an act of His own ; for he hath made him to be ſin for us ; that is, by *imputation,* in which way we are made the righteouſneſs of God in him;

@@@[m]\* St. Matth. xx. 28.

@@@[m]\* Chap. liii.

@@@[m]\* I Peter ii. 21. and 24.

@@@[m]\* I John i. 7. ii. 2.

@@@[m]\* St John I. 18.

@@@[m]\* Ibid. ver. 11.

@@@[m]\* Body of Divinity, vol. ii. book iii. chap. v.