

know nothing more delightful than the respectful notices, made by this distinguished Savant, of the Augsburgh confession, of Luther and Calvin and even our own Samuel Rutherford. There is a refreshing contrast here, with the whole tone and spirit of our more recent Philosophy; and in this age of little men, who look to our Theology as altogether an ignoble speculation, we feel an abundant recompense for their contempt, when we behold the homage that was rendered to it by the colossal intellects of other days.

CHAPTER III.

Use of Hypothesis in Theology.

ON THE DOCTRINE OF A SPECIAL PROVIDENCE AND THE EFFICACY OF PRAYER.

1. THE use of an Hypothesis in Theology is not to establish any proposition, but, which is a very different service, to vindicate it. The proposition in question may be altogether sustained on appropriate evidences of its own; and the hypothesis which has been conjured up in its defence may add nothing affirmative to these evidences. But though it makes no accession either to their number or their strength, it does much if it but throw a shield of protection over them; and this it does when it displaces or neutralizes the hostile argument which has been devised for their overthrow.