

**EXEMPLA CONCIONUM; OR, PLANS OF
SERMONS, SKETCHED FOR THE PULPIT:
INTENDED EITHER AS OUTLINES TO BE
FILLED UP BY WRITTEN COMPOSITION OR
AS NOTES TO REGULATE AND FACILITATE
EXTEMPORANEOUS DELIVERY, VOL. I**

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Exempla concionum; or, plans of sermons, sketched for the pulpit: intended either as outlines to be filled up by written composition or as notes to regulate and facilitate extemporaneous delivery, Vol. I by Anonymous

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ANONYMOUS

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THE Editor of the following, which are *literally* sketches of Sermons, consisting partly of outline and partly of hints, more or less elaborated into arguments and illustrations, makes no apology for submitting them to the Public. This has been done sufficiently by those who have preceded him in works of a similar description. He has only to observe, that the students, ministers, or lay preachers, who may do him the honour to look into his volume, will soon perceive that while it directs them to important subjects for the Pulpit, and suggests *materials* for their treatment, it affords no encouragement to indolence. Its contents may be *used*, but cannot be *taken*. They do not relieve from the labour of thought; on the contrary, they render it necessary. Should the work

meet with the patronage which the Editor is led to anticipate ; it will be continued in a series of volumes, each volume, with a few miscellaneous exceptions, containing a distinct class of subjects.

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EXEMPLA CONCIONUM.

PHILIPPIANS I. 6.

Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

DIVINE agency and human accountableness, the influence of heaven and the voluntary efforts of man in the great work of religion, cannot be reasonably doubted—they exist together, and cannot be separated. In the scriptures, therefore, true piety in the heart is uniformly exhibited under these two aspects: “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his own good pleasure.” The glory of salvation in its commencement, progress, and termination, is attributed to God—yet are we exhorted to “enter in at the straight gate”—“to run the race set before us,” and to secure final victory and triumph.—The first is generally employed as a powerful argument and incentive to the latter.

If we consider religion as exclusively a

Divine operation, without comprehending human effort and endeavour, we destroy its character, and convert man into a mere passive instrument, without either faculties or affections, in reference to the noblest pursuit and the most glorious object of his existence.

Again, if we consider it as simply a human thing—the product of unassisted nature—we err in the other extreme, and reduce it to insignificance; like every other labour of man, it would be debased by the imperfections of its author.

Personal religion is in the text emphatically denominated the work of God,—a work which he had actually commenced in the Philippian converts—and of the final completion of which, in judgment and in glory, the Apostle entertained a perfect assurance.

Keeping these observations in mind, let us consider religion,

I. As a *work*—something that is the effect of contrivance—that is performed by certain agency—that is designed for an anticipated result.

II. It is a *divine* work,—as it is effected by the immediate influence of God—as it bears more of the impress of Deity than any other of his works. The soul is but the image of God—even in its perfect state, a faint and distant resemblance of him; but religion is his nature—his life—himself; those who are partakers of this, “are a