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OF ELECTION.

*From the Manuscript of MR. TOPLADY.*

*(Communicated by the EDITOR OF HIS WORKS.)*

**E**LECTION may be considered as relating to Christ himself, and to those who are to be saved by him.

Christ himself was chosen, by the Father, to atone for the sins of many, and by an eternal immutable decree, given to his people for their Saviour, and, on that account, said, by the apostle, "to be fore-ordained before the foundation of the world," 1 Pet. i. 20. By the same decree, particular persons were given to Christ, whom He was to save, and bring to heaven, John xvii. 6. "I have manifested thy name to the men whom thou gavest me out of the world." Hence, they are said to be chosen in Christ, Eph. i. 4. not only chosen *by* Christ, as *God*; but chosen *in* Him, as *Mediator*: who is Himself, therefore stiled *elect*, because by the same gracious act of the Father, by which his people are given to Christ, to be his members and peculiar possession, to be saved by his merit, and preserved by his power; by the very same act is Christ given unto them, to be their divine Head and sovereign Lord, Col. i. 18. The Book of Election is likewise termed the Lamb's Book of Life, Rev. xiii. 8. not only because eternal life is obtained by virtue of his sufferings, but also because the Lamb himself is, if I may so speak, the *title-page* of this book, he stands *first* and most conspicuous in it, as the Head of his elect ones, and the first among many brethren and co-heirs, Rom. viii. 17, 29.

Election, as it more particularly respects man, is the *everlasting one, and irreversible act of God, whereby he did, from eternity, decree to manifest the glory of his grace in the salvation of some particular persons.* Every branch of this definition we find strongly displayed by the apostle, Eph. i. 4, 5, 6. "According as he hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated

us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself." What was the *motive* of his predestination? "According to the good pleasure of his will." What was the grand, ultimate end God had in view in so predestinating his people to life? "to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein, or whereby, he hath made us accepted in the Beloved."

We call election the *counsel* of God, which, in meaning, is the same with decree, and St. Paul sometimes calls it *προβειν*, or *purpose* and *fore-appointment*, and it should seem, that the apostle thought this word extremely apposite to the point, by his using it so frequently. It denotes a certain, firm, immoveable determination of God, of which he will never repent, and from which he will never swerve; and which is founded wholly on the good pleasure of his will, 2 Tim. i. 9. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, but according to *ιδιου προβειν*, his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ, before the world began." Consonant to this, is that express passage, Eph. i. 11. "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated, *κατα προβειν*, according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." To the same effect is Rom. viii. 28. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called *κατα προβειν*, according to his purpose." Again, *κατ' εκλογην προβειν Θεου*, the purpose of God, according to Election."

The hidden purpose and election of God may and must be distinguished from the *manifestation* of it, by the visible and actual separation of those who are interested in it, from unbelievers, in and by effectual calling. In this sense, it is likely, our Lord said to the disciples, John xv. 19. "Because I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." For the secret and hidden decree of God was manifested by the actual severing of the disciples from the world, and endowing them with those divine principles of life, which the world had not. St. Paul seems to have had this in his eye, when he says, "Ye see your calling, brethren; how that not many wise, are called, but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise." Where *choosing* and *calling* seem to be taken for the same thing; the *external* choice, or calling, differing from the secret purpose of God, only as it is the *discovery* and *accomplishment* of it.

Before

Before we enter deeper into the subject, it may not be unnecessary to premise, that we are not now speaking of the election of a man to any *civil dignity*, as 1 Sam. x. 24. or to any eminent office in the *visible church*, as John vi. 70. nor to the participation of a *national covenant* with God, which relates to temporal good and prosperity of a people or commonwealth, and which we freely grant, is suspended on their external good behaviour; and in which sense the whole body of Jews were termed elect, Deut. vii. 6, 7. But concerning *that election*, which is an appointment of the heirs of salvation; or, as Paul speaks, that Election whereby "God hath, from the beginning, chosen his people to salvation, through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth," 2 Thess. ii. 13. Glory is the *end* of Election, as it relates to the elect themselves; and faith and holiness the *means* in order to that glory.

Neither will it be foreign to the subject if we, in this place, enquire what is meant by the *Book of Life*, so frequently mentioned in scripture. The term is evidently metaphorical. As men usually commit that to writing, which they are desirous of keeping in mind; so the *Book* of God signifies the whole series of men and things, which are absolutely decreed, and perfectly known by Him from all eternity.

God, in scripture, hath several kinds of *books* ascribed to him. There is 1. The *Book of his general providence*, in which the *Book of Life* and *Death* of every particular man, are particularly registered, with every circumstance relating to them. Psalm cxxxix. 16. "In thy book were all *my members* written."

2. There are also the *Books of Judgment*; in which are put down all the good and evil actions of men; and according to which books, the world will be judged, Rev. xx. 12. "The dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." These are stiled, not *book*, but *books*; as if every man, for the prevention of mistake and confusion, had a book particularly allotted to himself; which, doubtless, implies the exactness, extent and perfection of the divine knowledge.

On the other hand, we find mention made of these in the *singular* number, Mal. iii. 16. called there, "A *Book of Remembrance*;" denoting the accuracy of his inspection, and the absoluteness of his omniscience, who, at a single view, knows all things that ever have been or shall be trans-

acted, from the beginning to the end of time. There is the *Book of Life*: which, likewise, is three-fold.

(1.) The *Book of natural Life*, concerning which Moses spake, Ex. xxxii. 32. who, when God was about to destroy the Israelites in the wilderness, deprecated the divine wrath, and offered himself to death in their stead, so God would spare the people alive, and settle them in Canaan; "Yet now, if thou wilt, forgive their sin; and, if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of the book which thou hast written," as if he had said, "Lord, I decline thine offer of making a great nation of me, when Israel are cut off; give me rather to die, if that be possible, before my destined period of days; only let not my brethren be destroyed in the wilderness."

(2.) There is the *Book of federal Life*; which federal life consists in communion with the people of God in external *church-privileges*, so Ezek. xiii. 9. "They shall not be in the assembly of my people, neither shall they be written in the writing of the house of Israel." And Psal. xxvii. 6. "The Lord shall count when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there."

(3.) Of *eternal life*: concerning which, see Isai. iv. 3. Dan. 12. 1. Phil. iv. 3. Luke x. 20. Rev. iii. 5. and xiii. 8. and xvii. 8. and xx. 12. and xxi. 27. which book signifies, the number of men ordained to eternal life.

As the *Book of God* does not always denote the same thing; so neither is the *being written* there always of the same import. It is sometimes *imaginary*, when persons, on too slight grounds, think that either themselves or others are written there, Jer. vii. 4. "The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are we." These are such as have a name to live, but are dead. Rev. iii. 1.

There is also a *true*, but *human* writing in the *Book of federal Life*. This is done either, 1. *By a man himself*, who, by an outward profession of faith, as it were subscribes, with his hand, "I am the Lord's," Isai. xlv. 5. or, 2. *by the Rulers of the Church*, who note down and acknowledge the person thus professing, for a member at least of the *visible church*.

Lastly, there is a writing by God himself, which is no other than his own most free, sovereign, eternal and immutable decree; concerning which the apostle speaks, "the Lord knoweth them that are his."

Due observation of all which things, will cast much light on many passages of scripture, and be of use in treating of the point in hand.

This predestination to life, is not a *vague, indefinite* decree of saving them that believe, who are holy, and persevere to the end; but a *special, particular* designation of some certain individuals of mankind to the inheritance of glory. General and indeterminate decrees, which are suspended on, and are ratified by, the creature's self-determination, are unworthy of the Divine Majesty and perfections, and have not the least shadow of foundation in scripture. There we read of his *determinate*, but no where of his *indeterminate* counsel. Besides, the inspired writers never represent Election as the proposal of some condition whereby salvation may be attained, and without which it cannot; 'tis no where, for instance, said, that *faith* or *obedience*, is chosen of God and written in his book of life; but that *men*, as such, abstractedly considered from all qualifications whatever, are the objects of his electing favour.

This is what our Lord had in view, when he bid his disciples rejoice because their names were written in Heaven, Luke x. 20. He called them as it were, each by name, assured them of their eternal predestination to life, and bid them rejoice on that blessed account. But, according as some explain the article of Election, Christ should have said thus; "Rejoice, for God hath decreed to save all that believe, provided they continue to believe; but he hath not immutably assigned salvation to any one of you." This would have been miserable comfort indeed: whereas, take the words of our Lord in their genuine, natural meaning, and they are pregnant with consolation, afford a rich and amiable display of Divine philanthropy, and furnish an unanswerable argument for the eternity, the particularity, and immutability of Election.

Paul testifies, concerning Clement, and others, that their names were in the Book of Life, Phil. iv. 3. Now, will any be so void of candour, equity and common sense, that the apostle only means, that Clement and the rest were inscribed in the book of life, not as persons chosen by God, but as having fulfilled such and such conditions; which conditions, if they continued to fulfil, they should be finally saved. Surely, to write down a man's name in the book of life, and to propose a condition whereto that life is annexed

nexed, are opposite as light and darknes. The phrase here used by the apostle, seems to refer to an ancient custom among the Jews, of setting down the name of every individual person, according to his tribe and family, in a catalogue or register kept for that purpose: and when a paternal inheritance was, at the jubilee, or any other time, to be restored to a family, any person demanding the restitution, was admitted or rejected, according as his name was found enrolled in the family register, or not. We have an example of this, Ezra ii. 61, 62. when, after the Jews return from the Babylonian captivity, the children of Habaiah and Coz, and Barzillai, sought their register among those that were reckoned by genealogy, but were not found in it, they were, on that account, excluded from the priesthood. In the very same manner, the book of life comprehends the names of all who belong to the family of Heaven; and whoever is not found written therein, shall be openly rejected in the last day, as having neither part nor lot in the kingdom of glory. As, therefore, to be written in the book of life, infallibly secures the salvation of all who are so written; so does it, on the other hand, as infallibly exclude all who are *not* so written, from the participation of present grace and future happiness.

When the apostle says, 2 Tim. ii. 19. "The Lord knoweth them that are his," and our Lord, John xiii. 18. says, "I know whom I have chosen," their meaning is apparently this; that God keeps a most exact and particular account of those whom he will glorify with himself, and in whom, as his own inheritance, he will be glorified for ever. And the very fore-knowledge of God makes this necessary; for just so many will be saved, as he foreknows shall be saved; none, whom he foreknows will be saved, can be lost; and none can be saved, whom he fore-knows will perish. The Socinians themselves are obliged to grant, "that supposing God infallibly foreknows every thing that shall come to pass, the doctrine of the particular predestination of some persons to life, and of others to death, inevitably follows, and cannot be refuted." Compend. Socin. Cap. 4. S. 1. But that God infallibly does fore-know all things, and did from everlasting, cannot be denied without undeifying him, and giving the lye to the whole Bible. We need go no farther to prove his absolute fore-knowledge, than the numberless prophecies recorded in his word, of persons and

events that should be and come to pass many hundreds, and sometimes several thousands of years afterwards. Multitudes of these predictions have been already accomplished, as in due time, they will all be. And this his most perfect fore-knowledge is founded on, and flows from, his everlasting purpose and determinate counsel, Acts ii. 23. for God fore-knows what shall be, because he has *decreed* what shall be; and it is by virtue of that decree, that things pass from a state of *mere possibility*, into a state of *certain futurity*.

From what has been said, it abundantly appears, that Election is *particular*, or *refers to individuals*; and consequently, must be *exclusive of some*.

But this is not all; Election is not only *particular*, but likewise *eternal*, and that in the true and proper sense of the word. We need go no farther than the fore-knowledge of God, to prove the eternity of this decree. "Known unto God are all his works, *απ' αιωνος*, from eternity," Acts xv. 18. and, consequently, the decree, on which his fore-knowledge is grounded, must be eternal too. Besides, the apostle expressly asserts, that God hath chosen his people in Christ, before the foundation of the world, Eph. i. 4. If before the world was made, then before the commencement of time; and whatever was prior to the commencement of time, must be eternal.

The Socinians, without any shadow of ground, distinguish between *predestination to life*, and *election*. They say, that, by the *former*, is meant God's eternal and general decree of saving all who pay a persevering obedience to the laws of Christ; and, by the *latter*, the particular decree of God in time, whereby he chuses to himself those who perform the conditions included in his general one. But, pray, let it be noticed, that the words of Paul, Eph. i. just cited, do not in the least insinuate that God chuses *holy* persons to salvation; but they positively affirm, that God chuses particular persons *to holiness*, as part of that salvation to which he hath ordained them; which holiness the persons so elected shall, through the grace and power of his spirit, surely partake of; inchoatively on earth; and consummately in glory. This point shall be more fully insisted upon, when we come to speak of the *freeness* of Election.

Our Lord's words, Mat. xxv. 34. are full to our purpose: "Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." That phrase, *from the foundation of the world*

world, has; in this place, the same force with that of Paul, before the foundation of the world; and denotes the eternity of Election, or, if we must distinguish between those two modes of expression, from the foundation of the world, and before the foundation of the world; so that the latter shall imply from eternity; and the former denote the birth of time; the interpretation of Christ's words will run thus; that God, in pursuance of the decree of Election, prepared, that is built, or created heaven, as the future habitation of his people, to all eternity: and that Jesus will, in the last day, invite them to it, and put them into possession of it, as their inheritance, made and prepared from the foundation of the world, on purpose for their reception.

Neither should we omit that famous passage, Rev. xiii. 8.  
 "Whose names were not written in the Lamb's Book of Life, who was slain, from the foundation of the world." Here that same phrase, from the foundation of the world, may be referred either, 1. to the Lamb that was slain, or, 2. to the non-inscription of the reprobate in the Lamb's Book of Life.

1. It may be considered as relating to Christ, the true Paschal Lamb, who might properly enough be said to be slain from the world's foundation; to wit, in the decree and purpose of God: which purpose, being infallible and unfrustrable, imports, the certain futurity of the thing purposed; so that what was surely to come to pass, might, in some sense, be looked upon as already done, since it must certainly and necessarily be accomplished in due time. Christ might also be said to be so slain, as he was promised to Adam soon after his fall, and when the world had not been long created; and as, not long after that, he was figuratively slain in Abel, and in the typical sacrifices for sin. Add to this, that he might, in a more remote sense, be said to be so slain, inasmuch as his personal and actual sufferings extended themselves, in their merit and efficacy, to all the elect of God who have lived since the world began, and shall live to its consummation. For since, without the shedding of his blood, there could have been no remission of their sins, had not the one atonement of Christ been effectual for the purgation of the earliest believers, they must either have been excluded from heaven (which is impossible) or Christ must often have suffered since the foundation of the world, according to the apostle's reasoning, Heb. ix. 26.

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2. We may take the words, "from the foundation of the world," as relating to the non-inscription of the reprobate in the Book of Life. Junius, Piscator, Gomarus, and other great divines, understand them in this connection; and their opinion receives no small confirmation from the words of John elsewhere in this same book of Revelations, chap. xvii. 8. "Whose names were not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world," &c. from eternity. If, therefore, reprobation is an eternal act of God, election must be so likewise.

The words of Paul, 2 Tim. i. 9. should not be here passed over without observation. "Who hath saved us, &c. according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the world began." This saving grace is given to the elect three ways; 1. in *decree*, 2. in *promise*, 3. when it is *actually conferred*. The decree of God is the grand *spring* and fountain head of grace; his promise is the *discovery* and declaration of that decree; and actual bestowment of grace is the *accomplishment* of both decree and promise. Now since it cannot be, that the decree of God should be disannulled, and, or his promise fail: it follows, that, many for whom any benefit is decreed, and to whom it is promised, may be as sure that, sooner or later, they shall have the benefit thus decreed and promised, as if they possessed it already; and from the immutability of the purpose and promise of God, it may be looked upon as even now bestowed. So that Paul's saying, that grace was given to the elect, before the world began, is quite proper and strictly true: and strongly concludes for the eternity of Election.

To this we may add another passage from the same blessed apostle, 2 Theff. ii. 13. "But we are bound always to give thanks to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning, chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth." This choice is said to be *from the beginning*, i. e. from everlasting. St. John, in the first chapter of his Gospel, treating of the deity and attributes of Christ, let's us know that the Redeemer, as to his divine nature, was truly and properly eternal; "the same was in the beginning with God:" and calls him, in the first verse of his first Epistle, "the word of life, who was from the beginning." Therefore, to be from the beginning, is to be eternal. See

also Micah. v. 2. where the prophet, describing the birth of Christ in Bethlehem, speaks likewise of his eternal generation; and tells us, that his goings forth, in that respect, have been of old from everlasting: or as the Septuagint render the words, "His goings forth were from the beginning, from the days of eternity, ἐξ ὁδοῦ αἰῶνα ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἐξ ἡμερῶν αἰῶν." The son of Syrach, in the same manner, chap. xxiv. 14. reciprocal he terms *πρὸ τῆς* and *ἀπ' αἰῶν ὁ ἀρχῆς*. As does Solomon, Prov. viii. 22, 23. Where *from the beginning*, and *from everlasting*, are represented as terms convertible and synonymous. From all which, and much more that might be urged to the same effect, we conclude, that the text under consideration makes for the eternity of Election, and which, being eternal, the apostle expressly distinguishes from effectual calling, which is in time, verse 14. "Whereunto he hath called you," &c.

(To be concluded in our next Number.)

### THAT I MAY KNOW HIM.

PHIL. III. 10.

**N**OBLE desire, Paul! A more sublime and valuable knowledge there cannot possibly be attained than the knowledge of Christ.

The apostle whose words these are, had been given to know this by no less a Teacher than the Holy Spirit himself, and it was from what he had seen and known of Christ by the revelation of the Holy Ghost, that he was led to thirst after increasing degrees of this most invaluable blessing.

Paul's first acquaintance with Christ appears to have been when he was on the road from Damascus, on that diabolical errand of persecuting the church. Then the Lord was pleased to shew him a glance of his glory; and although it terrified him so greatly as to bring him to the ground, yet was there much grace and compassion in the arrest, so powerful was even then the love of Christ felt by him and so operative was it on his heart, that he cried out, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do." This proved a gracious discovery indeed of the Lord Jesus to Paul. To the present moment he has not lost his sense of the rich grace it conveyed; and ever after did the apostle desire to know more of this divine Person; who, though he was persecuting  
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him in his members, and might, instead of graciously checking the persecutor, have sent him instantly to the regions of darkness, yet made this the time of revealing himself to him, in a way of infinite mercy, and of bringing him into his marvellous light. Oh the blessedness of that season, Paul! Here thy day began, then the day-star emphatically visited thee. The effect of this first revelation of the Lord Jesus to and in Paul, immediately operated in his aspiring after increasing knowledge of his Divine Lord and Saviour, and in the pursuit he found a heaven on earth. Blessed be the Divine Spirit of all Truth, for the unequivocal manner in which he has been pleased to enable the apostle to communicate to the churches, the happy views he was favoured with: they have stimulated believers in all ages to press after the same glorious attainments.

To know HIM, Oh! the transcendent excellencies of that Divine Object, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the wonder and admiration of angels, the eternal Son of God, whom the Father, with an infinite delight, makes the seat of his everlasting love; resting therein to him and his mystic body eternally. No other object can possibly be worthy to occupy and engage the divine mind of God the Father, but his well-beloved Son: In Him, the God-Man, the whole essence of Deity is found; and every perfection that can delight the eternal Father: by virtue of union with whom, the Lord Jesus, it is that his people also are loved with the same love, being made one with Him: How immense the grace! and all concentrating in the ever-adorable and blessed Lord Jesus Christ.—Well may angels be prying into the mystery.

To know Him! How important a subject, How much do these few words contain! In this consists the very essence of all true religion. It is not sufficient to the soul, convinced of sin, and burthened by it, merely to hear of Christ, but he must *know* him, and be made spiritually acquainted with him. Alas! how many hear of Christ, that know no more of him than those do of any renowned character of whose fame they have only read. Such have no acquaintance with Christ; they have not been given to feel their need of him, nor have they any desire after him; to them he is without form and comeliness. But the mind enlightened by the Holy Spirit, whose office it is to lead to Christ, and to glorify him, apprehends Christ in the word, in every respect suited

to his case and need, and joyfully embraces him in the arms of his faith: thus knowing him he is enabled to walk in him, to make him his defence and hiding-place, amidst all his conflicts. To the fountain of the blood of Christ and his righteousness he makes application under sense of sin and guilt, and from the store-house of his grace has renewed supplies to assist him onward and through the wilderness; ever casting his care on his Beloved, whom he encreasingly discovers careth for him. The spiritual and heavenly refreshment, the soul who knows Christ enjoys, in sweet communion with him, when under his shadow and enabled to contemplate the glories and beauties of his Person, and has a renewal of the love of his heavenly Friend, it is impossible to describe. Such manifestations, so soul-humbling and yet transporting, lead the believer more and more to long for renewed and exalted views of his Jesus, and again to repeat with Paul, "That I may know Him."

Most interesting and delightful of all themes!—Oh thou Divine Spirit, shine on thine own word, from which only I can acquire more enlarged knowledge of Him, whom to know, is the sure earnest of everlasting glory, present bliss, and life eternal.

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*To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.*

SIR,

THE following Character of a late excellent Divine, whose writings will ever be highly esteemed by all the friends of vital religion, is written on the cover of a copy of his *Soul's Conflict*, in my possession. It was drawn by Dr. Gaceden, at that time minister of Bocking, Essex; afterwards Bishop of Exeter. Your inserting it in your useful Publication, will, I hope, be highly gratifying to your other readers, as well as to your real Friend,

E. P.

DR. SIBBS's fragrant name I may not mention without special gratitude and honour due to the memory of that venerable divine, not only for the piety, learning, devotion, and politeness of his two genuine writings (*The Bruised Reed*, and *Soul's Conflict*;) but also for that paternal love, care and counsel by which he much obliged me to him in my younger years. Indeed, that holy man I found altogether

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made up of sweetness and smoothness, oil and honey. As his actions, so his gifts and graces were set in a kind of Mosaic work, admirable for that meekness and humility; which, while they thought to conceal and shadow over his virtues, gave the greatest lustre to them.

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AN ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE AND WRITINGS  
OF JOHN HUTCHINSON, ESQ.

*To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.*

LETTER I.

SIR,

IN reviewing the histories of mankind, with care and attention, two things appear particularly striking; first, an insatiable desire after something new; and, secondly, a bigotted attachment to some preconceived, or popular system. From the joint operation of these two causes, have arisen all those feuds and contentions which have successively divided the theological and philosophical part of mankind, and impelled them to brand each other with ignominious and reproachful names; and, with implacable fury, to persecute each other to imprisonment, torture and death.

It is a general maxim, laid down by the wise man, that there is "nothing new under the sun," and in no point of view is this more fully exemplified than in the common fluctuation of opinions on philosophy and theology. One set of opinions is supplanted by another; and *these* are again in time obliged to submit to *those*, only brought forward in another dress: so, that were the various systems of all ages compared, when divested of those exterior ornaments, which are merely accidental, it would perhaps be found, that the different systems were in reality very few, when compared with the number of names under which at different times they had been propagated.

Hence appears the very great folly of opposing with virulence any set of opinions, merely because they appear new; and of rejecting under reproachful, or new-coined epithets, every thing which seem to vary from the system generally received, without examination: because it may, perhaps, be found, upon enquiry, that these are more ancient than those, and more agreeable to truth. At all events it is well to attend

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attend to the apostle's advice, "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good."

The general characteristic of human affairs is instability. Hence, as the thinking part of mankind is very small, the evidence of truth is in time forgotten. Opinions become established, and are received as a matter of course, without examination. Ignorance succeeds. The order of things is inverted, causes and effects are jumbled together, and universal confusion ensues; till some one, led by attention to some trivial object, and prompted by a supposed discovery of something new, pursues his enquiries with success; searches into the opinions of former times, and attempts against an opposition, to plan things upon a better and more stable foundation.

To attempt any reformation in the opinions of mankind is always an arduous task, and the first paroxysms of party are generally violent, so that it is difficult to procure from the public a fair or impartial hearing; and it is hardly possible to expect from persons engaged on either side of the question, that free and impassionate discussion, which truth always demands. It is for posterity therefore to appreciate the merits of rival system; when party and rage have given way to cool and impartial investigation.

To these reflections I was led by considering a subject upon which we had some discourse when I was in London, viz. the Life and Writings of J. Hutcheson, which at one time made so much noise in the world, and gave occasion to style those who adopted his opinions, Hutchesonians.

It may not be amiss at the distance of time to enquire who was Hutcheson? and what were those opinions which were so new and so surprizing, as to place him at the head of a sect, and to involve many of the literati of this century in a long and tedious controversy. The utility of biographical writings is allowed on all hands: and, indeed, there is nothing so much calculated to give an extensive knowledge of human nature. It is history instructing by example, and pointing out to posterity the characters of those who are worthy of imitation; and, at the same time, shewing those rocks of error upon which many have fallen, never to rise again.

In detailing the memoirs of literary characters, we perceive much to strengthen our idea of providence. We see great effects arise from little causes. A trifling circumstance  
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(considered alone) give rise to events which were not even thought of, and by its continuation with others, determines at some times, even the fate of empires. When we see these things, we are obliged to consider, that great and small events are equally links in that chain of providence which hangs from the footstool of the Almighty's throne; embraces the utmost bounds of creation; and reaches from eternity to eternity.

The sources from which I shall draw my account of Hutchinson, are but few, and the incidents of his life are such in general as have some connection with his writings; with regard, however, to his opinions 'tis to his writings, and to them alone, we must look for a satisfactory account, in reviewing these, I shall endeavour to proceed with that impartiality which is alike due to him, and to the public, "Nothing to extenuate, nor ought set down in malice," neither to applaud or condemn, but in conformity to that word, which shall remain when heaven and earth shall be no more.

John Hutchinson was born A. D. 1674, at Spennythorn, a small village about a mile distant from Midlam, in Yorkshire, where his father had an estate of about 40l. per annum, and in this place received the first rudiments of his education; as his father's intention was to qualify him for the office of steward to some gentleman or nobleman, he was considering whether to send him for his further qualification, when a circumstance happened which seems to have laid the foundation of his future pursuits, and to have given him a taste for that peculiar kind of science which he afterwards cultivated.

A gentleman totally unknown in those parts, was recommended to Mr. H.'s father, as wanting to board in some reputable family, and was received into his house till he should meet with a situation more to his wishes. Finding him a sensible person and a man of learning, Mr. H. informed him of his intention respecting his son, and desired his advice, when, to his astonishment, the gentleman offered to undertake his further instruction, in every branch of learning, proper for the situation he was intended to fill, which he completed in a satisfactory manner.

Who this person was, to whom Mr. Hutchinson was so much indebted for his education, remains to this day a profound secret. During the whole time he remained at Spennythorn he industriously concealed every circumstance relating

lating to himself, and even his real name so effectually, that no discovery could ever be made of any trace of his family or connections. Mr. H. always speaks of him with gratitude and respect. He describes him to be "perhaps as great a mathematician as either of those whose books he studied;" and has having "taught him as much as he could see any use for, either upon the earth, or in the heavens:" or as one of his friends expresses himself, "He instructed him in every branch of the noble science of mathematics, and at the same time furnished him with a competent knowledge of the celebrated writings of antiquity, and a fund of learning, which equally shewed the extensive erudition of the teacher, and the comprehensive genius of the scholar."

To me who have been long in the habit of considering all events as dependent upon one great cause directing each to its proper place in the grand scheme of providence, there seems something extraordinary in this account of Mr. H's tutor. Our curiosity is excited but not satisfied. 'Tis well however to mark the secret spring of action in the human mind, and the means by which they are set in motion. The extraordinary instruction Mr. Hutchinson received from this *stranger*, qualified him for his subsequent connection with Dr. Woodward; the consequent breach with Woodward obliged him to become an author, and made him afterwards so famous for his having set up Moses in opposition to the philosophy of Newton, and the divinity of Dr. Clark.

When Mr. Hutchinson had attained the age of nineteen, he engaged himself as steward, to Mr. Bathurst, of Skutterskelf, in Yorkshire. From thence he removed into the service of the Earl of Scarborough, where he might have remained; but having before fixed upon a situation under the Duke of Somerset, he continued with the Earl no longer than until a vacancy happened in the Duke's household, to which he immediately succeeded. His diligence and assiduity soon elevated him to the office of chief steward to the Duke, who honoured him with greater marks of esteem and condescension, than he usually shewed to persons of his condition.

Mr. Hutchinson had now attained the summit of his ambition, and it does not seem that his views extended any farther. He appears to have attended to the duties of his station with diligence, and at the same time to have paid  
great

great regard to the study of natural things, particularly to the state of the earth, both its external surface, and the arrangement of the different strata in the internal parts. He made observations on these things, wherever he had opportunity, and appears to have been very attentive to the situations in which minerals and fossil bodies were found. He had many opportunities he says, of seeing the effects of water, fire, air and light upon a large scale, and was therefore more capable of ascertaining their nature and properties than many of our philosophers, who generally depend upon a few trifling experiments. These with the study of Moses in Hebrew, and other writers seem to have been his favourite pursuits, during the first years of his being in the Duke's service; but having found, searching into the old writings of the family, that the old Duke of Wharton had encroached upon and actually possessed an estate of 7000*l.* per annum belonging to his master, he had recourse to law, in order to recover it, and this about the year 1700 brought him to London, where through his perseverance, and industry, the suit terminated to his entire satisfaction, and the advantage of his employer.

London was at this time the grand mart of philosophic knowledge. The establishment of the Royal Society, a few years before, had drawn thither numbers of scientific men. Arbitrary hypothesis were losing ground, and observation and experiment seemed to be considered as the only foundation of philosophical reasoning.

The philosophy of Copernicus, &c. revived by the great Newton, supported by all the powers of mathematical reasoning, had astonished but not satisfied the philosophical world. The vortical system of Des Cartes was not yet given up, and the advocates for these rival systems were warm in the defence of both. Such was the situation of things when Mr. Hutchinson came to town, his business introduced him into much company, brought him the acquaintance of many literary men, and opened to his view the whole proceedings of the philosophical world. Being himself an observer of nature, he was introduced into the Royal Society, and became acquainted with many of the members. In a conversation with Sir Isaac Newton he started objections to some part of his theory; and upon these objections some of the Queries published at the end of Sir Isaac's "Optics" were founded. In this intercourse he was sorry to observe,

that an attachment to system, had caused them to judge of the state of things in nature, very different from his own ideas, and from matter of fact. Hence he does not appear to have entered into a lasting intimacy with any except Dr. Woodward. But as the history of his connection with this gentleman, will account for his first appearance in print, and throw some light upon the subsequent events, I shall reserve that for my next Letter.

And am Sir, your's, &c. W. S.

## AN ANSWER TO A QUESTION RESPECTING GOOD WORKS.

*For the Gospel Magazine.*

MR. EDITOR,

YOU and your correspondents appear to set it down as an axiom, that we cannot expect acceptance from God for our imperfect obedience. But will you have the kindness to say, whether there be any degree of merit in our best works. As much in my humble opinion rests upon the solution of this enquiry, a few thoughts from you will be esteemed an obligation, from Mr. Editor,

Your friend and well-wisher,

Aug. 6, 1800.

T. C.

To the above Correspondent we briefly reply in a few particulars.

1. Our best works are *defective*, or short of what the law requires.
2. They are *defiled* with sin.
3. Are not *beneficial* to God.
4. Are *due* from man to God.
5. Sanctification is the *gift* of God to us, and *his own work* in us.
6. No *proportion* between our works and Heaven.
7. We exercise holiness, in the performance of good works, by *strength* from God, and not from ourselves. Both will, ability, and opportunity, are from him.
8. Holy Scripture flatly *denies* all merit of our's.
9. Human desert overthrows the *merits of Christ*.
10. Lays a foundation for *pride* and human boasting.
11. Annihilates the *mercy* of God.
12. Puts man on too equal a footing with his Maker.
13. We must do *more* than God requires, in order to merit: but we cannot even do *so much* as his law demands.

THE

## SUPPLY FOR THE LORD'S PEOPLE. 1

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD, I SHALL NOT WANT.

*Pfal. xxiii. v. 1.*

THIS psalm was wrote by David, under the light, and by the teachings of the Holy Ghost. And David in the spirit is speaking of Jesus, under the character of the shepherd of God's flock. David was a type of Christ. The name David, signifies beloved. Christ is God's beloved, his well-beloved, his dearly beloved. This (says the Father) is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. David was a shepherd, so is Christ. David kept his father's flock. Christ keeps his Father's flock. David delivered the lamb out of the paws of the lion, and slew both the lion and the bear. And Christ delivers his dear people, the lambs and sheep of his flock, out of the hands of law and justice, of death and hell. And its worthy of notice, that this psalm follows the twenty second, in which the sorrows and sufferings of Jesus Christ, has been most wonderfully set forth. What the blessed Shepherd went through, when he bore the sins of many in his own body on the tree, from the law and justice of his Father, how his soul suffered the curse of God due to the sins of his people: and what he suffered in his body, the insults and contradiction of sinners against himself; and how he went through all victoriously, and came off an everlasting and eternal conqueror, is most exactly described in the foregoing psalm. In it, indeed, Christ is evidently set forth as crucified. Now in the twenty third psalm follows an account of this divine Jesus, under the character, title, and office of a shepherd.

“ The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.”

That divine Person, who had been represented in the foregoing psalm, as having his hands and feet pierced, and as dying for his sheep, in order that he might deliver them from dying eternally; is here called by David a shepherd. The Lord is my shepherd. This character and office Jesus Christ bears in the sacred scriptures. Old Jacob speaks of the Messiah under this character in Genesis xlix. 24. “ From thence is the Shepherd, the stone of Israel.” Moses was a type of Christ as a shepherd. Hence it is asked in Isaiah, lxxiii. 11. “ Where is He that led them up out of the sea, with the Shepherd of his flock.” Let us therefore consider Christ as sustaining the character of a shepherd. And se-

condly, consider his exercising his pastoral office. And it may be observed, that the spouse in the Canticles addresses Christ under this character, "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, were thou feedest." And the church in the eightieth psalm, "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel." Christ is in the first place God's shepherd. The eternal Father has appointed him, and chose and set him apart to this office. He has committed all his sheep to the care and charge of Christ. And he has received this commandment from the Father, that of all which he has given him, he should loose none. He is called God's Shepherd in the 13th of Zechariah. "Awake, O sword; against my Shepherd." He is called in the 34th of Ezekiel, "One Shepherd." "I will (saith God the Father) set up one Shepherd over them." He is called by the apostle Paul, "The great Shepherd of the sheep." He is indeed the great Shepherd, he being God's Shepherd, God's equal. And as all the under shepherds are entirely set up by him, supported and maintained and directed by him; and whatever bowels of mercies they have, and do exercise towards the Lord's flock, they receive all those bowels of love and tenderness from Christ himself. He is great in the eye of God, being his co-equal and co-eternal Son. He is great, being God-man, and having every blessing to bestow upon his people. His love towards them, his compassion, and care concerning them, is great indeed, and it greatly endears him to his beloved ones. He is likewise the good Shepherd. His goodness appears in his drawing near unto his divine Father, in the everlasting covenant, on the behalf of his people. In his engaging to become their surety; to pay their debts, to obey the law, to bear their sins, to endure their curse, to die the death due to their transgressions, to conquer for them all their enemies, and to obtain for them eternal redemption; and to keep, feed, rule and govern, and bring them all home to eternal glory, saying unto his Father, "Behold I, and the children which thou hast given me." As Christ is a shepherd, so he has all the properties of a good shepherd, and all the qualifications of a great and good one. He is described by the prophet Isaiah in the following manner: "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd." His heart is set upon his sheep; he loves them with everlasting love; his eye is ever upon them; he knows them all, and calls them all by their names, for they are all written in the Lamb's book of life.

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He knows them by name, knows them to be his, by his Father's gift, and by his own purchase. For he bought them out of the hands of law and justice, with the price of his own blood. He knows all the cases of his people, and he administers unto them according to their cases and necessities. His people are compared to sheep, which is a silly creature, very apt to wander from the fold, and quite incapable of finding its way back. Christ, the heavenly Shepherd, came down from heaven, and travelled upon this mountain of our world, in order to seek and save that which was lost. He finds his sheep wandering from the fold of God: and he takes them upon his shoulder, and brings them home, rejoicing. And calls together his friends, the angels, saying, rejoice with me, for I have found the sheep which was lost. He finds them defiled and polluted with sin, and he washes them from their sins in his own blood: he finds them void of all righteousness, and he spreads the garment of his own righteousness over them, and covers them, and says, I am your near kinsman. And he feeds them with his own flesh, and with his own blood; and says, eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved. He sets his own mark upon them, and calls them effectually by his grace out of darkness into his marvellous light; and they, through his divine love and grace, follow him as their shepherd and leader. Here we may observe, that Christ has all the properties and qualifications of a great and good shepherd.

The sheep require the shepherd's constant care. The Lord Jesus makes his people his constant care; he takes an infinite delight in exercising the love of his heart, and the bowels of his mercy towards them: They stand in need of food. Christ constantly supplies his with spiritual food, convenient for them. Their case requires particular consideration. Christ takes particular notice of all the flock of the lambs, as well as sheep: he feeds his flock like a shepherd. Are any of them lost? Christ goes to seek them. Are any of them driven out of the way, or from the way, the right way? He brings again that which was driven away. Are any of them broken in heart, afflicted in their consciences? Christ binds up that which was broken. Are any of them sick; under spiritual decays and infirmities? Christ will administer his word unto them, and will strengthen them. See Ezekiel xxxiv. v. 16. And as he has lambs in his flock, as well as sheep, so he will carry himself

himself with infinite pity and tenderness towards them; They being weak and strengthless, he will take them up, and carry them in his bosom, so that they shall be near his heart. He will cherish, refresh, and warm them with his heart's love. His arms shall embrace them. His bosom shall be opened for them to lean upon. His heart's love shall be manifested unto them; and as one whom his mother comforteth, so will the divine Shepherd comfort the lambs of his flock. Indeed his love towards them is as great as it is towards the strong. They are near his heart. His soul rejoices in them, and he will never leave them, nor forsake them. David says, the Lord is my shepherd, and I am one of his sheep. He loved me, and gave himself for me. He has taken my nature into union with himself; and he has fulfilled all righteousness in his life; and put away the sins of his people by his death. And by his holy spirit he has brought me to know him. To believe on him. To love him; and to look to him for every thing. I put myself, by faith, under him for protection; and this (says David) is the inference I draw from the Lord's being my shepherd, I shall not want. This is a just conclusion. And how we see the blessedness of a knowledge of Christ taught us by the word and spirit of God. The true knowledge of Christ leads us to rest upon him. By faith the believer looks to the person of Christ for acceptance. For we are accepted in the beloved. He rests upon the everlasting righteousness of Jesus for justification. He depends upon the blood-shedding sacrifice, and death of Jesus Christ, for the pardon of his sin, and for his discharge from guilt and condemnation. And he lives upon Christ for life and light, for grace and holiness, and for every thing. The Lord being my shepherd, I shall not want comfort in life, strength equal to my day. Victory over my spiritual enemies. Support in the hour of death, nor any manner of thing which is good. And here observe, David derives all his confidence and grounds, all his expectation, from this consideration, that the Lord was his shepherd. Faith looks to the Lord. Depends upon his word. Relies upon his faithfulness; and expects all, because God himself has promised it. And what he has promised in the word, faith knows he is able and faithful to perform. And faith sees in the word a blessed provision made for the supply of all wants in time and eternity.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE AND DEATH OF  
WILLIAM COWPER.*(Concluded from vol. 5, page 437.)*

AFTER more than twelve years of uninterrupted despair, some transient changes of his mental sensations admitted a gleam of hope, of which he immediately availed himself for a renewal of intercourse with God. He prayed in private as before his affliction, and even his slumbers were thus delightfully occupied. He has spoken of such nights compared with those he usually endured, as passed on a bed of rose-leaves instead of fiery tortures, and as a transition from hell to heaven. These lucid intervals were unhappily so short, that he never resumed his attendance on public worship. The most tolerable days that he spent in the customary state of his mind, he has described, as begun with traces of horror, left by the most frightful dreams. The forenoon, being employed in composition, became gradually less distressing. Before dinner, he usually walked two hours; and the air, the rural prospects, and muscular exercise, contributed to his further relief. If at dinner, and during the afternoon, he had the company of an intimate friend or two, which was frequently the case during the last ten years that he lived, their conversation seemed to afford the principal alleviation to his habitual burden. The evening was commonly employed in reading aloud to some friend who resided with him; for such was the care of God over this amiable sufferer, that he never was left without some companion, whose heart the Lord disposed to sacrifice every comfort for his preservation and relief. But as night approached, his gloom of mind regularly increased; and when he went to his bed, it was not to rest; but to be again harrassed in slumber with the terrifying images of a bewildered fancy, neither restrained by the controul of reason, nor diverted by external objects.

Of the general condition of his mind, during the last seven years, which certainly were the most tranquil that he passed in the latter part of his life, the best judgment may be formed from his own expressions, in a poem written toward the close of that interval. It was occasioned by the unexpected acquisition of a small portrait of his mother, whom he had lost more than half a century before, but had never ceased to remember with the warmest gratitude and the  
fondest

fondest affection. Having described her's and his fathers passage through this life to a heavenly world, under the figure of a voyage speedily and prosperously terminated, he naturally reverts in the same metaphorical language, to the distressing contrast which his own situation and prospects presented

“ But me, scarce hoping to attain that rest,  
Always from port withheld, always distress'd—  
Me howling winds drive devious, tempest-toss'd,  
Sails ript, seams op'ning wide, and compass lost ;  
And day by day, some current's thwarting force  
Sets me more distant from a prosp'rous course.  
But oh the thought, that thou art safe, and he !  
That thought is joy, arrive what may to me.”

The principal pleasure that he appeared capable of receiving, was indeed that which he derived from the happiness of others. Instead of being provoked to discontent and envy by contrasting their comforts with his own afflictions, there evidently was not a benefit that he knew to be enjoyed by others, which did not afford him sensible satisfaction, not a suffering they endured, that did not add to his pain. To the happiness of them who were privileged with opportunities of shewing their esteem for him, he was most tenderly alive. The advancement of the knowledge of Christ in the world at large was always near his heart, and whatever concerned the general welfare of mankind was interesting to him, secluded as he was from the public, and in common from religious society. In like manner from his distant retreat, he viewed with painful sensations the progress of infidelity, and of sin in every shape. His love to God, was invariably manifested, by an abhorrence of every thing that he thought dishonourable to the Most-high, and a delight in all that tended to his glory.

His sympathizing and admiring friends were fondly cherishing a hope, that the diminution of his sufferings, which was apparent for several successive years, would at length result in his restoration to spiritual peace and joy. Although advanced in years, his health, by means of regular exercise and additional society, was not only preserved, but even seemed to improve, notwithstanding the root of his bitterness evidently still remained. Amidst flattering expectations, the Lord permitted some affecting events to revive his distress in all its force, and to plunge him again into distraction and desperation. He declined all mental or bodily exertion, and rejected all attempts at friendly consolation ;

may

may he conceived his tenderest friends to be transformed by the powers of darkness into conspirators against his welfare, Expecting every hour to be his last out of endless torments, nothing short of this horrible prospect could attract his notice for an instant. He refused day after day, his necessary food; and imminent danger appeared of his speedy departure out of life, in so dreadful a state of mind. But the Lord, who had suspended the rising hopes of his friends now mercifully disappointed their fears. His period of mortality was extended; and means were unexpectedly afforded for his removal to a distant situation, where he could remain under the continual care of an amiable young kinsman; who, with a tenderness beyond the common limits of filial affection, watched over the precious remnant of his life. Much of it elapsed without a probability of his restoration to the state from which he had last fallen. His intellectual powers were so much affected by this relapse, that he was only capable of attending to the most trivial subjects, even when willing to have his thoughts diverted from despair. Local advantages, the solicitous attention of affectionate friends, and the indefatigable assiduity of his only remaining companion, were at length rendered so far useful, that he was enabled to resume his literary occupations, which were always, when pursued, a considerable, though partial alleviation of his distress.

The singularity of the Lord's dealings with him, excited in the minds of all who knew his situation, an anxious enquiry, "what will the end of these things be?"—During the last year, or two, of Mr. Cowper's life, his health and his state of mind appeared to be as much restored, as for an equal time at any period during his long afflictions. Toward the close of the past winter, he was however attacked by a bodily disorder, which brought on a rapid decay. His young friend and relative, convinced that he would shortly exchange a world of infirmity and sorrow for a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, repeatedly endeavoured to cheer him with the prospect, and to assure him of the happiness that awaited him. Still he refused to be comforted. "Oh spare me! spare me! You know, you know it to be false"—was his only reply; with the same invincible despair, to which he had so long been a prey. Early on the twenty-fifth of April, he sunk into a state of apparent insensibility, which might have been mistaken for

a tranquil slumber, but that his eyes remained half open. His breath was regular, though feeble; and his countenance, and animal frame were perfectly serene. In this state he continued for twelve hours; and then expired, without heaving his breath.

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## TWO QUERIES.

*To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.*

SIR,

HAVING seen in many of your useful Magazines answers to different questions of a religious nature, proposed by various persons, and being well convinced, by happy experience, that the doctrines of the everlasting Gospel, which you so strenuously maintain, and when opened and applied to the soul of an elect sinner by the holy spirit, is in unison with the scripture, I take the liberty of requesting an answer, for the satisfaction of several serious persons, whose judgments are not alike matured by divine grace, to the following questions:—

First. What were Rahab, the harlot's works, of which the apostle James speaks so highly?

Secondly. As the scriptures appear so decidedly against *telling lies*, can a child of God be *justified* in doing that act to screen himself from what *he thinks* is the *oppression of the wicked*, or to preserve his friend from the violence of wicked hands; or, in fact, can *any* providence whatever be pointed out when he *would be justified* in having recourse to *prevarication*, in order to extricate himself, even if he *thought*, by such means, to *glorify Jehovah*, and to *do good* to a fellow creature?

If MINIMUS, or CLERICUS, those champions for the doctrines of grace, will favour the public with their thoughts upon the above subject, through the medium of your valuable Magazine, they will receive thanks of,

Sir, your most obedient servant,

London, Dec. 19, 1800.

H.

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WE are desired to correct a misnomer which took place in an Anecdote, related in our last volume, page 340. Instead of the pious Drelencourt being privy to the insertion of the Ghost story, the whole design laid with the Bookfeller.

EDITORS.

*The two following Letters written by our Correspondent CLERICUS, the originals of which were transmitted to his GRACE THE DUKE OF PORTLAND, bearing the name, place of abode, and profession of the Writer subscribed at full length. As we conceive it to be the duty of every Minister to bear a faithful testimony against the crying sins of the day, by which the community are distressed in an unexampled degree, so likewise we are of opinion that every religious publication should remonstrate against the oppression of the times, and leave the issue to the disposal of Heaven. We presume therefore that the annexed Epistles may not be unfit to have a place in the Gospel Magazine.*

Jan. 12, 1801.

EDITORS.

DUPLICATES OF TWO LETTERS  
TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF PORTLAND.  
LETTER THE FIRST.

MY LORD DUKE,

**I**T is the indispenible duty of every man in the present distressing period, to transmit to his Majesty's Ministers any information in their power, which may be of service to the public.

The patience of the nation under increasing burdens, has been unparalleled. This calls for thankfulness, and humble acknowledgments to the Supreme Being, for restraining the unruly passions of men; otherwise, penal laws, and the awe of military force, would be ineffectual. But now, HOPE, which has hitherto supported the public mind, hope, of provisions at a moderate price, seems ready to give up the ghost. And dejection, melancholy, despair and desperation, set evidently painted on all faces, except the farmers, and individuals of large fortunes. They only look cheerful, and the former seem to enjoy the afflicting season. The last harvest, for hay, barley, oats, beans and pease, was the most abundant ever known in this country. The wheat, also, was undoubtedly, on the average of the whole kingdom, two thirds of a good crop, or more. The writer of this was in the centre of the nation a little before harvest, and from his own observation, as well as from the information of growers of corn, he makes his remarks. The present seed-time, is one of the best ever known, and cattle have still a full bite of grass in the field: seldom was there so much fodder known on the ground, so far advanced in Autumn. With all these pleasing prospects, instead of falling, every thing is rapidly advancing in price. The  
farmers

farmers had the injustice to sell their wheat, for forty guineas a load in our market this week, some of them asked "forty-five pounds." Our peck loaf of second flour, is six shillings; one shilling above the London price, considering the difference in price and the quality of the bread.

The farmers have availed themselves of a paragraph in the papers, said to be your Lordship's sentiment, transmitted to the inhabitants of Nottingham, "that there is not corn enough in the country to last round the winter." They begin to talk "of fifty pounds a load." And their abundant crop of barley, they sell at ten shillings the bushel. The spirit of riot which lately manifested itself, was a little alarming. The proclamation of the Sovereign caused it to subside. It is manifest to all, there was nothing seditious in the public disturbance; only starving multitudes clamouring for bread. It had a good effect, in reducing the exorbitant price of corn and other articles of provision for the moment; and if by the seasonable and prudent interference of the military, mischief could be prevented. Some imagine, a little stir of the populace would have produced permanent beneficial effects, in over-awing the farmers, who seem to be, for the most part, the great oppressors of the land. Since his Majesty's late proclamation, provisions of every kind have considerably advanced in the country, above any thing ever known before, and bread, especially, has much exceeded the price given in the Metropolis.

The farmers have been growing rich for these seven years past, to the distress and impoverishing the community at large. They have tasted the sweet of the dishonest gain of extortion\*; and henceforward, let bountiful Heaven send ever

\* "Dishonest gain of extortion," no softer name can be given for it. Those who purchase dear must sell accordingly, but growers of grain should be contented with a fair profit. Upon investigation it is now admitted, universally, that the deficiency of the last crop of wheat, was no quite one fourth and all other grain a plentiful crop. But, admitting a scarcity to be real in a certain degree, a three and four-fold price, which has been given ever since last harvest, is wickedly taking the advantage of the public distress, and cruelly adding affliction to the afflicted. Those who do so, are guilty of robbing the community, and stand as criminal before God, who heareth oppression, as those who plunder on the high-way. The trumpet of scarcity has been sounded for two years past, by avarice; and yet every one has had bread; the enormous price has only enriched the yeomanry, and impoverished the great mass of the people. The perpetual trumpeting for the scarcity, serves effectually, the unjust views of the covetous, though it is an ungrateful impeachment of the bounty of Providence, and merits censure and rebuke. The long, unexampled price of the necessaries of

ever such a plenty, the public will not reap the advantage of it, unless the Legislature, in their wisdom, enact strong laws for the regulation of the markets, and apply an effectual remedy for the existing abuses. May the All-wise God direct thereto.

If these hints may in the least increase your store of useful information, and contribute to the benefit and tranquillity of the Empire, the writer will be happy; being that which was aimed at, by,

My Lord,

Your Grace's most obedient, humble Servant.

Oct. 23, 1800.

CLERICUS.

P. S. In the present distressing crisis, the paupers, aided by their respective parishes, are in a more eligible situation in point of subsistence, than thousands of little house-keepers who are obliged to contribute to them.

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LETTER THE SECOND.

MY LORD DUKE,

THE under-signed does not presume to address your Lordship as a Politician, but rather as a Casuist, which comports with his function. Nor with the least design of dictating, but only humbly proposing his opinion. Not from personal motives, but with a view to national utility. Being apprehensive, from all considerations, that affairs are approaching to a very serious crisis, and that now is the moment for every man to speak his sentiments, or be silent for ever. On this ground he waves any apology for the liberty assumed, in writing to a superior, as, on the present occasion and subject, it would imply a glaring contradiction. He begs leave to premise, that it is since he wrote to your Grace before, he has read your Lordship's letters, in the public papers, addressed to the Duke of Marlborough, and the Mayor of Nottingham.

They are founded on principles of national policy, and are applicable to the ordinary course of things; in which view they are excellent, but the writer of this fears they are but little calculated to alleviate the present distress; he wishes they

they, henceforward, will make it the interest of the farmer to have indifferent crops; as the most abundant harvest, will be nothing near so advantageous to him, as the last deficient one. This note was added to the Letter, since it was sent to his Lordship.

they may not, according to their apparent tendency, aggravate and increase the evils they are designed to obviate, the farmer taking advantage from them: extraordinary emergencies must be remedied by extraordinary applications. Corn is the first necessary article of provision. It is, with consummate propriety of the inspired writer, stiled, "the staff of life \*," We are not at our option whether we will purchase or no. We must part with our furniture, the very clothes on our backs, but we must have a loaf of bread in our houses. Yea, heretofore, some have resigned that which is much dearer than life, sacred liberty, for bread-corn †. It is a possible case, if not probable, for growers of corn to combine together, not to sell their corn but at such a price. Though nothing formally of this nature is done, or perhaps, legally, can be done, yet, virtually, such a thing doth already exist ‡. They are now possessed of the idea, that there is but a bare sufficiency of grain for the year. Therefore, they seem determined to take an advantage again this year of the public distress, but in a higher degree of injustice and extortion, than that of the last. They begin to talk loudly, "of fifty pounds the load. And, if it were an hundred, as observed above, it must be had. The high price, will not diminish the consumption, among the lower orders of society, yea, never was more bread consumed than in the last year among the poor, living wholly upon it, through the continued high price of animal food. So that the unreasonably high price of corn will only enrich the farmers, impoverish the community, increase the number of paupers, and ruin thousands of little house-keepers, without extending the means of subsistence, by diminishing the consumption. With the strictest national justice and equity, in the present unexampled distress, the legislature might fix a price of wheat and barley, at least; beyond which, it *should not be sold till the end of 1801*. The feller of wheat might be allowed thirty pounds a load, which

\* Isa. liii. 1.

† Gen. xl. 17—20.

‡ "Doth already exist." Do not the farmers, in most places, bring only samples of corn in their pockets, instead of loads to be pitched in the market-houses? And are they not seen in groups from twenty to fifty, or more, early on the market-day, consulting with one another, what shall be the price of the day? And if they do not sell, there is no inconvenience to carry home the sample, and they are not straitened for the money. What is this but a virtual combination against the public welfare?

is a triple price, and more when it is a plentiful year. This would be ample for the farmer, who could not, in justice, complain: the markets would soon be well supplied, those who now withhold their corn from avaricious expectations of a still higher price, and receive the curses of the poor, Prov. xi. 26. would bring it to market. The price would soon be lower than the above, and if, by way of precaution, another law was enacted for making only one sort of bread throughout the kingdom, with a fixed proportion of barley. The apprehension of famine would be removed, the ruin of thousands of families prevented, the public mind supported in dependence on the Almighty Benefactor for a fruitful harvest next year.

If such a law as that proposed is unknown in this country and not quite compatible with the British constitution, it may be remarked, that the present price of wheat was never heard of before, and if some such remedy, effectual in its operations, is not applied, who can tell what it will sell at?

With the profoundest deference to your Lordship's superior judgment, it is imagined, that the case of the "handicraft, mechanic, or artist," is not parallel. Their labours and productions may be dispensed with for a time, without any serious inconvenience. We may purchase or forbear at option, but a loaf of bread must be daily on our table, or we exist no more. Potatoes, the next substitute to bread, rise in proportion with it. Moreover, when mechanics combine to advance their wages, they are punished by law, this is a practical maximum upon their labour. Other instances of a similar nature might be produced\*. There never was, nor never will be such a thing known, as persons of this description, combining together through the whole kingdom, to advance their wages or commodities, threefold.

\* Produced, particularly that of interest of money, five per cent. is the utmost legal interest that can be taken, the least advance on this would invalidate the security. The borrower, sometimes, gets from twenty to fifty, or cent. per cent. by the money, but the lender cannot take a farthing more, without the risk of losing all. Is not this a severe maximum upon a great part of the property of the kingdom? Thousand of families live on the interest of money. If by the laws of their country, their income is limited, by the said maximum, ought not the first necessaries of life to be limited also? The family, of a small income of hundred a year, arising from interest of money, could formerly live comfortable. But now that hundred is reduced to half that sum, or less; through the high price of provision. The little house keeper has double expences in his family, and triple poor-rates to pay, he is crushed, and cannot longer sustain the unequal burden. The load should bear equally on the farmers, as well as our tradesmen, and those of small fortunes.

But wheat is more than three times its value all over the land, and ought to be limited:

When it is recollected, that the exorbitant price of bread in France was a principal occasion of the revolution, which has shaken the foundation of empires, and made Europe an aceldamia, a horrid scene of slaughter and devastation, and the Omniscient only knows what fatal consequences may yet ensue. Who, that has the spirit of a man, or the least regard for the welfare of his country, can forbear intimating his opinion in this period of national perplexity and dismay; his innocent opinion, which can do no harm, if it should do no good?

For many years past the produce of land has brought double price to the occupier. At present, bread, butter, cheese, and meat of every kind, as well as grain, are sold for triple. None can stand the pressure of this period, but gentlemen of large fortunes, and those few persons who have good trade, and are so happy as not to be ruined by the bankruptcy of others. The rest are crushed by the weight of the intolerable load. This evil calls loudly for redress, it is one of the crying sins of the land, and whoever is accessory to it, directly, or indirectly, must answer it at the awful tribunal of the Judge of the world. Those who move in the higher circles of life, cannot form an adequate, impressive idea of the sufferings, wretchedness, and complicated misery of the great majority of the people. I doubt not, but your Lordship's humanity will prompt you to every exertion in your power to meliorate their condition, and to mitigate their distress. Having thus pleaded the cause of the poor and needy, impelled thereto by an imperious sense of duty, it is committed to, and left with God and your Lordship. And that you, and all the Ministers of the Crown, may be endued with "wisdom from above," appropriate to the extremely critical conjuncture of affairs, to the honour of the Eternal Majesty, the felicity of the community, and the tranquillity and prosperity of the Empire, is the fervent undisssembled prayer, of,

My Lord,

Your Grace's most obedient, dutiful  
humble Servant.

OCT. 31, 1800.

CLERICUS:

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\* \* *The Review of Books is obliged to be laid aside, owing to the temporary matter of this month.*

## ORIGINAL POETRY.

## ABEL'S MORNING SONG.

RETIRE, O sleep! from ev'ry sluggish eye,  
Fly far, ye hov'ring dreams! for Reason now  
Again resumes her empire; once again  
Illumes the mind, just as the quick'ning rays  
Of yon bright orb, diverging from the east,  
Dispelling all th' impervious shades of night,  
Diffuses beams resplendent o'er the earth.  
Hail, hail, resplendent sun! who, from  
behind

Th' aspiring cedar, darts thy vivid rays,  
Which to enlivened Nature colour gives,  
And dazzling light, while ev'ry beauty smiles  
With Graces newly born. O Sleep! retire  
From every eye, and fly, ye hovering dreams!  
To Night's impervious shades. But O  
declare

Where now those gloomy scenes! lo! they  
have fled,

With hasty pace, to yon dark, silent caves,  
In mighty rocks, in groves of tufted trees.  
Delightful seat of silence! there they wait,  
T'afford us sweet repose, while Nature's life,  
Extends his sultry reign. But see afar

Where new-born day the soaring eagle wakes,  
While from the glittering summits of huge  
rocks,

Pure exhalations rising, soon unite  
With morning air, like as the towering  
smoke

From immolated victims newly slain.  
On yonder sacred altar quick ascends,  
And joins the fount of day. Thus Nature  
hails

Returning light, all pleasing to the eye,  
And gives to universal Nature's Lord  
The willing sacrifice of grateful praise!  
Ye round of beings! who existence claim,  
Or if ye dwell on Afric's torrid sands,  
Or icy Greenland's coasts, now raise your  
songs

To Heaven's almighty King, whose wisdom  
vast,  
And goodness infinite, from chaos called  
This pond'rous globe, and rules and governs  
all—

*Ye blooming flowers* that deck the grassy plain!  
Or in the well-ranged garden rear your  
heads,

Exhale the sweets he gave you in his praise;  
Ye light-winged tenants of the shady grove!  
Who chirp your notes mellifluous, let your  
strains

Re-echo forth the goodness and the pow'r  
Of him who gave you voice and n'ody.

While the majestic lion honour gives  
By the loud thundering roar, and gloomy  
caves,

Refuse not to refund his noble praise.  
O then, my soul! adore the mighty God,  
Who form'd thee first, and guides and guards  
thee still—

Yes, gracious Lord! or ere the twilight  
breaks,

Or beasts arouse from slumber, or the world  
Shakes off the dull, the heavy shades of  
night.

Let needy man address his song to Thee!  
And summon all creation to rehearse  
Thy wondrous majesty; for all thy works  
Magnificent appear; on each are stamped  
Divinity and wisdom. To what source  
My raptured eyes I turn, there I behold  
Fresh traces of thy bounty, while each sense  
Becoms transported; and th' astonish'd  
mind

Beholding beauties so profusely rich,  
Becomes o'erpowered with the wond'rous  
view.—

Almighty Sovereign, arbiter of all  
In heaven and earth—disposer of events—  
Touch'd with thy Majesty and love profound,  
Though but a feeble worm, tenant of earth,  
E'en I would raise my joyful songs to Thee,  
In sweetest adoration, joy divine!—

O smiling morn! in thee I see display'd  
A lively image of the matchless work  
Of Nature's Lord! for when the brilliant sun  
Just gilds th' horizon, soon he scatters wide  
Earth's dewy vapours, sable night compels  
To fly his presence, and resign her throne  
To his controul, unbounded and supreme!  
When from his lofty throne th' Eternal  
spoke

Majestic was his voice, and great his pow'r;  
As when the rattling thunder peals aloud,  
Or vivid lightnings pierce the dark recess,  
Thus he saw chaos and confusion reign.  
When all was dark, and desolate, and void,  
He spake the words—Let beautiful light  
appear,

And light there was. He, from confusion  
world,

Called order, and from nothing earth arose,  
Teeming with living creatures, which  
emerged,

Fluttered in air with variegat'd plumes,  
And rendered vocal the astonish'd woods,

With praises to their beneficent Lord!  
Shaking his flowing mane, the sprightly horse  
Bounds o'er the verdant turf, while with  
fierce roar,

Impatient of restraint, the lion, strong,  
Advances, now escaped earth's cumbrous  
weight.—

See yonder hillcock how it teems with life!  
It moves, it bursts, and from its bowels stalks,  
With solemn pace, th' unwieldy elephant,  
Greatly surpassing th' animalculæ,  
So God surpasses weak polluted man.

These, great, omnipotent, Almighty King!  
“These are thy glorious works” each rising  
morn

Thou call'st thy creatures from th' imperious  
pow'r

Of sleep, resemblance true of lifeless forms,  
Surrounded by thy bounties and refreshed,  
They arise, and all uniting, echo forth,  
In sweetest warblings, softest strains, thy  
praise!

The time (ah, happy period! fondly viewed  
By Christian men) the time will shortly come,  
When, O thou blest Supreme! thy praise  
shall rise

From ev'ry corner of the peopled earth,  
when all,  
From north to south, from east to west,  
shall hail

The great Jehovah as their King and Lord!  
When altars, sacred to thy blessed name,  
On every hill shall blaze with offerings pure,  
Of love and adoration, the first fruits  
Of grateful souls, when with thy Majesty,  
Thy Glory, and thy Grace, Earth shall be  
filled,

And peace, and joy, and harmony shall  
re'gn!

MAY, 1800.

R. C. H.

The following verses, printed at the bottom  
of the yearly bill of mortality of the town  
of Northampton, D. C. II, 1787, we  
are assured were written by Mr. Cowper.

*Pallida Mors æquo pulsat pede pauperum  
tabernas Regumque tuores.*

PALE Death, with equal foot, strikes  
wide the door  
Of royal hall, and hovels of the poor.

While thirteen moons saw smoothly run,  
The men's barge laden wave;  
All these, life's rambling journey done,  
Have found their home—the grave.

Was man (frail always) made more frail  
Than in foregoing years?

Did famine, or did plague prevail,  
That so much death appears?

No, these were vigorous as their fires,  
Nor plague or famine came;  
This annual tribute death requires,  
And never waves his claim.

Like crowded forest trees we stand,  
And some are mark'd to fall,  
The axe will smite at God's command,  
And soon will smite us all.

Green as the bay-tree, ever green,  
With its new foliage on,  
The gay, the thoughtless, have I seen;  
I passed, and they were gone.

Read, ye that run, the awful truth  
With which I charge my page;  
A worm is in the bud of youth,  
And at the root of age.

No present health can health insure  
For yet an hour to come;  
No med'cine, though it oft can cure,  
Can always balk the tomb.

And Oh! that (humble as my lot,  
And scorned as is my strain,) (a)  
These truths, though known, too much  
forgot,  
I may not teach in vain.

So prays your CLERK, with all his heart,  
And, ere he quits the pen,  
Bega you at once to take his part,  
And answer all—

AMEN!

(a) John Cox, Parish Clerk of Northampton.

WILT.

## WILTSHIRE ASSOCIATION,

*And opening of a New Chapel at Wincaunton.*

ON Thursday, September 18, 1800, a new and elegant Chapel was opened at Wincaunton, in Somersetshire, belonging to the independent denomination of Dissenters, under the pastoral care of the Rev. William Warlow;—on the same occasion was held the half-yearly Wilts Association, of which Mr. Warlow is a member.

Mr. Jackson began the services of the day, with reading and prayers; Mr. Dunn, of Bradford, preached a suitable sermon on the occasion, from Isaiah lv. 10. 11.; and Mr. Priestley (late of Deal), concluded with prayer.—Mr. Warlow read the Hymns. Immediately after the morning service, the Lord's Supper was administered to the members of the neighbouring churches; Mr. Hey, of Bristol, and Mr. Hyatt, of Frome addressed the auditory; and Messrs. Sloper, of Devizes; Mantle, of Westbury; Sibree, of Frome; and Herdman, of South Petherton, distributed the elements; Mr. Weston, of Sherborne, concluded with prayer.

During the afternoon service the Ministers belonging to the association, transacted the business which came before them; Mr. Morren, of Yeovil, prayed; Mr. Davies, of London, preached; Mr. Price, of Yeovil, concluded with prayer; Mr. Lewis, of Chelwood, gave out the Hymns.

In the evening, Mr. Edwards, of Wilton, began with prayer; Mr. Hey, preached; Mr. Banister, of Bristol, concluded with prayer; Mr. Warlow read the hymns; the people of God found it to be a day of “refreshing from before the presence of the Lord.”

Mr. Lewis, of Chelwood, preached on the Wednesday evening, and Mr. Sibree, at seven on Friday morning.

*List of Theological Books published in January.*

THE Afflictions of England a Warning from God, a Sermon preached Nov. 2, before the University of Cambridge, by R. Luke, B. D. Rivingtons.

A Discourse on the Connection of the Prophetic Office, with Poetry and Music, preached Sept. 30, 1800, at the Meeting of the Choirs of Worcester, Hereford, and Gloucester, for the Relief of the Widows and Orphans of the three Dioceses, and published for their Benefit. And

A Discourse on the Consideration of Evil, as providentially conducted to some ultimate Good, preached at Worcester on the general Fast, March 12, 1800; by T. James, D. D. 1s. 6d.

Rivingtons.

The Character of the King, a Sermon preached at Exeter, Nov. 30, 1800, by the Rev. Jonas Dennis, L. L. B. 2s.

Rivingtons.

The Sacred Exhibition at Worthington Hall; or, select Paintings from sacred History, considered with a View to religious Improvement, by S. S. Author of Sunday Lectures, &c. 12mo. 3s. boards.

Rivingtons.

Pious Reflections for every Day in the Month, translated from the French of Fénelon, Archbishop of Cambray, to which is now added a Sketch of the Life of the Author, Father's Advice to his Son, &c. with a beautiful Portrait of the author, Price 1s. in coloured Paper, 1s. 6d. bound and lettered, or 3s. 6d. elegantly bound in Morocco.

Symonds.

Dr. Watts's Psalms and Hymns, set to new Music, consisting of upwards of fifty original Melodies or Tunes, in three or four Parts, composed by Edward Miller, Mus. Doct. To which is added a copious Appendix, containing the most favourite Tunes now used in different Congregations, corrected and adapted to a new Selection of 600 Hymns, by the Rev. Dr. Williams, and the Rev. Mr. Boden, with References to those of Dr. Watts, 10s. 6d.

Williams.

The Substance of the Holy Scriptures methodized and arranged upon an entirely new Plan, in such a manner as to form a Bible with Hymns, Notes, &c. by the Rev. Edmund Butcher, 4to. No. I. 1s.—to be completed in twenty Numbers, H. D. Symonds.

The Alliance between the Church and State, a Sermon preached before the University of Cambridge, Nov. 2, 1800, being the Day of Commemoration of Benefactors, by Richard Ramfden, M. A. 1s.

Mathews.

A Sermon preached at St. Julian's, Shrewsbury, Dec. 14, 1800, on reading his Majesty's Proclamation for limiting the Use of Bread, by S. Butler, 1s.

Longman and Rees.

An Enquiry into the Knowledge of the Ancient Hebrews, concerning a future State, by Joseph Priestley, L. L. D. 2s.

Johnson.

Serious Cautions against popular Errors, a Discourse addressed to the young Persons who attend the Unitarian Worship at the Gravel-pit Meeting in Hackney, by Thomas Belsham, 1s.

Johnson.

A Sermon preached at the Chapel in Hanover-square, Newcastle, for the Support of the New College, Manchester, by William Turner, 1s.

Johnson.

A Collection of the Hebrew and Greek Texts of the Psalms; with a prefatory Epistle to the Right Hon. William Pitt, by John Reeves, Esq. 8s. boards.

Payne.

The Fall of Anti-Christ the Triumph of the Christian Church, by C. Decoetlogan, A. M. 1s.

Rivingtons.