



THE

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The HISTORY of JOSEPH.

[Continued from our last.]

CHAP. XI.

Joseph's policy to stay his brethren. Gen. xlv.



IN order to detain his brethren, and enjoy more of his beloved Benjamin's company in particular, without making himself known to them, Joseph has recourse to the following stratagem: "He commands the steward of his house to fill their sacks with food, as much as they could carry; and not only put every man's money in his sack's mouth again, but to put his own silver cup in also. They had gone but a little way out of the city, when Joseph ordered his steward to overtake them, and say unto them, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good? [A most cutting interrogation!] ye have taken away my master's cup that he drinketh out of [An awful charge!] and whereby

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he

he divineth." Joseph, a servant and worshipper of Jehovah the true God, had nothing to do with divination, or the black art. But, by means of this cup, he tried and proved them, and brought to light and knowledge things that were secret to him before, as we shall see hereafter. "Ye have done evil in so doing."

Doubtless, they were amazed at a charge, of which they knew themselves perfectly innocent. Therefore, with all the courage which innocence could inspire, they ask the steward, "Wherefore saith my Lord these words? God forbid that thy servants should do such a thing." They detest the crime; and, as a proof of their honesty, refer him to their bringing back their money, which they before found in their sacks mouth; yea, they boldly declare, upon whomsoever the cup should be found, he should die, and they would become bond-servants to the steward. O ye sons of Jacob! now prepare for a shock.

They eagerly took down their sacks, and the steward opened and searched them; when, to their utmost astonishment, and greatest distress, the missing cup was found in Benjamin's sack. Ye sons of sympathy, and daughters of compassion, do ye not feel for the amazement and distress these brethren must be in? Poor creatures! they must now be at their wits end. No marvel that, in their agony, they rent their cloaths. Fatal to them all, and to their aged and affectionate father, they must think this event would prove. But be it what it may, they were compelled to see the issue of it: therefore they laded their asses, and returned back to the city.

Now for another most awful interview with Joseph. They came into his presence, and fell before him on the ground. Doubtless they were ashamed and afraid to look him in the face. "And Joseph said unto them, What deed is this that ye have done? Wot ye not that

such a man as I can certainly divine?" We may well suppose Joseph spake this with a stern countenance, and in an angry tone, to reprehend them for an action the most base, wicked, and ungrateful, of which nothing too bad could be said. But observe, Joseph seems to have a reserve in his speech. He does not absolutely fix the charge upon them, but speaks to it obliquely; not by way of assertion, but by an interrogation; for he well knew their innocence; and therefore could not with truth, and a good conscience, charge it upon them: and he appeals to them concerning his skill and judgment to detect it. It is good and right, at all times, to watch over our words, and to guard our speech, lest we offend with our tongue. Poor souls! without doubt they were quaking and trembling before him.

But Judah, recovering himself, replied in the most simple, honest, and artless manner, "What shall we say unto my lord? what shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves?" signifying, that they were non-plus'd, confounded, and at their wits end what to say. Own the theft, they could not. Deny it, they dare not: for the cup was found upon them. The fact seemed plain against them. Though they might suspect some fraud, yet they were afraid to speak out. Therefore, being in great strait, he delivers himself with the greatest modesty, and humbly appeals to Joseph. But he confesses to him, "God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants." Here he might have reference, not to the stealing the cup, but to some other crime they had been guilty of, and for which conscience did its office, in testifying of it, and for which God was now about to visit them.

But it is most probable, their iniquity of selling Joseph into Egypt was the ghost that now haunted their minds, and distressed their souls. But, adds Judah to Joseph, "Behold, we are my lord's servants, both we, and he also with whom the cup is found." Ay, but

Judah, before the cup was discovered, you said, the man should die upon whom it was found. Now you only say, he shall be a servant. Well, more than ever, ye are all now fulfilling Joseph's dream, in acknowledging yourselves his servants, and his dominion over you. But hear the good man's reply: Joseph said, "God forbid that I should do so," i. e. make all of you suffer for the crime of one: that is both unjust and unreasonable. "But the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant: but as for you, get you up in peace unto your father." This must be like a dreadful thunderclap, enough to make the ears of them all to tingle, rend their hearts, and distress them to their very souls. For if Benjamin is detained, how dreadful must the parting be! What must become of their aged father! What of Judah, who was surety for him, and said, If I bring him not unto thee, let me bear the blame for ever! Therefore, to go in peace to their father, was absolutely impossible.

Thus were they now perplexed and distressed on every side. A most dark and impenetrable cloud of providence now hangs over them, and seems just ready to burst on them. But though they saw it not, it was soon to be dispersed, and succeeded by the bright shining of the sun, with comfort, peace, and joy. Thus it often is, in the experience of God's people, as it is in nature, always darkest just before the morning light breaks forth: the darkest seasons of adversity are often forerunners of the brightest scenes of prosperity. Judah, who had pleaded for his brother Joseph's life, and by whose means it was spared, and he sold into Egypt, is now made the happy instrument of pleading their cause with Joseph, and, by the relation of a true and artless tale, so works upon his passions, that he could no longer refrain from making himself known unto them.

Inspired

Inspired with a sense of innocence of the charge laid against them, and with some courage and resolution, Judah drew near unto Joseph, and thus politely and affectionately addressed him : “ O my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord’s ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant : for thou art even as Pharaoh.” As though he had said, We honor thee as such. Thou hast full dominion over us. We are in thy hands, to do as it pleaseth thee with us. What a most perfect fulfilment of Joseph’s dream is here ! “ My lord asked his servants, saying, Have ye a father, or a brother ? And we said unto my lord, We have a father, an old man ; and a child of his age, a little one : and his brother is dead”——Stop, Judah—Joseph, how couldst thou bear to hear this ? Ye rest of the sons of Jacob, who were privy to the affair of Joseph, how could ye support yourselves on hearing this ? Reader, pause a moment, and reflect on this amazing scene of God’s providence, over-ruling their cruelty, and bringing them before Joseph, to confess, in his presence, their belief of his death. Surely Judah must stammer here, and his brethren in iniquity must be confounded, at his pronouncing it.

But he goes on : “ And he alone [Benjamin] is left of his mother, and his father loveth him : and thou saidst unto thy servants, Bring him down to me, that I may set mine eyes upon him. And we said unto my lord, The lad cannot leave his father ; for if he should, his father would die. And thou saidst unto thy servants, Except your youngest brother come down with you, you shall see my face no more. When we came up unto thy servant my father, we told him the words of my lord. And our father said, Go again, and buy us a little food. And we said, We cannot go down : if our youngest brother be with us, then will we go down ; for we may not see the man’s face, except our youngest brother

brother be with us. And thy servant my father said unto us, Ye know that my wife bare me two sons ; and the one went out from me : and I said, Verily he is torn in pieces ; and I saw him not since.

Now Joseph has got from them, what his aged, affectionate father thought concerning him. Was it not enough to make him burst out into a fit of rage against them, and make himself known, by crying out, in severest resentment, “ Take these wretches hence, and punish them in the severest manner ; but slay them not : let them live such a life, as to make death preferable to it, for their cruelty to me, and the anguish and distress of soul they thereby brought upon my dear, loving, and beloved father ? ” But no : he saw the over-ruling hand of the LORD in all, and causing all to work for all their good. Therefore he sits coolly, hears attentively, and is a perfect master of himself and his passions. What is it, which the grace of God is not able to effect in us ? We can do all things, thro’ Christ strengthening us. O may our eyes be more upon our gracious Lord, and strengthening Saviour !

But Judah goes on with what his father said, “ And if ye take this son also from me, and mischief befall him, ye shall bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. Now therefore, when I come home to my father, and the lad be not with us (seeing that his life is bound up with the lad’s life), it shall come to pass, when he seeth the lad is not with us, that he shall die ; and thy servants shall bring down the grey hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave : for thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then shall I bear the blame to my father for ever.”

What a moving, what an affecting scene is here presented to Joseph ! As though he had said, Suffer me, my lord, to appeal to your tender feelings.

Image

Image to your mind, all of us returning to, and meeting with our aged and honored father (whose life is bound up in the life of Benjamin), when lo, we appear before him, and he sees him not with us, the shock would be too great for his infirm body to sustain. He would not live to ask us the reason, but certain, sudden death would instantly seize him; and, as for me, think, O think, I beseech you, my lord, what poignant distress, what pungent grief, I must fall under, who, relying on your goodness, pledged myself for his safe return, and was therefore the sole cause of his tender father's parting with him. I therefore beseech my lord to accept the proposal I now make. For my dear father's, for my beloved Benjamin's, and for my own sake, "I pray thee, let thy servant abide, instead of the lad, a bond-servant to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren. For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me? lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come upon my father." The very thought is racking: the sight must prove fatal. I had rather endure the hardest bondage in Egypt, than see it. Accept me, I pray thee, and let my dear brother go free. What effect this moving address had upon Joseph, the next chapter informs us. The Lord help us now to make improvement of this!

Did Joseph order the cup to be put into the possession of Benjamin, who was nearest and dearest to him of all his brethren, to put him in apparent danger, to see how his brethren stood affected to him, and to try how they would behave to him under such circumstances, and that he might have a reason for retaining Benjamin with him? Let then this be an established truth in our minds, that the cup of the greatest afflictions the Lord often administers to those whom he loves best; and that afflictions from the Lord are no proofs of the want of love in him. This holds true, both with respect to the most dearly beloved

Son

Son of God, and all his beloved brethren. Behold him, who was the delight of his Father's soul, and in whom he was well pleased, with the bitterest cup of his Father's wrath given him to drink. Hear him saying, with the greatest fortitude, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" John xviii. 11. But yet praying, in the greatest agony, "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me;" and adding, with the deepest humility, and most perfect resignation, "nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done," Luke xxii. 42.

Did Joseph bring the charge of theft against his beloved and innocent brother? Behold, "God made his beloved Son to be sin for us, who knew no sin." He laid upon him the iniquity of us all," Isai. lii. 6. He made Christ to suffer all that punishment which law and justice could inflict, and which was due to our sins; yet, in and under all this, there was the most perfect and consummate love dwelt in the heart of God to his only begotten Son. Here let humble faith bow to divine sovereignty: let not the cavils of proud reason be heard, nor the murmurs of daring unbelief be uttered; but let this word silence all, "IT PLEASED THE LORD to bruise him, and put him to grief," (Isa. liii. 10.) O ye redeemed, it is by this pleasure of the LORD that your sins are taken away, and that your souls live and are saved.

Again: As Joseph, by putting his brother Benjamin to apparent danger, hereby tried his brethren, to see how they stood affected, and would behave towards him under these circumstances; so God tries all the elect, beloved brethren of Christ. What, O ye professed disciples of Christ, think ye of God's beloved Son, under all that load of obloquy, shame, contempt, and ignominy, in which he appeared in the days of his flesh? Look at HIM as a condemned malefactor; see HIM despised,

spised, rejected, and set at nought: hear the cry of the multitude, Away with him, crucify him. See HIM hanging on the accursed tree, between two thieves. Hear HIM crying out, as tho' forsaken of God, as well as rejected of men: behold him bowing his head, and giving up the ghost, like any other mortal.—And what think ye, what say ye of him? Why, unless the Holy Ghost hath glorified Jesus in your sight, and to your heart, you will think no more of him than any other man, nor care any more about him than they did who crucified him. But if the loving Spirit has given you precious faith, Christ will then appear most precious, altogether lovely, infinitely glorious, and ever to be most earnestly desired; so that you will exclaim of him, “This is my beloved and my friend, my Saviour and my God, on whom my hope is placed, and from whom all my salvation cometh. O I see such grace and glory in him, that attracts my affections to him. I am never happy, I can never be easy, but when I am abiding in him, and cleaving to him with purpose of heart. To know him, is life: to enjoy him, is heaven: to look to him, is salvation; to follow him, thro' evil report and good report, is the sure way to endless glory!” Is this the language of your heart concerning him? This is tried faith, true faith, the faith of God's elect: manifestly so, because it vitally unites the heart and affections to God's chosen Servant, his beloved Son. And while Christ is thus glorified to you, and you are thus glorifying Christ, praise the Lord the Spirit for his discriminating grace, in giving you this precious faith, whereby you know and enjoy the Father's love in Christ, and full, perfect, and everlasting salvation by Christ. Let faith have its perfect work, even to live to-day, to-morrow, and to the end of time, upon the fulness of Jesus, till the curtain of time shall drop, the soul take its flight to the presence of Christ in the mansions of

glory, where faith shall be lost in sight, and changed into full fruition of him who is precious to all who believe. Lord, increase our faith in thee !

[*To be continued in our next.*]

ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.

CHAP. IX. (of BOOK II.)

[*Continued from our last.*]

28 **B**UT how incurable the corruption of the papal doctrine became in these times, is plain from three capital errors, which before were particular, but were now become universal and public. The first is, that of transubstantiation, which in the year 1215, in the fourth general Lateran council, under Innocent the third, at which there were more than 1000 prelates, whence by the Romanists it is called the twelfth œcumenical council : then it was established by an eloquent decree. This was followed by other errors : the adoration of the host, and kneeling to it. When Urban IV. was pontiff, in the year 1264, a solemn feast in honour the sacrament was instituted : the office for which was composed by Aquinas ; and the occasion, some revelations of Leodiensian silly women. Another is the most foul marketting of selling of indulgences, which though it was a little restrained by Innocent the third, yet by the occasion of the crusado expeditions, and afterwards by the jubilee instituted by Boniface the eighth, it gathered strength. The third is auricular confession, concerning which it is thus decreed in the same Lateran council : Every faithful person of each sex, as soon as they come to years of discretion, must singly and faithfully confess all their sins to their proper priest, at least once a year ; and afterwards study to undergo the penance enjoined

enjoined with all their might ; and otherwise, if living, let him or her be driven from entering the church ; and, if dead, let them want christian burial.

29. Many other monstrous opinions, besides, are enforced by the monks ; to which may be referred the portentous book called *The Eternal Gospel*, of which *Cyrillus the Carmelite*, according to some, was the author ; according to others, *John of Parma*, an Italian monk, and general of the order of the *Minor Friars* ; formed from the dreams of *Joachami the abbot*, and *Cyrillus the monk* ; in which is babbled forth, That this gospel exceeds the *Old and New Testament* : that the gospel of the *Spirit*, which is much more perfect, succeeds the gospel of *Christ*, from the year 1260 : that only the barefooted friars could now instruct men in spiritual and eternal things, &c. *John Valdo* strenuously opposed it, with whom many others joined in the opposition ; but the affair being brought before the pope, he not only condemned the gospel itself, but also the doctrine of its antagonists, and *Valdo's doctrine*, that the invidiousness of the fact should not wholly be laid on the monks.

30. And how should any thing remain sound in doctrine, when the whole form of the *Roman church*, from being corrupt, became daily more corrupt, through their means that governed it ? At the first appearance of *Waldus*, in the year 1159, *Alexander the third* filled the papal chair ; who reduced the emperor *Frederic the first* to such submission, that, meeting the pope at the entrance of the great church of *St. Mark at Venice*, he prostrated himself on the ground, and, laying aside his robe, craved pardon for what had passed, that he might receive the kiss of peace. It is added (which nevertheless is controverted by others), that the pope set his foot upon the neck of *Cæsar*, who lay prostrate at his feet, saying, “ It is written, Thou shalt tread upon the asp and the basilisk, and shalt trample upon the lion and the dragon.”

dragon." This man shewed an insolence resembling it, when he gave the command of the Adriatic sea as a token of gratitude to the senate of Venice; and acted against Henry the second, king of England, in the cause of Thomas Becket, archbishop of Canterbury, who seditiously opposed the king, to such a degree, that he excommunicated the king and all the kingdom for the death of Thomas by the soldiers, without the king's knowledge. He forced him to undergo a particular penance; but in the year 1173 made Thomas a saint, at the same time making a law, that such-like canonizations should depend on the will of the pope. Under him the third Lateran council, by the Romanists called the eleventh general one, was held by 300 bishops, against the antipopes and the Albigenses. His successors, in the year 1181 Lucius the third, and in 1185 Urban the third, thro' disdain and hatred, rose up to disturb all the affairs of the emperor.

31. Gregory the eighth being in the chair in 1187, and Clement the third in 1188, was undertaken the third expedition against Palestine; when Saladinus the sultan of Egypt, in the foregoing year, by the dissensions of the christians after the death of Baldwin the fifth, making use of the opportunity about the succession to his own advantage, expelled them out of Palestine, and possessed himself of Jerusalem. The conductor of this war was Frederic the first, the emperor, with the kings of France, England, and Sicily; and there were apparent hopes that Frederic would restore the affairs of the christians; had he not been suffocated, in the midst of his victories, in the Cydnus, a river of Cilicia, in the year 1190; and if the other kings, who staid too long in Sicily, had been there in due time.

32. Coelestinus III. being pope from the year 1191, sporting with his thunders against the emperor and the kings of France and Galicia; and offering a crown, placed

placed between his feet, to Henry the 6th, who lay prostrate before him ; but afterwards being placed on his head, he again struck it off with his foot, so as it fell on the ground, that Henry might be mindful of his imminent fortune, if he should, by the example of his father Frederic, presume to bite at the pope's bridle.

33. The following 13th age, Innocent the third, who was pope from the year 1198, opened. Another Hildebrand, who promoted another expedition against Palestine. Its general was Baldwinus earl of Flanders, the Venetians coming into the alliance. But it ended in the taking of Constantinople ; for the Greeks acting perfidiously, the Franks unexpectedly seized the Greek empire to themselves, Baldwin, in the year 1204, being proclaimed emperor of the east ; so all the remains of them which had fled into Constantinople from Syria, and all Palestine, were pillaged, and dispersed thro' the west. But the empire of the Greeks remained in the power of the Franks, to the year 1261 ; in which Michael Palæologus Comnenus, by treachery, obtained it again to himself. About the year 1213, by the delusion of the devil, boys of different ages and conditions, signed with the cross, affirmed, that they were divinely commanded to go to Jerusalem. Women, and many young people, joined them in this expedition ; so that a great multitude of both sexes were collected together ; part of which perished in the woods and deserts, and part of them miserably died by famine and other calamities. The same most insolent pope dashed in pieces the western empire with his factions. First, he promoted Otto the fourth to the empire, in opposition to Philip the Swede, and again opposed to him Frederic the younger. He not only excommunicated John king of England, because he would not suffer cardinal Langton to be obtruded on him to the archbishoprick of Canterbury, but also gave his kingdom away to Lewis the heir

heir of France ; till John, being broken, declared the kingdom to be tributary to the see of Rome : but afterwards having received from the king a larger sum of money, he anathematized those who a little before had executed his commands against the king. Under him, divers new orders sprung up ; amongst which, the Preachers or Dominicans were most eminent. The author was Dominic Guzman, born about the year 1170, not without the presages of a burning torch, by which he might set the whole world on fire. And the Franciscans, from Franciscus Assisius an Italian ; of whom they impudently lie, amongst other marks of his sanctity, that he received the same wounds by a seraphim in his hands, feet, and side, that Christ received on the cross. Between these two orders, a perpetual dissension and emulation prevailed. To Dominic is ascribed the institution of rosaries, which are called Pater-noster. From the school of Franciscus proceeded the order of the S. S. Trinity for the redemption of captives, which was confirmed by pope Innocent in 1198. The Augustinian Eremites also then arose, the author one William, a Parisian scholar ; to which was prescribed the rule of the Pseudo-Augustine by Innocent the third, and the following popes.

[*To be continued.*]

The CHURCH CATECHISM enlarged, from the Church herself : or, Several of her ARTICLES thrown into Question and Answer.

ARTICLE XVII. *continued from page 444.*

PERhaps some may ask, What is a fatalist ? and how does he differ from a predestinarian ? A fatalist, I take to be one, who holds that God hath decreed the sal-
vation

vation of the elect, and damnation of the reprobate, in such wise as to say, 'It is vain for any person to concern himself about salvation; for if the decree be in his favour, he shall, without all peradventure, be saved; but if against him, he must inevitably be lost; and therefore denieth that God beareth a good will to all men, not desiring the death of a sinner. A predestinarian, in the analogy of scripture, is one that holds the absolute decree with regard to the salvation of men, irrespective of good or ill in them, according to Rom. ix. 11. that God may have the sovereign, unrivalled glory of the gracious work; yet, notwithstanding, in acquiescence to the unfathomable mystery * of the divine counsels, he holds, that we are justly accountable, as probationers, for the general strivings of the Spirit under ordinances, providences, and the universal offer of mercy, founded on God's good-will to all men, in that he desireth not the death of a sinner, which, as they are gracious means of bringing sinners to Christ, so will they leave those, who are finally obstinate and hardened, without excuse.

That, notwithstanding these seeming contradictions, predestination is absolute, appears evident from that objection raised against it, Rom. ix. 19. "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault, for who hath resisted his will?" hereby owning, that this objection would naturally arise from the obvious arguings of human reason, but which would have no plausibility to support it, if predestination were not absolute. Nor does the apostle go about to prove, that the objector had not really reason on his side, according to its present apprehension. Neither attempteth he at all logically to

* This may be represented by the appearance of a wheel in the middle of a wheel, in Ezekiel's vision of the mysterious ways of providence, chap. i. 16. an emblem of intricacy, perplexity, and unaccountableness; but, though one wheel may seem to turn contrary to another, both move to the same place: all God's purposes move in righteous and harmonious conjunction to the same just and glorious end.

shew,

shew, farther than by the right of the divine sovereignty, * that this doctrine is nevertheless consistent with God's justice. On this argument of the divine sovereignty, he silences the objection with a "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" ver. 20. that is, this doctrine stands in the word of God; and what man dare then deny the truth or righteousness of it? Though reason may fancy predestination to be repugnant to God's justice, as the apostle signifies it will, in the 14th verse also; yet he there strongly assures us, that reason itself is mistaken: "What shall we say then," says he (meaning as to the equity of this doctrine) "is there unrighteousness with God?" Is there indeed that unrighteousness with God, which we are apt to imagine must necessarily follow upon the doctrine of predestination? To which he answers, "God forbid!" for it is impossible that the divine decrees should be repugnant to any of the divine attributes. But because this doctrine seems to charge God with unrighteousness, doth the apostle proceed to prove, that no such doctrine exists? Instead of this, he proceeds more strenuously, if possible, than before, to establish the reality and sovereignty of it, till he again brings in the objector opposing him as abovesaid, ver. 19. But then this, instead of checking the assurance which he had of the validity of his argument, does only, as it were, whet and stimulate him to ratify, exemplify, and confirm it more and more. Where now are those Arians and Socinians, that will believe nothing in religion but what they can comprehend? Where are our Arminian free-willers? Let them join here their brother the objector, in confronting the apostle,

* However, it is to be noted, that even the vessels of wrath, ver. 22. are endured with much long-suffering; by which it appears, that they are probationers, and are not lost for want of God's good-will to save, and consequently that there is no fatality in the case.

and try whether God's ambassador, with his credentials from heaven, be not too hard for them.

If we consider the omniscience and immutability of God, the rationality and certainty of predestination will appear so evident, that, as it hath been proved (p. 14th of last volume) we shall see an inconsistency in believing a God, if it be denied : for it is a self-evident truth, that nothing can be infallibly foreknown, that is not infallibly predetermined : consequently God's foreknowledge and omniscience must fall to the ground, if there be no predestination. God, then, hath decreed all things ; notwithstanding (as hath been before proved) he hath decreed sin only permissively, or in a way of permission, whilst all the fault or blame of it lies at the door of man's free-will ; and thus, theologically, the divine justice is manifestly vindicated on that account. But if we take a step farther, and logically inquire how the fault of sin justly lieth to the charge of man's free-will, whilst God hath predetermined the salvation of mankind, irrespective of good or evil, according to Rom. ix. 11. 18. ; here, I apprehend, we lose the bottom, and are constrained to cry out, " O the depth ! " 'Tis true, we may most justly and rationally argue, with the apostle, that God hath certainly a right to do what he will with his own, as the potter with the clay ; and well may we say with Eli at all times, " It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good," without entertaining the least shadow of fear that he will do us wrong ; for, according to Abraham, " shall not the Judge of all the earth do right ? " It is utterly, it is infinitely impossible he should do otherwise. Notwithstanding, I apprehend the apostle does not here attempt logically to solve all the difficulty wherewith this doctrine is attended, but only to put a stop to our audacious objections by the authority and sovereignty of an infinitely just, wise, and gracious God, with whom we have no more any right to

find fault, than it is impossible for him to do us injustice. But if the apostle waves a direct logical answer to the grand objection against the seeming injustice of this doctrine, by still resolving all into the right of the divine sovereignty, and that when urged home (though indeed by himself) to give one, much more have we reason to lay aside the fruitless task. "What can a man do, says Solomon, that cometh after the king?" meaning, to discover whether there is something more than vanity in the world, or not, which this king could not find. With like reason may it be said, What can we do, who come after the apostle, to search out the logical equity of this doctrine, more than he could? It is not our business, then, I think, logically to demonstrate the equity in itself *, farther than the apostle did, but chiefly to set forth the privileges and advantages of it. If it is asked, what these privileges are; I answer, that predestination, or, which is the same, the everlasting love of God, is the only moving cause of our salvation, and therefore, as was shewn before, one of the greatest bulwarks of free grace, or of securing the glory of salvation to God alone. Moreover, it is full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to godly persons, as being the blessed means, under grace, of establishing and confirming their faith of eternal salvation to be enjoyed by Christ, as well as because it doth fervently kindle their love towards God, according to the article.

Though the gracious offer of salvation to all men in a strict sense, and the choice, nevertheless, of some only in particular, be not reconcileable by the comprehension

* I say, in itself; but, if considered in connection with the probatory strivings of the Spirit, the general promises of a long-suffering God, and his declarative good will to all, in that he desireth not the death of a sinner; we shall, I think, find ourselves somewhat in the dawn of that bright day, wherein we shall be enabled (notwithstanding absolute predestination) to sing, with the fullest understanding, the song of Moses and the Lamb, "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints!"

of human reason at present ; yet free grace and election, or predestination, are not only reconcilable, but inseparable, and that by the clearest dictates of the present light of reason and common sense. For if I have any, the least hand in the choice of myself to salvation, then grace is not free, but absurdly conditional, suspended on that least thing, whatever it be, as the moving cause of my salvation : and therefore, No election, no free grace. Again, *vice versa*, if grace be free or unconditional, suspended on no moving cause or condition by way of merit or qualification in ourselves, it can stand only in election, for there will remain no other moving cause of salvation. A material or formal cause there is besides, viz. the righteousness of Christ. An instrumental cause there is also, viz. faith, the gift of God ; but a moving cause there must be in all the doings both of God and man ; and therefore, if free grace is a scripture doctrine, election is so too. Hence then will arise this self-evident maxim : ‘ A man that holds free-grace, must either virtually or professedly maintain predestination :’ or, to the same purpose, free grace and election, in reality, ever stand or fall together.

To conclude, that God should offer salvation generally to all, that he should will all men to be saved, that is, have a good will towards all men, without respect of persons, not desiring the death of a sinner, and yet that he should have an everlasting, distinguishing love to some in particular, we must confess, is a hidden mystery, and seeming contrariety, inexplicable by us.—That we are accountable beings, and must be judged according to our works : that such persons as have heard the gospel, and reject it, will have a heavier doom than they who have never had an opportunity to hear it ; and yet that God should have the glory of all, as working all our works in us, Isa. xxvi. 12. yea, as working in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure, Phil. ii. 13.

without whose grace in Christ Jesus we can do nothing, any more than a branch cut off the tree can bear fruit, John xv. 5. ; this also is a seeming contrariety, and another of the deep things of God, that is utterly unfathomable by human reason at present.—That the dead in trespasses and sins should be commanded to arise, or, as it is in the parable, that dry bones, exceeding dry, should be preached unto, and accountable too if they do not hear and live ; this is also another seeming contrariety, which the keenest human discernment cannot reconcile. Now what have we to do in these cases ? Are we to attempt the fathoming these divine mysteries, to reconcile these seeming contrarieties ? Nay, verily, this would be impossible and vain, because they are some of those secret things which belong to God. But what use are we then to make of them ? Why, we are to take the doctrines singly, and apply them severally, as occasion requires, to our consciences. Thus the universal promises will comfort those that are pining in their sin without hope, Ezek. xxxiii. 10.

If God loves with an everlasting love, this may teach us not to depend on any thing we have done or can do ourselves, but to look to that love, and depend on that mercy, purposed from everlasting.—If we are accountable for what we do and hear, this may warn us not to do and hear in an unbecoming manner.—If God worketh all our works in us, both with respect to willing and doing, of his good pleasure ; this may teach us to depend on Christ wholly for our sanctification, by the blessed means of the Spirit's application.—If we, dead sinners, dry bones, are commanded to rise from the dead, and live to God, and are accountable too if we do not arise and live, then it is our duty, and we must with all care endeavour to obey the call ; but, at the same time, look intirely to Christ, through whom alone light and life are promised. Thus still to take the pro-

mises as they lie, applying to ourselves that strength and comfort which they are intended severally to convey ; in every case doing with all our might implicitly, as we are commanded, without regard to the seeming contrarieties which appear connected either with the promises or precepts ; and observing, that the means and the end can never be separated ; this is the only way to avoid that curiousness and carnality so justly censured in the seventeenth article.

[*To be continued in our next.*]

ON RELIGIOUS ZEAL.

[*Continued from page 460.*]

A Becoming concern for the interest of Christ, and one another's spiritual prosperity, will incline christians to watch over each other in love. "Am I my brother's keeper?" is at best the language of a cool indifference, and too often of a shameful contrapt. In one sense, indeed, we cannot either secure others or ourselves : he that keepeth us, is the Lord ; nevertheless we are appointed, under God, to instruct, warn, encourage, quicken, and edify one another. The apostle Paul lamented the want of a spirit for this, in his day—in his epistle to the Philippians (ch. ii. ver. 20.) "I have no man like-minded (i. e. with Timothy), who will naturally care for your state:" and he accounted for it on principles that may justly humble and alarm all to whom his words are applicable, "for all seek their own things, not the things that are Jesus Christ's." That selfish, worldly spirit proves like so much cold water thrown upon the sacred flame of love and zeal. The Lord subdue it within us, and incline us to feel with and for one another, as becometh brethren ! To say and do every thing

thing we can in the spirit of love ; to correct what is amiss, to supply what is wanting, to strengthen what is weak, to revive what is languishing, and to cherish and improve every thing amiable and useful in all around us. Moreover, the zeal we are recommending is to be manifested in a resolute and active concurrence in every proper measure for suppressing iniquity, and promoting real religion in the world. Though we talk ever so often, or in the strongest terms, of the propriety and expediency of this, and the other scheme, we have very little zeal for God, if we are not willing to take an active part in them ourselves ; that would make us willing to employ hand and foot, head and tongue and purse in the service ; to exert every power, employ all the influence, and improve every talent that God has given us, in this good work.

It becomes us, not only to pray for the reformation of sinners, but to do all we can to effect it ; by private instructions, cautions, and admonitions ; and, where they avail nothing, by open rebuke ; and even, if necessary, by exemplary punishments. “ Thou shalt not hate thy brother : thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him,” Lev. xix. 17. Associations formed by men of wisdom and piety, for the reformation of manners, have in many places done great good ; and would do more, were they countenanced and supported, as they ought to be, by persons of rank and influence. It is very true, that nothing of this kind can be undertaken without trouble, nor pursued to purpose without submitting to some expence both of time and property. But a becoming zeal for the cause of God and religion in the world, and for the best interests of men, will teach a christian to say, with Paul, of these and still severer trials, “ None of these things move me,” nor, assisted by divine grace, shall ever move me from my purpose and pursuit. May that spirit, my reader,
glow

glow within thee ! Say not, you want time and abilities for the service. Employ some of those hours which others (shall I say, which you ?) spend in pleasurable amusements, in vain company, and useless trifling visits and conversation, in concerting, with serious, pious friends, measures for carrying on this great design. Lay out, in this service, some of that money which would otherwise be spent in entertainments, or in gay ornaments of dress and furniture. A blessing even for this life is promised to such zealous efforts in the cause of religion. " Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase : so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine," Prov. iii. 9, 10. I may add, if men of learning would employ less time and pains in curious speculations, or works of mere learning and ingenuity, and more in their best efforts for snatching sinners as brands out of the burning, and in shewing them the way of salvation, their labours would be of infinitely more avail both to others and themselves.

I will close these directions with reminding myself and others of that zeal which has enabled our forefathers to meet death itself in this glorious cause. And may we never forget that the spirit and courage, with which they have endured the most horrible and agonizing tortures, has, in many instances, done more to serve the interest of their Redeemer, than all the laborious services of their whole lives. A fact which gave rise to the well-known saying amongst protestants : " The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church." Hear thou then, my reader ; hear and obey, Oh my soul ! the word of thy exalted Lord, " Be thou faithful to death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

But I must not forget, that, in the passage mentioned at the beginning of these remarks, the apostle assures, it is good to be *always* thus zealously affected : i. e. at all times,

times, and in all circumstances. The sentiment may be illustrated, by observing,

1. It is good to be so *in all the periods of life*. The young, I hope, will remember it. This zeal becomes them; and the vigour of nature, at that period, enables them to exert it with advantage, if the heart be but in the work. Nor can they, who are in the midst of their days, exert their strength, employ their judgment, or use their influence, in a cause of equal moment. The aged will do well to consider how much the rising generation need their instructions and example. It is greatly to be lamented when aged christians sink into indolence, turn their zeal from the interest of religion to worldly gain, or exercise it in a churlish or peevish manner. It is said of the apostle John, that when old-age had laid him aside from public service in active life, he would frequently send for a number of young converts around him; and though he was no longer able to address them in any long-continued discourse, would say to them, as long as he could speak, "My little children, love one another." It is peculiarly amiable and honourable, when the same christian carries this same spirit through the several stages of youth and manhood, to old-age; and, instead of making former exertions of zeal an excuse for the neglect of them then, considers them as a motive to persevere in them, in order to preserve thro' life that consistency of character which will be an honour and a comfort to him in his last moments. Be it farther remarked,

2. It is equally good to preserve this spirit in all the various circumstances of life. Let not the rich imagine activity in the cause of Christ and religion below them: they ought to be leaders in it. The more they enjoy, and the longer they have enjoyed it, the greater their obligations to the returns of gratitude. May I drop a hint likewise to those, whose circumstances are improving!

It has been observed of some, that they lost their zeal for God as fast as they got their money. They were steady, active, useful christians, when they had but little of the world ; and ready to appear for Christ, and his cause, upon every occasion : but when their riches increased, they grew indolent and lukewarm, and indeed lost their first love. If this admonition falls into the hand of any one to whom it is applicable, I pray God it may humble and quicken him. But many experience, what is called, a reverse of fortune, and rather sink than rise in the world, or (as is the case with the greater part of the Redeemer's followers) never knew what it was to abound. Let them, however, not conclude either that they are excused from the exertions of zeal, or that it would be in vain farther to attempt any thing. If they cannot serve the cause of Christ by their purses, there are many other ways in which they may do it, and that to better purpose than, perhaps, the richest of their neighbours. The fervent piety, consistent purity, and amiable contentment and thankfulness of many poor disciples, render them high ornaments and great blessings to the Redeemer's interest.

But, besides recommending this zeal in the different circumstances of worldly prosperity and adversity, I would likewise exhort my brethren to every possible exertion of it both in health and in affliction. The season of health is the time for active service ; and he that sleeps away that harvest in indolence and insensibility, is a son that causeth shame. While a good God is continuing the powers of exertion, enjoyment, and usefulness, let us up and be doing : nor, when the hand of God is upon us, should we indulge a spirit of dejection, as if nothing more for his honour and interest was to be attempted then. Many a christian has manifested a very warm and lively concern for the cause of God and a Redeemer, on a sick bed ; and by his prayers, instruc-

tions, and behaviour, has done more to serve it there, than in all the former years of his health and prosperity.

I shall only add here, that this spirit is equally becoming in every state of the church. It is never so peaceful and prosperous, as to render the best endeavours of its members unseasonable and needless; nor should they ever look upon it with dejection and despondency, as sunk below recovery, even in its lowest and weakest state. Though ever so weak and decayed, the Lord can revive it: he has given gracious assurances of his constant attention to his church, and delight in it; and of the notice he takes of every expression of regard for it in his faithful servants. The lower his cause is in this or the other situation, the louder our call to exert ourselves to the utmost in its behalf there. And the message sent to the ancient Israelites, who were discouraged at the mean appearance which the second temple made in comparison of the former, may properly be recollected here, both to give spirit to our endeavours, and to encourage our hope of success: "Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do you see it now? Is it not in your eyes, in comparison of it, as nothing? Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the Lord, and be strong, O Joshua son of Josedech the high-priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the Lord, and work, for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts: my Spirit remaineth among you, fear ye not," Haggai ii. 3. 5.

EUSEBES.

N. B. *I had intended concluding the subject in this number; but am obliged to postpone the motives, to be urged in recommendation of this zeal, to another month.*

To the Editors of the GOSPEL MAGAZINE.

GENTLEMEN,

The inclosed letter providentially happened to fall into my hands; it having lain in obscurity so long, being lost by the worthy author.—I thought I would take the pleasure to transcribe it, and transmit it to the Editors of the Gospel Magazine, hoping to see it inserted there, in order to keep so valuable a letter from perishing.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your constant reader and humble servant,

Sept. 12. 1778.

C. T.

Dear C——,

PART of our conversation, contrary to custom, gave me great uneasiness; and though I determined to write to you thereon, I could not find time till now. It is of the utmost concern to us, to have *faith* in the ever-blessed JESUS, *the Lamb of God*; for, “by *faith* ye are saved.” A false faith is no faith (in essentials, I mean): it is pride, I fear; that is, weakness; “to be wise above what is written.” But what is it to be wise contrary to what is written? Surely this wisdom is the greatest folly; if our salvation depends on our having a true faith; and if the scriptures, rightly understood, are a means of obtaining that faith, for faith comes by hearing; then let us consider a little, what tendency the objection *you offered* (for I hope it is not *your* objection, even by approbation) will have; I think it was, That the great God, being infinitely wise, and seeing every thing before him, so that with him there can be no such thing as future, is not to be altered from his eternal will and purpose by any thing we can say or do. This is very pretty: and

there is not a good heathen in the world, but would be honoured for having such perfect ideas, such notions of perfection in the Deity ! but surely 'tis dishonour to a christian, to be wise contrary to what is written.— However, I will first consider the tendency of such an argument, and then endeavour to confute it.

If the Almighty is not to be deprecated because he is not to be moved by us, then prayers, praises, reading and hearing the word, using the sacraments, yea the scriptures themselves, are all useless things ; for God will do what is in his eternal purpose, let his creatures do what they will ; pray or not pray, 'tis all one ; so religion or no religion, 'tis all one : nay, a Saviour, in the office of an intercessor, is unnecessary ; for God will do what he intends, &c. This is the philosophy, the wisdom, the religion, of the present age of deists, and therefore I am sure it is not yours. But, my dear friend, why do you even stop to look at it ? Could an atheist, reasoning from our belief of perfection in the Deity, advance a more ensnaring argument to laugh us out of our religion ? Is not this something like the fine philosophy and speculations of the Greeks, in the time of the apostles, whose learning blinded their eyes, and who were too wise to be saved ? Is not this to make the religion of a Saviour, of JESUS, seem as much *foolishness* to us, as to the Greeks ? And now we have seen the tendency of this objection, we are sure where it comes from ; not from above, but from the father of lyes. But you and I, who read the scriptures, and believe them, surely can be at no loss to know this objection to be of no weight ? Is there scarce a page from Genesis to Revelations, but there are examples upon examples, precepts upon precepts, as well of preaching as of praying ? But beware of the consequence of such an argument : I think you agreed that it was right for a man to pray for himself, but it was foolish for him to pray for others. Now I don't

see any distinction in the objection, but that a man would be rather led to say, If God has a mind to save me, he will save me: if to damn me, he will damn me, notwithstanding any thing I can say. But does not God say in the case of Abimelech, Let my servant Abraham pray for thee, and I will accept him? Did not Abraham pray for the people of Sodom and Gomorrah? Did not God say to Job's friends, he would not hear them for themselves, but he would hear his servant Job pray for them? Did not our Saviour pray for his murderers on the cross, Father, forgive them, &c.? Did not Stephen pray for the persons who were stoning him? Did not Paul (throughout all his epistles you may see it) pray for particular persons, families, and churches?—Did not Christ, when on earth, *as man*, pray for his disciples? Did he not tell Peter, he had prayed for him? Did he not give us a form of prayer, wherein we pray one for another, even for all mankind? Are we not directed to pray for the princes under whom we live, that the blessing of peace may follow? In short, must I transcribe the whole scriptures? Therefore we may, as christians, safely conclude, as well from examples as precepts, that, *of duty*, we ought to pray for one another as well as for ourselves. But, my dear friend, who hath told us, whether God hath changed, altered, or varied, from his eternal purpose, by reason of our prayers? Have we, as dependent creatures, any thing more to do, than, without reasoning, to do as we are bid? When we know we are bid to pray, it is sufficient for us; it becomes then *our duty* to pray; and we are to leave and trust the rest with God, who loves us, and will do what is best for us. But how can we fathom Wisdom itself? Oh! the presumption of creatures, to pretend to scan, to measure, to comprehend that Power which gave them existence! How do we know but Wisdom has, in his most comprehensive plan of man's creation and redemption,

taken

taken in the whole of our prayers, deprecations, and intercessions ; for since there is no time with God, since *all* is present before him ; eternity, to us that amazing thing, is spread open before him ; how can we say that every incident of our little, little lives, is not known to him, all our prayers, &c. before him ever present and comprehended from all eternity in his great plan ? and if so, if I have been able to explain what I think I conceive, what becomes of this deistical objection, flowing from an hard heart of unbelief ; from *them*, denying the scriptures ? I know you don't espouse this objection : but, for the sake of your precious soul (which our Maker knew to be of that value, that he became man, to save it from eternal death), don't look at it, don't stop to listen to it ; 'tis dangerous playing on the brink of a well ; 'tis dangerous to go out of this world doubting ; 'tis damnable to be an infidel ; therefore fear the consequences of being drawn off from a *crucified SAVIOUR*, to regard the objections of unbelief.

This sin of unbelief, I think, we may resolve all other sins into, of men or angels. In respect to angels, it is the denying the Godhead of the eternal *Word* (belief, when we apply it to the Deity, includes obedience to him). In respect to men, it is the denying the mystical, personal union in the SAVIOUR, God-Man, *Jesus Christ* the Son of GOD, the *Word*, the almighty *Λόγος*, assuming flesh, *Jesus* of Nazareth, who died on the cross,—to be GOD,—GOD who created us : he that believes that Jesus is the Son of God (the Son of GOD, is GOD), shall be saved ; the alternative you know. Isaiah says, “ To us a child is born, a Son is given—the mighty God, &c.—Immanuel, i. e. God with us.” But certainly you are sensible enough of the number of texts which declare his Godhead.

But here our wise and learned reasoners come in, and ask how this can be ; that is, How can this be, according
to

to my reason? Poor creature! dost think that the wisdom of that God, who created thee, is not greater than thy reason? And dost disbelieve it, because thou canst not understand it? Then tell me upon what principles dost thou believe that thou hast a soul? and that it is united to thy body? Since thou, by thy reason, canst not tell any thing of thy soul, nor of the manner of its union: but as it is this sin of unbelief, for which the devils are condemned, 'tis no wonder that they should endeavour to involve us all in the same sin. Who could believe that these sweet and comfortable tidings, this good news, this *gospel*, which tells sinners (who knew not how to save themselves), of a SAVIOUR, and which has been preached for 1700 years, should be now doubted? Why are people so averse to being saved, but from the craft of that evil one, whose cause, whose tenets, we espouse, in opposition to him that made us, to that God who redeemed us?—Let us not therefore be wise in our own conceit, high-minded; but humble, docile, and willing to be taught of God, that Fountain of wisdom.

I am obliged to contract greatly the proofs of this latter part of my letter, the divinity of our SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, the carpenter's son,—that scoff of the unbeliever, and my glory and joy; but that my good friend will forgive the liberty I have taken. And may the God of wisdom and our salvation, that Lamb of God, Jesus the angel of the everlasting covenant, who left the bosom of his Father, and came down from heaven, teach us all, by his eternal Spirit, those things which belong to our everlasting peace! *DN.*

I am, dear C.

Aug. 5. 1752.

Yours, &c.

A. M.

Am

AN ANSWER to a Query.

Dear Madam,

To your important question, "How does true grace, or real faith in the heart, discover itself under a sense of fresh-contracted guilt?" please to accept the following answer from

Your affectionate friend and sincere servant,

E P H R O N.

SIN is the object of hatred to a new-born soul. Guilt, as the consequence of sin, is a sore burden and grievous distress to the awakened conscience. How does true faith manifest itself here? By sorrow for sin? Doubtless. By mourning and bewailing the cause? Certainly. By the soul humbling itself before God? Unquestionably. By confession of sin to God? Surely. But then, after all its sorrow, mourning, humility, and confession, the soul cannot rest in, or rely at all, on either or all of these, for relief and peace. No, here more especially and peculiarly, true grace, or real faith, discovers itself, by looking and applying to the blood, the precious blood of the Lamb of God, which was shed to atone for sin, and which alone can cleanse from the guilt of ALL sin. True faith will have to do with that, and with nothing else. And as faith pleads that, applies for that, and thus honors that blood alone, the Holy Spirit, the glorifier of Christ, will honor that soul, by applying the virtue and efficacy of the blood of the Son of God to his conscience, both for healing, comforting, and cleansing.

Hence you plainly see, these three things are absolutely necessary for obtaining this. 1. The word of truth, where-
in the one atonement of the Son of God for sin is held
forth. 2. The grace of faith, which receives, believes,
and

and rests upon the divine testimony. And tho' the soul cannot of itself apply the blood of Christ to its own conscience for healing and comforting; nor can faith itself, by its own power and operation, effect this; yet the sensible sinner both can and does apply to a throne of grace, to have this application effected by the power of the Spirit, in believing; and he will not, cannot rest, till God does fill his soul with all joy and peace in believing; and make it abound in hope, by the power of the Holy Ghost. Thus you see the full meaning of that assertion, "if we confess our sins, [laying the hand of faith upon Jesus, and relying on the great and full atonement which he has made for sin] God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins [that is, to apply that sense of pardon to our consciences, which the blood-shedding of his Son hath obtained for us; and God is faithful to his covenant engagements and covenant promises to do this; and he is just in doing this, because his justice is fully satisfied by the atoning sacrifice of our surety] and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" [to purge away and remove all guilt and wrath and terror from our consciences, as though we had never sinned.] Hence you see, you will have constant need to have recourse to the word of God, the blood of God, and the Spirit of God, so long as you remain a sinner upon the earth.

O&A. 2, 1778.

Salvation by GRACE alone.

LETTER X.

My dear friend,

HOW strange, how pitiable our case, that our ambition and pride should so advance, in matters where they are most conspicuous and most odious, even in the things of our God! What are *we*, whose know-

ledge, when most enlarged, is not equal to the smallest ray of light, compared with that great luminary the sun; that we should ever rashly talk of our Maker! Here the profoundest humility becomes our thoughts, and the greatest reverence our tongues and pens! But alas! what evil is not in free-will! What dishonour is not done to God thereby!

“The understanding of the Lord is *infinite*. There “is *no searching* of his understanding. He worketh *all things* after the counsel of his own will.” These positive assertions of his own mouth must be denied or believed. If believed, where is any room for the boast of human wisdom, either in the concerns of providence or grace? But if denied, for man to share in praise, where is the glory of God? Is it rational to suppose, that God has left any event, whether greater or less, in nature and moment, to the foolish wisdom or captious will of man? Shall an infinite Being rely on a poor, capricious worm? May humbling grace prevent you from the infection of such a thought! The first opening of self, in this matter, “is like the letting out of waters.”

As the LORD’s *understanding* is infinite, he must perfectly *know* every real and possible existence, with every possible occurrence attending them, from eternity.

“With thee, there’s nothing *old* appears;

“Great God, there’s nothing *new*.”

What appears, to us, the greatest contingency imaginable, is not only known to him, but so governed and over-ruled by him, as to accomplish, thereby, his own design. And he will be glorified both by our daring ignorance, and our humble knowledge. He has declared his *wisdom* in the contrivance and execution both of the old and new creation. And free-will shines and appears

no

no more in the latter, than the former. I grant, the thought is humbling; but 'tis better to acknowledge man's weakness and wickedness, than dishonour God. May grace be given us, that we may be cheerfully disposed to receive every favour at his hand, as the *freest gift!*

A very imperfect view of divine wisdom, in the gospel scheme of salvation, will enlarge our minds, and shew us where is the place of free-will. In this, he has abounded towards us in *all* wisdom and prudence. Let us survey the gracious settlements of covenant mercies.—The person of the Mediator, his work, his redeemed, their privileges and his glory, all admirably testify the fulness of eternal wisdom. And how beautifully does it shine forth, in the stable security both of the perfections of God and the final salvation of every chosen vessel! 'Tis a covenant *order'd*, in all things, by consummate knowledge and wisdom, and made permanently *sure*, against all the attacks of open and secret foes. This counsel of God shall stand, and all its articles shall be fulfilled, whether we believe or disbelieve. Let free-will step forth here, and see if his help is needful—No such thing! All was ordered and secured long before his existence, and therefore he comes too late. Inspect the first opening of this gracious covenant to man, after the introduction of sin—Follow the footsteps of Jehovah, in the gradual disclosures of his good pleasure to a wandering rebel—Pursue the beam of growing light, by sacrificial types and heavenly prophets imparted to the world—Behold the Saviour come in the fulness of time, born of a woman, and made under the law—Observe his life! regard his death—Remember the nature and design of his present office, in the presence of his Father and ours.—Consider these things in the light of God's word, and his people's experience of faith, and see the vanity of

free will. In short, I might request your attention, while we remark the rise, progress, and preservation of the church of God in the world, from the beginning—more especially the New-Testament church-state—How it was at first erected—how it has been opposed by all the art and power of united earth and hell—and how the Lord has wisely over-ruled and ordered all for her establishment and glory—how truth has been despised, and error wished to reign—yea, in one word, how a poor sinner is caught in the net of the gospel, and brought to the celestial shore, through crouds of surrounding billows and roaring tempests; through violent attacks without, and dreadful fears within—how he is conducted safe through all, and securely lodged beyond the reach and fear of all, to sit and sing on Zion's mount for ever. In each of these, in all of these together, I might ask you, Where is free will? His voice is not heard, his name is not known, in all the path where wisdom leads—nor ever will. “I know that whatsoever God doth, it shall be ever.” He is *so wise*, that “nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doth it, that men should *fear* before him.” Well, therefore, does the wondering apostle say, “O the depth of the riches both of the *wisdom* and *knowledge* of God!” That the God of wisdom and knowledge may lead you down, and keep you low before him, for his name's sake, is the ardent desire of

Oct. 3. 1778.

Yours,

R.

To the Editors of the GOSPEL MAGAZINE.

Gentlemen,

Recollecting that one of your correspondents, in a former number, proposed a query, respecting the parable of the unjust steward, which yet remains unanswered;

I have

I have transmitted some thoughts on that passage of holy writ, communicated to me by a friend. Should they appear satisfactory upon the subject, you will oblige me in giving them a place.

I am, &c.

J. A. K.

HOW forcible is our Lord's doctrine ! " Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." Mammon is a Syriac word, signifying riches, gains, or treasures ; which are the idols of carnal hearts, in opposition to the chief good. But why are they called the mammon of unrighteousness ? Agreeable to the stile of the preceding parable, wherein the unjust steward is represented as making his lord's tenants his friends, with his Lord's goods. So when we hoard up our Lord's property, the riches of this world ; or use them only for our own private interest ; we make them the mammon of unrighteousness. In opposition hereunto,—our Lord advises us to learn, by this unjust steward, to make an infinitely better use of riches than he did : to remember we possess them only as stewards, for the purpose of doing good with them ; and accordingly to lay them out for God's glory, and the good of others : that when our heart and flesh shall fail us, they, on whom they are thus laid out, may be witnesses of our charity, and vouchers of our faith ; and we may be received, in a way of well-doing, though not for it, into everlasting habitations.—This is to make them the mammon of righteousness. See Luke xvi. 1—9.

On the Happiness of contemplating God in his Works.

Pfalm viii. 3, 4.

“When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained,— what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?”

SUCH are the grateful and exalted strains, in which the sweet singer of Israel celebrates the praises of Jehovah, on reviewing the wonders of his created and providential mercies. And surely, it well becometh creatures, who owe their existence and support in being solely to his bounty, to be much exercised in meditating upon his goodness, and adoring him for all his benefits.

“The heavens declare the glory of God,” and the abundant blessings which he showers down upon the children of men, loudly proclaim his love. But so far, alas! are we degenerated from our primæval rectitude, and so in love with our misery, that, by nature, we have neither capacity nor inclination to contemplate that supreme Source, from whence all our comforts flow: and until an intire change is wrought in our wills, understandings, and affections, we are neither awed by the power, nor melted by the loving-kindness of the Lord.

The wretchedness of mankind, in consequence of the fall; the way in which the Infinite Wisdom accomplishes his purposes of recovery, and the blessed effects produced thereby; are strikingly exemplified in the case of Bartimeus, which stands recorded Mark x. 46. and is peculiarly animating and instructive.

That never-failing Providence, which ordereth all things in heaven and on earth, placed him in the way by which Jesus was to go on his return from Jericho; and though it is probable, Bartimeus might have heard some-
thing

thing of the Messiah's fame, it is very evident that he knew not the Lord was in that part, until he inquired of those that followed him, and was told that Jesus of Nazareth passed by;—in that instant sovereign grace struck his soul with a conviction of his misery, and brought him, a poor blind, naked sinner, to Jesus; who owned the faith which his Spirit had inspired, and wrought a miracle of mercy on him.

“I have read,” says the great Mr. Hervey, “of a person being so struck with that noble luminary the sun, that he imagined himself made on purpose to contemplate its glories.” Nor is it in the least surprising, that a creature, recovered from a state of total darkness, should mistake that magnificent orb for its Creator.—But an object infinitely more glorious engaged the admiration of Bartimeus; he saw and followed, adoring that Uncreated Sun of righteousness, whose healing beams had risen upon his benighted soul.

To a mind illuminated by anointings from the eternal Spirit, each surrounding object proves a silent monitor to praise the Lord;—and who, beholding the wonders of creation, through the evangelic telescope, can forbear calling upon all around and within them to adore his holy name, who formed and upholds them by his power!

“God of all worlds, Source and Supreme of things,
From whom all life, from whom duration springs;
Intense, O let me for thy glory burn,
Nor fruitless see my days and weeks return;
Give me with wonder at thy works to glow,
To grasp thy vision, and thy truths to know;
O'er time's tempestuous sea to reach thy shore,
And live and sing where time shall be no more!”

PEARSALL.

Teach me to reflect, with gratitude, on that unbounded goodness which prevents my wants, by innumerable

merable blessings of thy providence. But, chiefly, let the superlative delight of my soul be, to adore that condescending love, which moved the Lord of glory to come down and dwell with men on earth.—In the house of my pilgrimage, be thou, O gracious Jehovah,

“ My theme, my inspiration, and my crown,
 My strength in age—my life in low estate—
 My soul’s ambition—pleasure—wealth—my world—
 My light in darkness—life in death—
 My boast in time—bliss through eternity—
 My sacrifice—my God !”—— YOUNG.

Enabled by thine all-sufficient grace, may I “ so number my days, as to apply my heart unto wisdom !” And O let the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord my strength and my Redeemer !” Give me, with humble confidence in thy love, to look forward in blest anticipation to that day, when “ the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads,” Isa. xxxv. 10. when “ they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more : neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat ; for the Lamb, that is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto fountains of living waters ; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes,” Rev. vii. 16, 17.

“ No sorrow there shall ever cloud their brow,
 No bloodless malady empale the face,
 No age drop on their hairs his silver snow,
 No nakedness their bodies does embase,
 No poverty themselves and theirs disgrace,
 No fear of death the joy of life devours,
 No unchaste sleep their precious time deflowers,
 No loss, no grief, no change, waits on their winged
 hours.”

Aug. 10. 1778.

J. A. K.

On

On the EVIDENCE and ASSURANCE of LOVE.

TO the lonely traveller, what can be more pleasing, than to be comfortably assured, that he is in the right road to his journey's end ? If doubts and suspicions arise in his mind concerning it, he will pursue every method to obtain certainty and satisfaction. It will afford no relief to his mind, to reflect, " The road I am in is good and pleasant, I cannot wish for a better ;" but the grand consideration will be, " Have I good evidence, any kind of assurance, that it leads to the place where I want to be ?"

Every christian is a traveller. He is journeying from earth to heaven ; thro' the road of life, to an eternal world. What inconceivable pleasure, what inexpressible joy must it yield him, to be assured, that he is in the way, the right way, the king's high-way to eternal bliss and glory ! Blessed be the Lord, we are not left to doubt and uncertainty here. We have an infallible directory, his word : we have an unerring teacher, his Spirit. The former, like a Mercury, directs to the way : while the latter testifies of the way, leads into it, and gives comfort in it.

Hence we hear fellow-travellers of old joyfully saying, " Hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him," 1 John iii. 19. Hereby !—we know !—we shall assure our hearts ! what bold ! what confident language is here ! Who, besides apostles, dare talk in such a high strain as this ! Verily, every one who is a partaker of the same Spirit of faith which they had, and who walks by the same rule of love which they did. For, they were sinners as well as we : they had sin dwelling in them, as we have : they stood in the same need of the blood of Christ to cleanse them

from all sin ; and the righteousness of Christ to justify them from all condemnation, as we do. And they had no other title to heaven and glory, than all christians have at this day, which is in and through Jesus Christ *only*. And we have the same truth and the same Spirit they had ; and, as believers in Christ, we have the same right in him, to the very same divine comforts and happy assurance which they enjoyed. It may then be asked, Why are not all believers in Christ favored with the same degree of assurance which they possessed ? It may be answered in general, Because they do not possess the same degree of love ; and therefore do not, cannot so comfortably know and assure their hearts, as they did. Let us dwell a little on this subject ; and, while engaged herein, let us look up to the God of light, love, peace, and comfort, for his blessing upon our souls.

We will begin with the adverb, *Hereby*. What doth this refer to ? Love : loving not in word, neither in tongue ; but in deed and in truth. Who ? *The brethren*, even all who appear to be born of the Spirit, and to be brethren of Christ, by believing in, cleaving to, and following of him. The criterion is love. The peculiar objects of this love, are those who give evidence that they know the love of God the Father, thro' believing in the name of his only begotten Son, by the teaching and influence of God the Holy Spirit. Now, detached from every other consideration but this only, that because we see, in such, somewhat that displays the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the holy Ghost, therefore can we, and do we really love them in our hearts ? If so, what then ? Why, " *HEREBY* we know that we are of the truth." O most blessed knowledge ! WE KNOW, that it is absolutely impossible for any one fallen sinner, who naturally lies in the wicked one, the father of lies, to love any one who is of the truth, i. e. who believes in, and follows

Christ.

Christ, who is THE TRUTH, as it is for a devil in hell to love an angel in heaven. WE KNOW, that we ourselves, naturally, had heart enmity against the truth, and every one who is of the truth. WE KNOW, that nothing less than being born again of the Spirit and receiving Jesus, and the truth as it is in him, could ever have subdued our enmity, and caused us to love any soul who is of the truth. But now WE KNOW, that we really do in deed and in truth love all such. For, as we love God who begat, so we love all who are begotten of him. And WE KNOW so much of the importance of this heavenly love, that it is our duty daily to strive and pray to cultivate and increase it more and more. For, WE KNOW, that if but a spark of this love dwells in us, it descended from the fire of heaven; and therefore proves our heavenly birth, that we are of the truth.

“AND SHALL ASSURE OUR HEARTS.” What means this? Our poor hearts are prone to be exercised with doubts and fears concerning our state. If we really are sincere christians, there is nothing in all the world we are so much concerned about, as obtaining some certain evidence and assurance of our interest in the salvation of Christ. Nothing will be prized by us, equal to this. The want of this makes many go on sadly, while the enemy of peace and comfort oppresseth them. Now, while we firmly believe, steadfastly look to, and rely upon, the work of Christ, as the sole cause of our justification and acceptance before God; let us examine our hearts, and see what he hath done *in us*, by his Spirit, as evidential of his love *to us*, and as an assurance of *our* interest in him. Has he bestowed upon us the precious gift of faith? If so, it will display its heavenly nature; for “faith worketh by love,” Gal. v. 6. that is, it worketh by the free, rich, boundless love of God in Christ Jesus, known and apprehended in the heart of us poor sinners. This love is the data, or given principle,

on which faith feeds and is nourished, and by which it works. And as it worketh *by* the love of God, so it works love *to* God and man, in the heart. For this is the genuine reasoning of true faith: "If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another," 1 John iv. 11. There cannot possibly be a spark of love to God, where there is no faith in Christ. Nor can faith in Christ exist in any heart, without love. Faith is the parent of love. Love is the fruit and evidence of faith.

Now then, the matter is brought to this point. He who is blest with the faith of God's elect, will love those who appear to be the elect children of God; and from hence, all such may assure, persuade, or quiet their hearts, concerning their state. For if we can sincerely say, our own conscience bearing us witness, we really do find love in our hearts towards christians, as such, because somewhat of the grace of God appears in them, and the image of Christ in some degree shines forth in their conversation and life; we verily are partakers of those dispositions and affections which naturally we are utterly destitute of, and therefore we may assure our heart, that the Sun of Righteousness has arisen upon us, and communicated of his heavenly grace and influences to us.

But, we not only thus assure our hearts, and quiet our minds, but we shall also do this, BEFORE HIM. What are we to understand by this? Verily, the crowning work of all. For we do this in the presence of that Jesus, our God and Saviour, in whose sight all things are naked and open; and this is done also with an eye to his glory. For we dare appeal to him, if we have a spark of love in us, we are wholly and solely indebted to him for it. And therefore, all self-boasting and self-confidence are totally excluded; for what hast thou, that thou didst not receive out of Christ's fulness? And if thou hast received this love from him, he intended it

for

for his glory, and thy comfort. Therefore glory in the Giver, praise him for the gift, and by it know and assure thy heart, that thou art of the truth, and that Jesus THE TRUTH dwelleth in thee, by the Spirit of love which he has given to thee. O what sweet boldness and holy confidence doth this inspire us with before God!

One word of advice to your soul and mine.

Is this knowledge and assurance the common privilege of all believers? Is it attainable by them? Can't we be happy without it? Then by all means let us most earnestly study, strive, and pray to cultivate this heavenly grace of love. For the more love, the stronger assurance of heart that we are born of God, and know God; the greater boldness before him, and the greater joy in him. If we have but one spark of divine love, may we be concerned to have it blown up into a flame: and where love flames, let us strive to keep it burning: let us take heed and beware of all things which tend to damp love; for, if love be damped, assurance will be checked. Let the fair copy of God's free, unmerited, everlasting, unchangeable love to us in Christ, revealed in the scriptures, be ever before us. Beg that faith may work; and according to that, let us think of, speak to, and act by, our brethren in Christ. Let us ever remember, love is of God. It originally grows not in nature's soil: it is an exotic, transplanted from the paradise of God, into the new-born, believing soul of man. Love is the note that all the birds of paradise should ever be singing. Then let us watch and pray against the workings of that perverse enemy to love, cursed unbelief, which makes us think we have no love; and that tho' we pray for love, yet God is slow to hear, and slack to bestow love upon us.

But let the joyful reasoning of precious faith be attended to: "If God spared not his own Son, but freely delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Rom. viii. 32. If
God

God so loved the world of ungodly, rebellious finners, as to give his only begotten Son to save them; will he, can he with-hold the gift of his love from any one who believes in Christ, and prays for love? The thought is most absurd. The objection most unreasonable. For is not the Holy Ghost as willing, freely, to shed the love of God abroad in our hearts, as the Father was to give his Son, or as Jesus was to die for us? Who will dare to think or say to the contrary? O let us not be straitned in our own bowels, for we are not straitned in God! If our hearts are filled with love, they shall be full of the joy of assurance. Let us then hear and obey the voice of our munificent Lord, ASK, AND YE SHALL RECEIVE, THAT YOUR JOY MAY BE FULL, John xvi. 24.

EPHRON.

The Layman's Reflections on LIFE and MANNERS.

"At thirty man suspects himself a fool,

"Knows it at forty, and reforms his plan;

"At fifty chides his infamous delay.

"Resolves, and re-resolves—then dies the same."

Dr. YOUNG.

A FOOL indeed! And who's to blame? None but himself. 'Tis not for want of sense, but not making a *right* use of it, that intitles him to this opprobrious and degrading appellation.

Albinus is a gentleman about 40 years of age, of fortune, character, and education; an indulgent husband, tender father, and loyal subject; esteemed by all around him for his hospitality, good sense, and benevolence; but he has, like many others, his *hobby-horse*, or predominant folly, which the more sober part of mankind would stile, in the language of scripture, *his easily besetting sin*; a *penchant* or passion for ridiculing religion, and every thing serious; never happier than in the company of those

those who turn (by the help of *false* wit, for real, sterling wit, cannot with propriety debase itself so far, as to level its forces against true piety) the important truths of christianity into derision and contempt, and treat the professors of them with buffoonery and scorn; this surely must be esteemed a capital failing, if not the height of folly and impiety,—and sufficient, in the view of sober and discerning persons, totally to eclipse whatever *moral* virtues he may be thought possess of. If the inquiry should be made, how comes this to be his disposition? I answer, The prejudice of education, and the force of parental example in the youthful part of life, co-operating with his natural temper, and inclination for gaiety and dissipation, encouraged and confirmed him in the love of pleasure, and dislike of all serious reflexion. Hence we may learn, that a man may be strict and commendable in the practice of moral obligations, while he may be despicable in the neglect of religious duties,—a *wise* fool; wise for time, and in the things of time, but a fool respecting the concerns of the soul, and an awful eternity to come: wise in the opinion of his fellow-creatures; but a fool, and the worst of fools, in the estimation of his God; from such worldly-wise men, good Lord, deliver us.

Miranda, a lady of beauty, wealth, and genteel accomplishments, about 30 years of age; a virtuous wife, an agreeable companion, and a friend to the poor. She also has her *penchant*, which is *cards*; no party so desirable to her, as an engagement to pass away the evening at a pool of quadrille, no company so pleasing as the advocates for cards; *Vauxhall*, *Ranelagh*, and the *Theatres*, have no charms for her, in comparison with this her favourite amusement*, or, as it may justly be accounted, her ruling weakness: excepting this, she is in many respects an amiable

* Any thing indulged in to excess may become a crime; but what serves to murder or destroy our precious time (given us to prepare ourselves for an eternity

amiable character, and deserving imitation. If not a zealous promoter of, she is not a profest enemy to, the cause of God and truth; if not a lover of the gospel, she does not make a jest of it: she has her failings, but they hurt no one but herself; she is conscious of her prevailing passion, often acknowledges it among the circle of her acquaintance, and yet has not sufficient command over herself, to restrain or overcome it: such is the imbecillity of human nature in both sexes.

If we are sensible of our defects and imperfections (as very few but what must be in a greater or less degree), we cannot act a wiser part than (if possible) intirely to remove them. All have their errors of one kind or another, and sometimes inclination leads us to plead for their continuance, and overlook their criminality; how ought this to put us on daily self-examination, and teach us to beware of *known* sins; or, as the scriptures stile them, *beloved* lusts, *which war against the soul!*

O Thou! from whom all wisdom flows,
 Thou God omniscient! kindly interpose;
 Pour the bright beams of knowledge on our mind,
 To know Thee right, ourselves, and all mankind:
 Teach us the art of self-inspection, Lord!
 T'amend our errors, and obey thy word;
 And, conscious of our many failings past,
 To make each day a critic on the last.

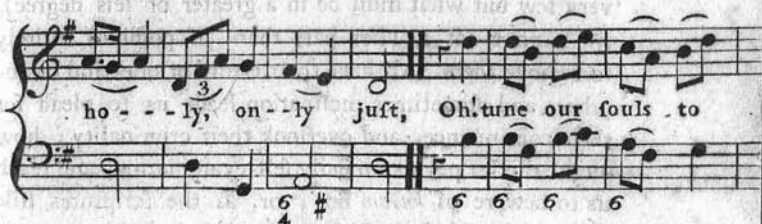
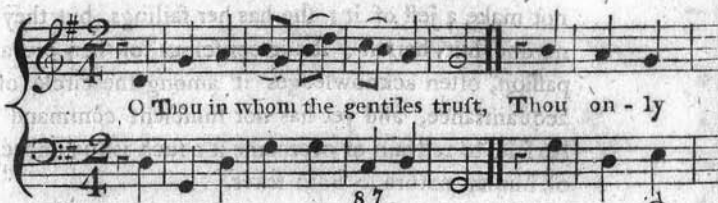
G. W.

eternity in), as *cards*, and such-like uninteresting diversions and employments, must be styled, doubtless cannot but be reckoned, by the thinking few, *wilful* sins.

*** *This (the only favour that we remember unnoticed by us) was mislaid. We are sorry G. W. should have cause for complaint. We wish him, and all our correspondents, to date their pieces. The two queries mentioned we do not recollect. This author's other piece shall appear in our next.*

A NATURAL

H Y M N.



2

If angels, whilst to thee they sing,
Wrap up their faces in their wing,
How shall we sinful dust draw nigh
The great, the awful Deity?

3

Glory to thee, auspicious Lamb!
Thou holy Lord, thou great I am:
With all our pow'r, thy grace we blefs,
Our Joy, our Peace, our Righteousness.

4

Live, ever glorious Jesus live,
Worthy all blessings to receive!
Worthy on high enthron'd to sit,
With ev'ry powr beneath thy feet.

A NATURAL HISTORY of ANIMALS, &c.
with Spiritual Improvements.

[*Carried on from p. 422.*]

The TIGER.

Epenetus. I THINK, Sir, you observed, that the chief difference between the leopard and the tiger lies in this, that the skin of the former is diversified, not by stripes, as the tiger's is, but by spots.

Abiah. I did. If you figure to yourself a cat magnified to a very great degree, you have no inadequate idea of a tiger. He is able to run off with a buffalo. And what must his agility be, when that of a cat so far exceeds its size ! The ancients thought him as beautiful among beasts, as a peacock is among birds. His skin is exceeding smooth, and shines with a captivating lustre. The streaks which mark him every-where in the most regular manner, are of a fine deep and glossy black, and the color of the ground is a bright yellow. His form large, masterly, and elegant ; and his aspect contrary to all our ideas of physiognomy.

Ab. How so ?

Epen. Because it is the very reverse of his well-known disposition. He is a dreadful emblem of the human hypocrite ; for, under a countenance the most placid and gentle, he hides a temper the most fell and dreadful in nature.

Ab. A just, but dreadful emblem of a hypocrite indeed ! May we not truly say, that all men, by nature, are such very hypocrites ? For do we not all strive to appear better than we really are ? The very worst of men

would not be thought so bad as they are. How, like Adam, do we all aim to hide our nakedness, and cover our spiritual deformity, by the patch'd-up fig-leaves of our devotion and righteousness! How common is it, that under a demure look, and devout countenance, lurks the most deceitful and desperately wicked heart! I think those lines, which I have somewhere met with, are justly applicable to every natural, unregenerate man:

“ He that seems virtuous, does but act a part ;

“ And shews, not his own nature, but his art.”

Epen. Your observation is exceeding just. If hypocrisy is hateful to men, how odious, how contemptible, must a race of such hypocritical beings appear in the sight of an omniscient God! Why will any such pretend to, and contend for, God's loving and choosing any of the human race, on account of any foreseen goodness and virtue in them?

Ab. It can only be accounted for, not that blindness in part is happened unto them, but that total blindness is fallen upon them.

Epen. How conspicuous, how glorious, then, does the way in which God loves, chooses, justifies, makes righteous, and accepts sinners of mankind, even in his beloved Son Christ Jesus, appear in our eyes! And how ought Jesus to be the triumph and glory of our souls from day to day, seeing we are perfect and complete IN HIM!—But pray proceed.

Ab. The tiger has all the noxious qualities of the lion, without sharing any of his good ones: he is cowardly without clemency, and strong without generosity. He kills merely because he delights in carnage; and his courage and fierceness seem to increase only as he meets with no resistance. Do any value themselves on mere exterior

exterior beauty? Let them mark this in the tiger, which though the most beautiful, yet he is at the same time the most detestable of quadrupedes.

Epen. Ah, my Abiah! how natural is pride to man! Where is the nature in which pride dwells not? And yet how ridiculous, how absurd is pride, in a creature who has nought, which strictly and properly he can call his own, but sin! How reasonable, how suitable, and how seasonable this advice at all times! "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God," 1 Pet. v. 6. for let us remember, sin dwelleth in us all.

Ab. True. If it did not, we never need to fear the temptations of our grand enemy Satan. But this brings to my mind, how fitly Milton compares his diabolical machinations to the artful cruelty of this dreadful and deceitful savage.

"Then as a TIGER, who by chance hath 'spy'd,
 "In some purlieu, two gentle fawns at play,
 "Strait couches close, then rising changes oft
 "His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground,
 "Whence rushing, he might surest seize them both,
 "Grip'd in each paw"——

Epen. Who is a match for this infernal foe? Happy for us, that we are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation.—I suppose there are different kinds of tigers.

Ab. Yes. There is also what is called the cougar, or red tiger, which is a native of South America. There is not an animal, in all the new continent, half so daring and mischievous. These fierce and desperate creatures make frequent incursions on towns and villages, and carry off domestic animals in great numbers. They resemble the tiger, however, only in ferocity and shape; for their size is greatly inferior, and their color totally

different. They dread the human species so much, as seldom or never to attack a single man, and yet have courage enough to encounter the crocodile.

Epen. Well, that is really extraordinary and surprising.

Ab. It is. For when this tiger goes down to drink in the river, this fearless monster of the deep will lift up his head above water to seize him. The tiger then, with unerring fury, plunges his claws in the crocodile's eyes, where alone he is vulnerable. Instantly both dive together under water; for the *cowgar* would rather die, than let go his hold. In this manner the combat continues, till the tiger escapes, or perishes in the water.

Epen. It is amazing, to consider what enmity exists in animals against each other.

Ab. But it is most amazing and awful to reflect, that in the carnal mind should exist enmity against a good, merciful, and gracious God: yea, that the carnal mind itself is enmity against God; that it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, Rom. viii. 7. Good God! what a state we are born in! What worse could possibly be said of us! O wretched creatures as we are, that there should be in us such a bitter, deep-rooted, irreconcilable hatred and variance against God!

Epen. How great the love of God the Father, how rich the grace of God the Son, how efficacious the power of God the Holy Ghost, to bring such stout-hearted rebels to the foot of Christ's cross, to seek for mercy, and sue for reconciliation!

Ab. And, to magnify and heighten all, let us ever remember, God loved us, before we loved him. He is reconciled to us, before we are to him. He seeks us, before we seek him. He sues to us, to be reconciled, before we sue to him. And it is the knowledge and faith of this that brings us to him. O may this know-
ledge

ledge abound, and this faith be increased in us more and more, that we may glorify the holy, undivided Trinity for such amazing love, unparalleled grace, and sovereign power !

Epen. Amen, and Amen.

[*To be carried on.*]

P O E T R Y.

Tha Experience of a Day.

Βλέπω δε ἕτερον νομον ἐν τοῖς μέλε-
σί μου ἀντιστρατευόμενον τῷ νομῷ
τῆς νοοῦς μου. Paul. ep. ad Rom.
vii. 23.

1.

HOW, amidst this lump of ruin
That my captive soul detains,
Shall a wretch escape undoing,
And avoid eternal pains ?

2.

Did I feel that blest freedom
Which the heirs of glory know,
When celestial guidings lead 'em,
Would my soul be fetter'd so ?

3.

Can immortal, new-born spirits,
Feel like me such strange extremes ?
Can the soul that grace inherits,
Thus abuse its healing beams ?

4.

Now, aloft, I rise, believing,
And to realms eternal fly,
Joy, my heart, from grief, relieving,
Bears me upward to the sky.

5.

Then the chain of this low dungeon
Round my wretched bosom twines ;
Down I sink, in mis'ry plunging,
Earth again my hope confines.

6.

Whilst annoying doubts molesting,
Overwhelm me with distress,
Darkness all my soul investing,
Grief and gloomy fears oppress.

7.

Now I view with detestation
Sin's alluring fatal charms ;
Now with hankering inclination
Take the monster to my arms.

8.

Now my love's supremely burning
For the God of endless day ;
Then from him, adult'rous, turning,
To some form of dying clay.

9.

Hear a wretch, desponding, groaning,
Hither, Lord, to thee I fly !
Where, my hapless case bemoaning,
Can I else for help apply ?

10.

Let not all my hopes be vanish'd ;
Hear a worm his guilt bewail :
From thy blissful presence banish'd,
Horror and despair prevail.

11.

Hear me, O thou bleeding Saviour,
Nor a miscreant vile disdain :
In thy blood, that heav'nly laver,
Wash me from my ev'ry stain.

12.

By thy strength and aid forsaken,
Vainly should I hell oppose ;
By their pow'ful wiles o'ertaken,
Soon should sink beneath my foes.

13.

In the paths of sin and ruin,
Let my vagrant feet ne'er tread :
At thy footstool keep me suing,
Guilt has horrors that I dread.

Haste,

141

Haste, O haste that hour auspicious,
Beaming bright with love and joy,
When my hateful foes malicious
Shall no more my peace destroy.

15.

O thou Source of ev'ry blessing,
Guide a stumbling wretch along;
Till in heav'n thy smiles possessing,
Grace shall be my endless song,
Abingdon. ELAKISTOTEROS.

* * * Future favours from the above
correspondent, will be most gratefully ac-
cepted.

On John xiv. 18.

"I will not leave you comfortless."

1.

C O M E, ye who know the Sa-
viour's love,
And all his faithful kindness prove;
In chearful songs your joy express,
He will not leave you comfortless.

2.

He ever acts the Saviour's part;
With strong compassion in his heart,
His saints he will for ever bless,
Nor will he leave them comfortless.

3.

His wisdom, goodness, pow'r, and care,
They largely, sweetly, daily share:
He kindly does their fears suppress,
Nor does he leave them comfortless.

4.

And while they sojourn here below,
And travel thro' this world of woe,
In storms, and floods of deep distress,
He does not leave them comfortless.

5.

And when they come to death's dark
vale,
And heart and flesh begin to fail,
Their dying lips shall then confess,
He has not left them comfortless.

6.

But when at last they meet above
In that blest world of joy and love,

Their rapt'rous song will best express,
He did not leave them comfortless.

7.

We thank and bless thy name, dear
Lord,

For this dear promise of thy word:
Deep on our hearts this truth impress,
Thou wilt not leave us comfortless.

Matrimony recommended to the Un-
married; with Directions respect-
ing Choice.

1.

Y E longing souls, that seek the
road

That leads to life and bliss^a,
And in a partner want to find
True happiness and peace;

2.

If you'll attend to what I say,
And follow my advice,
You'll not esteem my counsel vain,
Nor e'er repent your choice.

3.

An husband I will recommend^b,
That's worthy of you all,
Who will supply your ev'ry want^c,
Whatever may befall.

4.

He's ruddy as the blooming rose,
And as the lily white^d;
His actions all are free from guilt,
Clearer than morning light.

5.

Perhaps in answer you will say,
"I'm ugly, vile, and poor!"
"My cloathing's nought but filthy
"rags"^e,
"Unholy and impure."

^a John xiv. 6.

^b Isaiah liv. 5.

^c Isaiah xli. 10.

^d Canticles v. 10.

^e Isaiah lxiv. 6.

6.

He'd not disdain you for a wife,
If you were ten times worse^f;
But he'll reject you if you bring
One farthing in your purse^g.

7.

Methinks you say, "Tis Moses, Sir^h,
"That you thus recommend,"
I answer, No; a better far,
A more substantial friend.

8.

If you on Moses fix your choice,
You have a wretched tasteⁱ;
You'll work and strive, yet never
please,
But go in rags at best.

9.

The husband I would recommend,
Is worthy your embrace;
His love's an everlasting love^e,
You'll ever rest in peace.

10.

He'll cloath you with a perfect robe,
A garment of wrought gold^l;
Its beauty never will decay,
Its worth can ne'er be told.

11.

But, lest your patience should be tir'd,
I'll now disclose his name:
'Tis JESUS, God's beloved Son^m,
A MAN of matchless fame.

Coventry, Oct. 12.

I. E.

^f Luke viii. 2. John xx. 5.^g Isaiah lv. 1.^h Acts vii. 20.ⁱ Rom. iii. 10.^k Heb. xiii. 8.^l Psalm xlv. 13.^m Luke iii. 22.

Invitation to come to Christ.

1.

COME, sinners, stand amaz'd, and
view
How great the Saviour's love to you,

View him with arms extended wide,
Behold he shews his bleeding side;
And hear him in his gracious word,
This language sweet to you afford:
"If weary with your sinful load,
"You pant and thirst to have it
"mov'd!
"Repair to me; in me you'll find
"A friend in me, sincere and kind;
"Your load of sin I will remove,
"And give you comfort in my love;
"Nor all that earth or hell can say,
"Shall ever turn my love away."
O then may we by sov'reign grace
Be led to seek our Saviour's face,
The counsels of his love obey,
Nor lose these blessings by delay!

NEOPHYTUS.

An Invitation to the Marriage-Supper
of the LAMB.

1.

THE Bridegroom calls, make no
delay,
Haste to the marriage-feast:
Jesus invites: with speed obey,
And join the heavenly Guest.

2.

Tho' you're oppress'd with guilt and sin,
No sinners he requires;
To see and feel your need of him,
Is all that he desires.

3.

Tho' you're as black as Kedar's tent,
And vile as vile can be,
Jesus to save the lost was sent,
To set the captive free.

4.

The pow'rs of earth and hell combine
To keep you from your God;
Into his hands your all resign,
He bought you with his blood.

5.

He claims you his peculiar care,
He'll grace and glory give;
His pow'r preserves from ev'ry snare,
He dy'd that you might live.

Coventry, Oct. 2. 1778.

I. E.

REVIEW.

R E V I E W.

I.

A Memoir of some principal Circumstances in the Life and Death of the Reverend and Learned AUGUSTUS MONTAGUE TOPLADY, B. A. late Vicar of Broad Hambury, Devon. To which is added, written by himself, The Dying Believer's Address to his Soul; and his own Last Will and Testament. Sold by J. Mathews, in the Strand. Price 6s.

This account, of that eminent minister of Christ, cannot fail to afford unspeakable pleasure to the friends of Immanuel, and his everlasting gospel. For herein some truths, respecting that great man of God, are set forth, in contradiction to some false aspersions cast on him by a party. But above all, here we behold how the great God and our Saviour is pleased to honor his faithful servants in their dying moments. From this relation of the death of Mr. Toplady, we clearly perceive that he died in the triumphs of faith, the assurance of hope, and an unclouded prospect of glory. Enough this, to make every living saint cry out, Hal elujah, praise the Lord! and even the wicked to say, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!"

II.

An Elegy on the Death of the Rev. Mr. TOPLADY. By T. W. Sold by Oliver and Mathews. Price 6d.

A grateful Tribute to the Memory of the deceased, from a youth of 20, who was a pupil under this great man of God; and not only so, but a vein of truth and piety runs through the whole, for the profit of the living. As a specimen of this elegy, we give our reader the following lines:

"And shall a saint, a saint of such renown,
"Steal from the world, and seize a heav'nly crown,

"And not a voice to say, 'The Herald's fled,'
"But all in silence weep AUGUSTUS dead?
"No: the sad news shall reach all mortal ears,
"Nor be forgotten in an age of years!
"Ages unborn shall thy sad loss deplore,
"And mourn that fam'd AUGUSTUS is no more."

III.

An Elegiac Poem, in Blank Verse, on the Death of the Rev. Mr. TOPLADY. By John Fellowes. Sold by Mathews and Keith. Price 6d.

This poem represents the pleasure and joy of the angelic hosts, in obeying the heavenly commission of being ministring spirits to the heirs of glory, in a dialogue between MICHAEL and GABRIEL. That our readers may judge of the whole, we give them the following extract.

GABRIEL.

"Tis true, he was indeed
"A burning and a shining light; let up
"By heavenly power to lead the ram-
"som'd race
"Safe thro' the darkness which o'er-
"shades the land.
"The heights of science in his youth
"he gain'd,
"And with a rapid course explor'd
"th' extent
"Of learning's province. Then, by
"powerful grace,
"Call'd out, and to his Saviour's vine-
"yard sent,
"His ardent soul, inspir'd with love
"divine,
"Pour'd all her faculties and all her
"strength
"Into the noble work: and all her
"powers
"Born'd to display a bleeding Sa-
"viour's love,
"And teach a wondering world Imma-
"nuel's praise."

