

THE
EVANGELICAL GUARDIAN,

VOL. I

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No 7

For the Evangelical Guardian.

POPULAR ESSAY

On the Divine decrees.

No. II. THEIR TRUTH. SEC. 2d. SPECIAL ARGUMENTS. ELECTION.

Some I have chosen of peculiar grace
Elect above the rest: so is my will.
The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warned
Their sinful state, and to appease betimes
Th'incensed Deity, while offered grace
Invites. PAR. LOST.

The great contest on this subject is about the extent to which predestination covers the conduct and destiny of man. For the main source of the dispute is the sovereignty of God in opposition to the sovereignty of man. Anti-predestinarians appear not to care what becomes of inanimate nature, of the fowls of the air, of the fish of the sea, or the beasts of the field, if predestination will only let man be a god. Let the decrees too bind all the angels in adamant chains, if man is suffered to be as free as he desires.

We are willing to let the issue of this whole question rest upon the connection which the divine decrees have with man.

There are three kinds of decrees which are most disputed, viz: the decrees concerning our future state; those which regard our lot in this world; and those which refer to human actions.

Let us first enquire has the future state of all men been determined on
No. 7—25

The Committee to whom was referred a report of the Trustees of the 4th Ward, objecting to certain books as "sectarian"---having made their report, Thereupon

Resolved, That in the opinion of this Board, there are no well founded objections to the books mentioned in the said report of the said Trustees of the 4th Ward.

Resolved, That the Bible without note or comment is not "sectarian" within the meaning of the act of 1942, and the use thereof in our common schools was not intended to be prohibited by that or any subsequent act.

* Alison's His. of Eu., ch. 10, to 234.

We purpose to give our readers the Pastoral and farewell letter to the Associate congregation of Presbyterians in Ballibay new Erection (Ireland) by their former pastor the Rev. Dr. Thomas Clarke. The Author's name is dear to many of our readers. Only a small part of it can be given in the present No.

PREFACE.

The following particulars concerning Dr. Clarke's death, may excite the curiosity of the reader to peruse his Pastoral letter with attention and seriousness. They are extracted from an account written by his son, DR. BENJAMIN CLARKE, dated Feb. 27th, 1793. "On Sabbath, 25th, Dec: 1792, he preached at Long Cane Meeting-house, and in the evening told the congregation to meet there next day, to settle some business of importance. I asked him if he would go home; he told me he would not; so went and lodged with one of our Elders that night; and next day, with him, went and visited some families, and by the Elder was advised to pass by a school house, and not visit it, on account of his frailty: came home in the evening, and enquired where I was,---The family told him I was about seven miles off, but would be home that night. After sitting some time in his own room, he came to the family, and admonished, catechised and exhorted them. Then returned to his room and took some refreshment. Shortly after, one of the servants being near his room door heard him breath louder than usual---ran into the room and found him falling off his chair---called for help---so by the time the family came in, he had breathed his last. The *Pastoral Letter* lay on the table before him, which he had been writing as we supposed."

This farewell Address to the beloved people among whom he once labored in the ministry of the gospel, may be considered as his dying words

and should be received as a valuable legacy to the Secession church. The interesting narrative, the impressive anecdotes, and the awfully solemn exhortations which it contains, deserve the serious consideration of every member of the Associate Synod. The pastor may be reprovèd and edified, by that ardent affection for sinners, that undiminished zeal for pure doctrines of the gospel, and that deep sorrow for unfaithfulness in the Lord's service, which the pious author has herein discovered. His vigorous attachment to the Presbyterian system, may help to confirm the unsteady in these fluctuating times. The private christian may be ashamed of his attainments, when he hears how religion flourished formerly. In fine, this letter is so singular, so affectionate, and so pungent that it is calculated to make an impression on the most inconsiderate mind. May the Lord, by his gracious Spirit, accomplish the benevolent design for which it was composed.

Long Cane, County Abbeville, South Carolina,

March 15th, 1791.

DEARLY BELOVED, AND LONGED FOR,

Whose great salvation, from the power and practice of sin, I have much longed for these forty years past. Some of you I still claim as my joy, even my crown-joy. While I gladly hear of your steadfast perseverance in your religious profession and practice, in Ireland, and find many of your brethren, on this side of the flood, behaving soberly, and firmly adhering to that divine system of Presbyterian Doctrine, worship, and church order, which God gave our fathers at the happy reformation, anno. 1560, for which many of them suffered as the heroes of our holy religion, long 28 years;---I say your firm adherence to that noble system, makes me joyful in distress, though two or three of them have sadly apostatized, much grieving the Holy Spirit, and giving some sad times in secret.

The Lord commands, saying, Thou shalt remember all the ways, that the Lord, thy God, hath led thee, these forty years, in the wilderness of this sinful world. Deut. viii. 2. He complains of Israel, saying, they soon forgot his mighty works, they remembered not the multitude of his mercies. Ps. cvi. 7. 18. For our learning, it is recorded of the two Disciples going to Emaus, Luke xxiv. 14. that, while they talked together, of all things that had happened unto them, Jesus *himself* drew near.--- Although at 3000 miles distance, we cannot talk by the tongue, about many memorable things that happened unto us, while we were together; yet we may talk a little by the pen---thanks unto God for the blessed invention of writing and printing.

It *happened unto us*, that many students from Ireland, being at Glasgow College, were poisoned in their sentiments, by PROFESSOR SIMPSON, the Arian there. Returning, and being licensed to preach, your fathers

were greatly afraid to trust them with the pastoral care of their families; finding them extremely careless and erroneous, they supplicated the associate Presbytery of Glasgow for preachers, who then had but few probationers.

In April 1748, they licensed and sent me, to officiate among you. On July 3d following, I first lectured to you on Acts xvii. 16. 17. 18. and the 2nd time July 17, on John iv. 21. 22. Upon your unanimous call, which came before the Synod in Sterling, in competition with Clanenness, and Scoon, in Scotland, near Perth, being preferred three members of Glasgow Presbytery, were ordered to attend at the new Meeting house of Ballibay, and fix the pastoral relation between you and me.

On July 23d, 1751; being appointed as a day of fasting and prayer; to implore a blessing on the ordinances, then, and afterwards to be dispensed unto you although, the pastoral relation was then fixed; yet the strong prospect of persecution, and the deep sense I had of the great want of grace to glorify God in the fires, did damp me all that day.

Upon the next Sabbath, I spoke to you, from Acts, x. 29, *I ask you for what intent you sent for me;* but was greatly deserted and discouraged all that forenoon. It was then a very laudable custom with the better sort among you, in the interval of public worship, to retire among the bushes for secret prayer in the adjacent fields. Returning to the afternoon service, I came up with one of your number, who had been at secret prayer, and said to me, I see you are cast down to-day; but you shall yet hope, for I think the Lord hath in your behalf, this day said to my soul, fear not for henceforth thou shalt catch men. Luke, v. 10. This was some help to me,---so I spoke to you that afternoon from Is. xlv. 3. *I will pour water on him that is thirsty.* About a year after one of your number, a youth apparently near death, sent for me, to speak with me about his soul's state; I asked him, if at any time he had met with any words in the Bible, or in hearing any sermon, that had either alarmed him, or encouraged him as to his pardon or redemption? He said that for many years he had been trying to hear sermons, but yet never heard one, until he heard that text spoken from Is. xlv. 3. which had been of great use to him for some time, till he was horribly assaulted by violent temptations to deism and atheism for a whole year and more.---He recovered and became I think, a great christian, and very useful in your congregation.

It happened about this time, a boy came to me while I lodged at W. M'KINLEY's, and told me with tears, he was greatly afraid he had committed the unpardonable sin. I tried to resolve his doubts. Some short time after he returned, and again with tears told me in a great secret he was dreadfully afraid, that he never was converted, and if death came, and swept him away in that state, O how terrible!---Again, I essayed to

explain the matter to him.---Some time after there were several papists spoke to me, about their souls' states secretly, who after became firm protestants,---two of them died, I hope, in Christ, before I left you.

It happened about a year before said ordination, (as I was well informed) one of your number, a youth having set apart one day for secret prayer to God, that he would sway his mind to make a proper choice in marriage, thought it duty first to seek the Lord, greatly to bless the gospel among you, and Is. lxiv. from 5--15. was powerfully impressed on his soul, with so much comfort, and such an effusion of the spirit of prayer, that he forgot to pray about the marriage; but set apart the next day, to pray about it. You will please to read said ten verses. They are a great encouragement to me yet, about you to this day.---As soon as Zion's ministers travailed, in visiting, examining, &c., she brought forth her children, heaven-born heirs to God. So you see the standing of your congregation these 40 years, is an answer of prayer to some, and Oh may it be so to you also!

Aug. 1st, 1751. I began the visitation of families, at James M'Mullan's House, in Ligoran; but it was the 2nd of Oct. 1751, before I could get beginning to visit Deraneus: John Maxwell's house was the first there, in Tulliglish. The roll of all your names, I still keep to look at. It was a rule with Dr. Cotton Mather, of Boston, to set apart a day for secret prayer, once a year over all the roll of his congregation; what noble example! Paul, night and day, did still mention the Roman, Ephesian, and Thessalonian Churches, in his prayers, as well as Timothy and Philemon, his darling converts.---Oh! that all our ministers may follow this example in secret, and that you all may read your names in the Bible, the Lamb's book of life!

At this time, some members of the Ulster Synod, had printed several papers against the Scotch ministers, and one against me: also they had printed warnings against us but none against the Methodists, who were seducing their hearers into many erroneous and popish doctrines.

At the repeated earnest request of many friends, in defence of some truths, I printed 2000 copies of a brief survey of their degenerating principles and practices, comparing them with the bible, and rules of the reformed churches, on which there appeared a glaring disparity particularly in a sermon preached before them, on June 18th, 1745, by John Carlile, their late moderator. It was printed, and their approbation signed by their moderator and clerk; in it confessions of faith are treated very disrespectfully, and in the 9th p. they say, "that upon which are grounded all our hopes of happiness hereafter, must be a hearty inclination, and endeavor to know the will of God, and to perform it when known, which alone is true religion."

This is a gross error; Christ himself could not obtain happiness for his people, from his own father, at this price of mere inclinations and endeavors. He, in their name had, to fulfil all moral righteousness perfect-

ly, for 33 years, and then pour out his soul unto an incomparable death, the sorrows of hell! This error of the Synod is far more absurd, than the papist's opinion, for though they are divided into above 50 different parties among themselves, yet generally agree, that our hopes of happiness must be grounded on Christ's blood, though their title to eternal life, must be afterwards acquired, not by mere inclinations and endeavors, but by plenty of good works, and some works of supererogation too but in said error, the Synod, expressly excludes Christ's righteousness from being the ground of the Christian's hopes of happiness.

By said error, they contradict the most high God of eternal truth, who expressly saith, Other foundation (of hope) can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. iii 11. Behold, I lay in Zion, for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, elect and precious corner stone, a sure foundation. Is. xxviii. 16. 1 Pet. ii. 6. By these texts, God teacheth you that Christ is the sure foundation of his church, and of all her hopes and comforts, the foundation that will never fail, even when the earth itself is removed, and the whole heavens be rolled together as a scroll! What are all these hearty inclinations, and so very warm endeavors, when put together, and so great a stress is laid upon them by the Synod? The God of eternal truth plainly tells you, in his holy oracles; what they are, filthy rags. See Is. lxiv. 6. A most unfit ground of hope! David, a man after God's own heart, does not pray to God, to remember his hearty endeavors and inclinations, though he had many of them; but to remember the great incarnate word in the promise on which God had caused him to hope. Ps. cxix. 49. All the reformed churches, in their confessions of faith, and all the saints in scripture, with one voice, speak in this wise, Not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us. Tit. iii. 5. And these had done good works, profitable unto men. They all taught, too, that Christ gave himself a sacrifice, that he might purify unto himself a people, zealous of good works. Tit. ii: 14. but not to be the grounds of their hope, while they testify, that by the deeds of the law, no flesh can be justified. Rom. iii. 20. Gal. ii. 16. iii. 10.

Although we are not sufficient of ourselves to think one good thought, 2. Cor. iii. 5. Yet God still hath power, to require of us perfect obedience under pain of death eternal; so that we may be excited, to fly to the merits of Christ, consecrated for us, Heb. x. 20., and taking hold thereof, may produce them unto God as the only deserving cause, and strong reason, why we plead with God, to pardon us, and strengthen us, in heart and life, to the end of our days, in all our dealings with God, and our fellow-men.

I very charitably suppose, that about the year 1712 the Synod of Ulster were a body of very pious, sound men, but alas! the best of men are but

men at the best, and in the best of men remains a principle of apostacy; and when among them there arose a new generation of clergy, and people which knew not the Lord's doctrine about the grounds of a sincere hope, nor the works of reformation he had done for the protestant churches, but both from pulpit and press, taught you falsehood, so destructive to your souls: it was high time to call loudly to you, in the divine language of Jehovah, if there come any clergy unto you, and bring not this doctrine of Christ, being the only sure grounds of the sinner's hope of happiness, then receive not into your house, as a minister of Christ, nor bid him God speed, because he that biddeth him God speed is really a partaker of his evil deeds: 2 John, x. ii.

Let me beg you to meet me before the throne of grace, pleading that our Associate Synods and Presbyteries, on both sides of the atlantic flood, may by Almighty power be kept from such doleful apostacy; that our new generation of young clergy may not get proud of their natural abilities, and fall into strong delusions---for pride goes before a dismal fall, Prov. xvi. 18. That God may not have to write the same record of them he writes of Israel, Judg. ii: 10. that after Joshua and all the old elders were dead, there arose a new race, which knew not the Lord nor the works the glorious works of reformation and of grace, he had done of old to the Jewish Church. They did not care much about it; but did worse than the heathen, whom the Lord cast out before them, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 9. Let him that standeth on the sure grounds of hope, exhibited by God in his holy word, take heed lest he fall.

My soul desired peace. I was principled against sinful divisions among Protestants, which have given me many sorrowful times. Yet thanks be to God, we are not divided into so many parties as the Papists, who, as the best historians record and testify, have above 700 years been divided into about 50 denominations, or parties, viz: Jansenists, Quietists, Pietists, Quesrelites, Dominicans, Jesuites, &c.

The fiery strife between the two last about God's Grace, predestination, original sin, &c., anno 1601 occasioned 78 meetings of bishops, professors of divinity and 15 cardinals, to hear parties and to examine proofs---these parties have often violently persecuted one another, with banishment and death, while we enjoy peace, more than they, we must not forget, nor give up with that important and indispensable duty we owe to God's truth, and to the souls of perishing sinners.

In the 9th page of said Synodical sermon, Ulster Synod further tells you, that different forms of church policy, or government and worship, (even the Presbyterian form, not excepted,) are but trifles, or lesser matters of the law of God, who by the inspired apostle, directs Timothy not to neglect the charge given him by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery, 1 Tim. iv. 14. From that you may see that the apostle, and

Timothy, were Presbyterians. No word in all the Bible, about laying on of the archbishop, or primates' hands; but the solemn charge is only about the Presbyterian form of God's house, not to neglect, nor treat it as a trifle; but steadfastly adhere unto; and abide by the whole form of Christ's house, and the fashion thereof, and all the laws thereof, Ez. xliii. 11. None of God's matters are trifles.

Your pious and renowned ancestors, in Scotland, having 20 years sweet experience, of the Presbyterian rule, and worship, from 1560, to 1580, did then with uplifted hands before God, as a nation, swear to abide by it and promote it to the end, and on account of their adherence to it, from 16---, to 1668, the bishops and their king Charles killed of them 11 millions: and about ----- thousand of them were imprisoned, some banished, and others barbarously murdered.

Could any who loved Jesus, and his Gospel of divine order and worship, bear to see this disparaging of them, from Press and Pulpit, without opposing? wherefore I published 2000 copies of said paper, called a brief survey, of their principles, and practices, and called you to withdraw from their communion according to God's law., Prov. xix. 27. Cease my son, from hearing the instruction, which causeth to err, from the words of knowledge.

The Synod's foresaid instructions caused to err, and stenghtened the hands of Arminians and Papists; and God says, Jer. xxiii. 14. *I have seen a horrible thing*, in the prophets of Jerusalem, they strengthen the hands of evil doers. verse 16. Wherefore, hearken not unto the words of these prophets. I call on you to consider God's command, Rev. xviii. 4. *Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, that you receive not of her plagues.* Often have I critically examined that writing since, the second paper also, called *New light set in a clear light*, lest I had been guilty of leading you into a sinful schism in the church, but am still confirmed in it, that it was my duty, and cannot retract what I said against their grievous errors and defections. Only this I must lament, that oft times I have neglected to pray to the Lord to reclaim them, and the backsliding judicatories of the Scotch church, and have not been suitably grieved on their account. Jeremiah wished his eyes to be a fountain of tears, that day and night he might weep over the sins of his countrymen, and it never went well with Job till he prayed earnestly with God to pardon his reproaching friends, and offered sacrifices for them. There are lawful divisions for striving against sin, Heb. xii. 4. We are commanded to withdraw from every brother that walketh disorderly; why? Lest thou be a partaker of other mens' sins, 1 Tim. v. xxii. and so receive of their plagues coming on them for their sins; Rev. xviii. 4. There are sinful divisions, arising from cursed ambition, and arrogant pride, Prov. xiii. 10, only by pride, cometh sinful contention, and from carnality; while one saith I am of Paul; another I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? This is a vile strife, who shall be greatest, and not who shall be holiest. This division once got in among the disciples, and is not quite banished out yet.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

THE
EVANGELICAL GUARDIAN,

VOL. I

JANUARY, 1844.

No 8.

INFLUENCE OF THE LOVE OF CHRIST IN GREENLAND.

Nothing has so powerful a tendency, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, to warm, and soften, and break, the hard insensible heart of man as a consideration of the bleeding, dying love of Jesus. This it is that sweetly constrains the penitent believer to make a surrender of himself to that Savior, who has bought him with a price.

When the Moravian missionaries first visited Greenland, they began their efforts to instruct the heathenish inhabitants by preaching in a regular and systematic manner on the divine perfections; representing the great Jehovah as a being infinite in wisdom and power, majesty and glory. For a considerable time they preached in this way without seeing any fruit of their labor. None of the Greenlanders were converted, and the missionaries began to despond. At length they thought 'we have long preached about the divine perfections, and with no effect on the minds of these heathens; but let us now preach Christ crucified, and try whether that subject will move them.' The trial was made; the missionaries discoursed to their heathen audience about the love of God to a sinful world manifested in the incarnation, life, sufferings and death of Jesus Christ. They had now cast the net on the right side, and soon they had a large draught. The poor Greenlanders heard with amazement; they were melted into tears; many of them renounced their idolatry and their sins and embraced the Lord Jesus as their Savior.

THE OATH OF SECRECY OF THE JESUITS.

"I, A. B., now in the presence of Almighty God, the blessed Virgin Mary, the blessed Michael the Archangel, the blessed St. John Baptist, the holy apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, and the saints and sacred host of Heaven, and to you my ghostly father, do declare from my heart, *without mental reservation*, that his holiness Pope Urban* is Christ's Vicar-

LETTER OF DR. CLARK.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 324.)

It seems none of said papers were blessed for reclaiming the Synod. One of them printed a long paper, defending as well as he could, the said erroneous doctrines. They well knew that the Associate Synod of Glasgow, to which I belonged, scrupled at the form of swearing by book-kissing, and at swearing the Abjuration Oath, reduplicating on some acts that bound the jurant to own the king as head of the church, and to help bishops to dethrone the king, if ever he should happen to become a presbyterian. So, in hopes to frighten me away out of the kingdom, it is supposed that the Rev. Messrs. H-----n, of M-----n, and J-----n, then of B-----y, and other friends warmly urged C-----l G-----m, and A-----r M-----y, justices to summon me, on the Lord's day, to swear the state oaths, and kiss the book, as they alledged I was disloyal to the king. I appeared, producing to them a certificate of my character and loyalty, signed by the Lord Mayor and Alderman of Glasgow, and another by Lord Cathcart, the Duke of Cumberland's aid de camp---all in vain. On the 20th of May 1752, they fined me, but a great number of you that day appeared with me, and paid the fine very generously, for which I return you my most hearty and sincere thanks.

January 23d, 1754, they having secretly obtained a writ from said justices, their high constable, G. K. with a guard of their people, watched, while by order of the Presbytery, I was about to moderate a call to Newblis Congregation, in Esq. Kerr's new house. That day, as soon as sermon was ended (on that text, *Watchman what of the night*, Jer. xxi. 11.) they arrested me. Your regard for me, would then have carried resentment too far, against the officer and his party; but you so wisely moderated your temper, at my earnest request, and did them no harm. They detained me in a tavern, in Rockcorry, all night under guard, and next day doubled their number horse and foot, along the road to Monaghan. Many of you who lived along the road beheld the procession with tears. One of your number, on the morning before I went to Newblis, being at secret prayer, was greatly alarmed by a strong impression, of that word on his mind, 2 Kings, ii. 3. Knewest thou that the Lord will take away thy master, from thy head to-day, and very modestly, though strongly urged me to stay at home, insisting that a plot was surely laid for an arrestment: but I thought hard to disappoint the congregation: so went all the way. From Rockcorry to Monaghan, these four verses, Ps. 18, from 16 to 20 verse were set home on my mind, as subject of meditation, and ejaculatory prayer: they were as my song in the night, and have been so, very many times, in other troubles since. Google

FROM above the Lord sent down,
 And took me from below;
 From many waters he me drew,
 Which would me overflow.
 He me reliev'd from my strong foes,
 And such as did me hate;
 Because he saw that they for me,
 Too strong were and too great
 They me prevented in the day
 Of my calamity:
 But even then the Lord himself
 A stay was unto me.
 He to a place where liberty,
 And room was, hath me brought,
 Because he took delight in me,
 He my deliv'rance wrought.

Afflictions are great mercies, when the word of grace, and the sanctifying spirit of prayer, come along with them. O happy is the man whom God so correcteth. The first week in prison, was rather the best to me. They absolutely refused bail; but on my brother-in-law giving a penal bond of 4000*l.* they allowed me to walk the street within the corporation. Many of you then met every week for social prayer to solicit the Lord for my liberty; and found him the hearer of prayer. I earnestly beg you again, to read the warning I then wrote you from prison. Your tender sympathy with me in those days, I still remember, and thankfully acknowledge. One young couple of your number, came and got their marriage solemnized in prison, viz. Jo. Harris and A. Ranolds; now settled here by the Cataba river; she lately died an eminent christian; and her children still act as firm friends to religion, and are in very comfortable circumstances. You also had thirteen children baptized in prison. Two of these children, had eight infants baptized by me in this country.--- Thanks be to God for their perseverance, and regular behaviour.

On April 1st, 1754, a youth came thirty miles on foot to visit me in prison, and entering my room with tears, said, he hoped that before he returned home, he would see me at liberty. I asked what was the ground of his hope? He said that when using oft, and praying about the matter, the Lord impressed that word on his mind. Is. li. 14. The captive exile, hasteneth that he may be loosed; which at first greatly revived him; but afterwards finding his spiritual deadness much prevail, he sunk in grief until the Lord returned with a spirit of prayer, and impressed on his mind that word Heb. xiii. 23. Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty.

Next day a friend from Armagh visited me, and advised me to send a memorial of my case to the Lords Judges of Assize, then newly arrived

in town. I did so; when they read it they sent to the Jailor for my mittimus and examined it. They told my friend that it was erroneous, and the imprisonment false. As soon as they opened the court, on Monday morning being April 3d, they ordered the Sheriff to set me at liberty. So that the law authorized me to prosecute the justices; but vengeance belongs to God. The aforesaid youth was in the room with me, and two members of our Presbytery, when the tidings came from court; we all joined them in prayer to God, and sung a psalm of praise to God, the all gracious God, who sent from above, and brought me to a place of room and liberty.

Immediately after receiving any great mercy from God, in time, men are apt to fall into some sin, especially ingratitude. So it was with Joseph when delivered out of prison in Egypt. He soon learned to swear by the life Pharaoh. So it was with Israel coming out of two hundred years bondage, they grievously murmured. So it was with Hezekiah coming out of sickness, Is. 38. He got proud of his wealth and shewed it to the Babylonish Embassadors. So I soon fell into unthankfulness, &c. Let me beg you all in your secret approaches to God, to thank him yet for this thirty-seven year old deliverance. The Lord fulfilled his holy word in that 18th Ps. 16, 17, 18, far beyond my expectation. It is yet a *nichtam*, a golden psalm to me; but I have been fearful and unbelieving for oft that word hath haunted my mind since. Ps. lxxviii 42.

They did not call to mind his power;
Nor yet the day when he
Delivered them out of the hand
Of their fierce enemy.

Also Ps. xxviii. 5,

God shall not build, but them destroy,
Who would not understand
The Lord's own works, nor did regard
The doing of his hand.

Upon the first Sabbath, after the Lord brought me home again to your service, with joyful lips we sung, Ps. lix. 16.

But of thy power I'll sing aloud
At morn thy mercy praise,
For thou to me a refuge wast,
And tower in troublous days.

Some time being spent in prayer and conference, about that important matter in the session, it was agreed to dispense the Lord's supper among you after the ministerial visitation of families. Various diets were appointed for private conference, in several corners of the congregation, with such as intended to partake.

The appointed sabbath being come, and entering the meeting-house

How wonderful and solemn the scene! to behold, that though persecutors, had long three years labored to banish me from you; yet, lo! there a meeting-house for the worship of our deliverer---a table spread, and elements of bread and wine, ready to be set apart, for sacramentally representing the body, the blood, and dying love of the high and lofty one, who redeems Israel from all their iniquities.---A multitude of Gospel hearers, waiting to hear a new offer of God's unspeakable gift, consecrated to the use and benefit of them that are yet afar off, from what they had been, and far off from what they wished to be, in piety. How gracious the words, *take, eat, receive, claim, apply*, each to himself, the divine person, and redeeming righteousness of Christ. O how amazing his goodness to the chief of sinners! His merits that far surpass all the heights of guilt! his bounty that far surpasses all the powers of thought! You may remember the first Psalm we began in the morning was Ps. xl.

O Lord my God full many are,
The wonders thou hast done,
Thy gracious thoughts to usward,
Far above all thoughts are gone.

This was to me then, the sweetest Psalm that ever we sung together; ---never to be forgotten. I have met some, esteemed great christians in this country, who own that it was at this, and at some other of our great solemnities they were first alarmed, and comforted by his grace. They yet persevere in piety towards God, and fair integrity with men, much to the credit of religion, and the comfort of their connections.

Some considerable time after this, I was called to visit Wm. M'Kinley, in his last sickness. He was one of the first four who supplicated Glasgow Presbytery; It was at his house I lodged, and in his field I was ordained. Among other things I asked him, what he thought of his conduct in being so forward to promote the building of the Meeting-house, and supplicating Glasgow Presbytery for their probationers. He replied that he was sorry he had not done and expended far more in that business, and that he chose to sit in a dark place of the Meeting-house, that he might the better conceal the Lord's kindness to him, in hearing the gospel there; for often it was so great he could scarcely contain himself.

On Dec. 18th, 1762, at nine o'clock, it being sabbath night, you lost a praying friend by the death of my spouse; who, a little before she expired, said, my beloved is mine, and I am his, and his desire is towards me. After taking a little medicine, she said, now I am gone; then prayed a few words, and closed, saying, My Lord, and my God! She was the second who was buried at your Meeting-house.

The envy of our persecutors made them return honest William Craig, one of your elders, for high-constable, as a trap; knowing he, in conscience, scrupled to swear the oath of office, by touching and kissing

the gospels. Though he offered to serve, yet because he scrupled book-kissing, they confined him in close prison some months. At last going to Dublin, I obtained a writ of *Habeas corpus* for him, commanding the Sheriff of Monaghan to take him before the court of king's bench, in Dublin, who, in about fifteen minutes' trial released him. Some money should have been collected, for helping to defray his expense, but we sinfully neglected it. He and his valuable spouse, bore the affliction with meekness and fortitude. May the Lord save his offspring from right and left hand extremes: May they still own the same good cause, in this sinful dividing time! The Donatist heresy is become common; every difference in sentiment, almost every offence, is like to be made a term of communion: And though it be a sort of Donatism in reality, yet some suppose it to be real reformation and holiness.

For two or three years before we parted, I observed a coolness of attention in public worship; nor had I heard of any person alarmed or edified by any of the holy ordinances, for a great while; also, some sad scandals happened, even among those who had been communicants. All these led me, sorrowfully to suppose, that my usefulness among you was all over. *What dost thou here Elijah?* Your youth began to be weary in repeating their chapters and catechisms, between sermons; others began to neglect secret prayer in the interval of public worship; unprofitable talk took place. Some appeared, in practice, to adopt the Quaker's opinion, that very little or no salary should be paid to ministers; though it be God's express ordinance, 1 Cor. ix. 14. *The Lord hath ordained, that they who honestly preach the Gospel, should live by the Gospel.* Finding myself unfit for giving the Lord's supper, and most of you not fit as could be wished, for receiving it, that ordinance was neglected for two years. One of your number then urged me to give it, saying, Christ among all his hearers found only twelve; he gave it to that few: I am sure you will yet find twelve among this people.

It then happened that an invitation came to me from Volintown Parish, in Rhodeisland in America; and a call came also from a people near Albany, in New York province, with a petition to the presbytery who granted it, and appointed me to go and supply them for one year. This weighty affair gave me great concern, that the Lord might sway the vote of the presbytery to that which might be most for the interest of his holy religion. The ship which the people had sent still lay at Narrow-water near Newry, waiting for me, who was plunged in the midst of confusion, preparing for the voyage.

Mean time, that text, 1 Cor. ii. 3. was the only subject cast up for me to speak on the last sabbath that ever I saw you,---*I was with you in weakness, in fear, and much trembling.* This contains a history of my near sixteen years' sojourning among you. Doleful the review! In what both of weakness had I visited, examined, and preached many times.

Yet often has that word been supporting to me, 1 Cor. i. 27, 28, God hath chosen weak things, and base things, and despised things.---Sad experience told me I was the weakest of the weak things, and the basest of the base, small, and despised. Yet by such, it appears, that Almighty God, in Christ subdues the great kingdoms of error and vice, in which satan reigns. This has been some support to me. Yet I have been with you in much fear, lest some of you might eternally perish through my neglect. Alas! in what a weak and superficial manner have I visited your families, and your sick! Many precious opportunities of edifying you, and talking about your souls' state along the road, and in private, have I misguided, trifled away, and murdered in poor useless talk, when my speech should have been seasoned with salt, and my tongue as the pen of a ready writer, about Divine things. When grievous carnality and spiritual deadness seize the soul who is sufficient for these things? O happy are the ministers (though I think they are few) who can truly assume Paul's words when parting from his Ephesian congregation, Acts, xx. 26. *I am clean from the blood of all men.* By the blood of Jesus, I must rather assume the petition of David, Ps. li. 14. Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God! Ah consider, every head of a family has as much the charge of his wife, children, and servants souls, as I had of yours.

O how amiable and divine the example of Jesus, who though his body was weary, so that he must sit down by the well at Sychar, yet his zeal and his tongue were lively; meeting a poor woman there, he began to talk to her about a drink of water, but soon changed from that to talk about her soul, and talked her into a good state, John iv. When sitting at a poor dinner with his disciples, he talks to Peter about the degree, and reality of his love. Simon lovest thou me more than roasted fishes; or more than thy fellow disciples love me? Thus he preached at dinner, John, xxi. 15. We are to converse of soul-matters, and of divine truths, sitting in the house at meals, walking to the meadows, fields, or meeting-house, Deut. vi. 7. Alas! how much is the enmity of our hearts opposed to these good and holy laws, and examples? Pleasant, and yet strait is the way, that leadeth unto life, and few ministers, rulers, or farmers find it. In Acts vi. 7. it is recorded, as very singular, that priests were obedient to the faith. O how sad the review of so many good opportunities, of saying and doing good, now all lost irrecoverably! Oh! let you and I run to the blood of atonement, and plead it against all the law-curses, blood guiltiness, and all the sins we did against the Lord, and against one and other, while we were together. This blood cleanseth from all sin.

May 1764, we sailed from Newry. The all gracious God carried near 300 of us safe over the devouring deep in the arms of his mercy, praised be his name! We arrived safe at New York, July 28th, Jas. Hershaw, one of your elders, died about six months after, joyfully singing Ps. lxxiii

26, 27. Another of your number, soon after, died in the full assurance of faith. A boy of about nine years, I hope died well then also. Another died about four years ago, whom I baptized at your meeting-house, whose conduct testified that she had been with Jesus, who, I think, made her a christian. She owned on her death-bed that my poor ministry was the means of good to her soul. Thanks be unto the Lord.

Now I proceed to speak more particularly to each of your soul's cases, for the last time.

Dearly beloved, and longed for,

Whose being in grace, and growing in saving knowledge, I greatly long for; my heart's desire, and prayer to God for you is, that you may be powerfully saved, and your tender offspring preserved, from the vices and errors of your country, and apostacy, which has destroyed many churches, once valiant for the truth. Moses, a little before his death, wrote the journeyings of Israel. Now these few lines may serve to put you in remembrance of some steps of our pilgrimage journeys, and mercies we met with, while we travelled together. Let me also, humbly, offer you some advices, that may help you a little in some spiritual things, by the divine blessing, which I beg you to implore from the Lord, by repeated prayer, before you begin, and while you read them.

1. I most earnestly beg and advise every one of you old and young, male and female, seriously and frequently, to consider God's express command, 2 Pet. i. 10. Give diligence to make your calling and election sure. Thousands have given diligence, and got to be well assured. I saw several of you well assured of pardon and the love of God in life, and at death. Search the scriptures, and see; this honor have all the saints in some small degree, to be assured. All true protestants profess to believe this truth, as it is well expressed in answer to the 36th question of your catechism, that the first benefit which accompanies pardon, is assurance of God's love. Your popish fathers, and mine, lived above 500 years in opinion that no assurance of pardon of sins could possibly be had, until they would grope long for it through the dark regions of a supposed purgatory. Though you all profess to deny that popish opinion and say you are the strictest protestants, yet have you not lived these five years past, and all the last week, as uncertain about the pardon and love of God to your soul, and to the souls of your nearest relations, as if you were the most rigid papist ever lived on earth; and are you yet so far from using any careful diligence about it, that ye have not spent two hours, in serious self-examination, about the unspeakably important matter of salvation, or damnation; and yet spent three hours chatting over a glass in a tavern' or singing some trifling useless song of fools.

2. I beg you to consider that holy command of God, 1. Cor. xi 28. let a man examine himself;-----and give all diligence in this great busi-

ness, in order to be assured in what state and what frame his soul is in. Set apart one hour, and retire into some secret place, by day or by night, and after solemn prayer to God for help, read, in your larger catechism, what does God require of you in the first command, and say, O my soul, hast thou done some or all those duties? Then let conscience answer. Again, read what is forbidden in the first commandment: pause, and ask your heart, Have I been guilty of one or of all these sins, or not? Thus go over all the ten commands, deliberately and diligently, with strict care, confessing your sins against each command, before the Lord, one by one, imploring pardon through his blood.

For the Evangelical Guardian.

POPULAR ESSAY.

On the Divine decrees.

NO. II. THEIR TRUTH. SEC. 3d. SPECIAL ARGUMENTS. DECREES CONCERNING THE CONDITION OF MAN IN THIS LIFE, AND ALSO CONCERNING HUMAN ACTIONS.

They therefore, as to right belonged,
 So were created, nor can justly accuse
 Their Maker, or their making, or their fate;
 As if predestination overruled
 Their will disposed by absolute decree
 Or high foreknowledge.

Let us next inquire whether God has decreed every thing that comes to pass in our lot in this world. We open his revealed will and read as follows, viz:

“My substance was not hid from thee when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance yet being imperfect, and in thy book all my members were written; which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.”*

Here we are told what God saw with regard to every one of us, “our substance being imperfect”---while we were disorganized dust, and and while none of our members were fashioned. And what did he see? He saw all our “members written in his book”---the great book of predestination, lying open constantly before him. There, thousands of years before we were born, was portrayed the perfect picture of our bodies and our spirits---“all our members” without exception “were written” in it;---our exact height, so that we cannot add to our stature one cubit; our very hairs were numbered; the shape of every limb and the position