

EVANGELICAL BIOGRAPHY;

being

a Complete and Faithful Account

of the

Lives, Sufferings, Experiences & Happy Deaths,

or

Eminent Christians

Who have shone with Distinguished Lustre,

Alphabetically Arranged.

with

LISTS OF THEIR PRINCIPAL WORKS,

in Chronological order,

and

Occasional Extracts.

Vol.

*These are they which came out of great tribulation, and
have washed their robes, and made them white in the
Blood of the Lamb.*

Rev. 6. 14.

The Lord forsaketh not his Saints, they are preserved for ever.

Psalm 37. 28.

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DANSON, THOMAS, was born in the parish of St. Mary le Bow, Cheapside, London, and was educated first at St. Thomas Apostle, under T. Wise, in Latin and Greek; afterwards under Christian Ravis, a German, professor of the Oriental tongues in London House, who initiated him in the Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic. Thence he was sent to Oxford, after the surrender of the garrison; entered a student in New Inn, made chaplain of Corpus Christi College by the visitors in 1648, took one degree in arts in 1649, and then became fellow of Magdalen College by the same authority. Being admitted M. A. by a dispensation, through some indisposition, he became a zealous preacher. For a time he preached at Berwick upon Tweed, and afterwards had a living at Sandwich in Kent, whence he was ejected in 1660, though he came in upon the death of the incumbent, having been presented by Oliver. He was soon after settled at Sibston in Suffolk, but refusing afterwards to conform, he was ejected at Bartholomew day 1662. He then retired to London, where he preached for a time, and afterwards at Abingdon in Berks, on the death of Dr. H. Langley, having married the daughter of Dr. Garbrand, a dissenting physician of that town; where he continued preaching and administering in private houses, and sometimes in the town hall, not without some disturbances. An author of his persuasion (William Jenkyns, in admon. ante lib. cui tit. est *Celeusma*, &c.) stiles him, "*Vir doctissimus, totus rei Domus zelo ardens,*" &c. "A most learned man, who burnt with zeal for every thing belonging to the house of God." And all that were acquainted with him knew him so to be; and many have said, that if his juvenile education had been among orthodox persons, i. e. High-church-men,

I might be continued, however, for further usefulness in the church of Christ, I shall be glad to live; but if not, it is my earnest desire to finish at present." He spent whole nights in prayer to God, when he could not sleep, for himself, his family, his friends, and the church of God; for this was the proper breath of his soul. Upon occasion of the hours of prayer among many on his account, he said, "I heartily wish that my affliction may be the means of reviving the spirit of prayer; I shall not think much of any thing I endure, provided it have that effect." Some days before his death, he began, with a trembling hand, to write some hints of meditation for the use of himself and his friends: the inscription whereof was, "What am I as a creature; as a reasonable creature; as a sinful creature; as a redeemed creature; as a creature in a state of trial for eternity; as a sociable creature, and related to other beings about me." The last thing remarkable, while he was sensible, and some of the last words he was heard to say, were, lifting up his hands, and crying out, "All is well; All is well;" and finished his course with joy, in the 51st year of his age, May 16, 1730. Dr. Evans was of an uncommonly tall stature, yet not a lusty man. There was something very pleasing, solemn, and commanding in his countenance. He married a lady of family, and had a daughter supposed to be a considerable fortune; but it proved otherwise, and at his death there was a very handsome provision made for his wife and daughter by the congregation, out of the very great respect they had to his memory as an accomplished preacher and a most excellent man. It was not known, till after his decease, that he had been tempted to make private shipwreck of his large fortune in the fatal South Sea year, so destructive to multitudes of others as well as to him. The weight of which secret lay on his mind, and was, in some measure, productive (so one of his intimates thought) of his slow but certain death. He was buried with great solemnity in Dr. Williams's vault, in Bunhill Fields.—Dr. Harris spoke the funeral oration over the grave, and preached his funeral sermon.

His printed works were, many Sermons, published at various times, upon public and private occasions, from the year 1704 to 1727. A volume of Sermons for young Persons, 1725. Two volumes of practical Discourses, concerning the Christian Temper. Two Letters to Mr. Cumming, upon Scripture Consequences.

EWING, JOHN, D. D. Senior pastor of the first Presbyterian congregation in Philadelphia, North America. Dr. John Ewing was born at Nottingham, in Maryland, June

28, 1732, He received the first part of his education under Dr. Alison, a man eminent for piety and erudition, who then resided in the State of Delaware. Having finished those studies usually taught in his school, he remained with Dr. Alison three years as a tutor. During that time he made some progress in mathematics, in which he afterwards became eminent. Books of science at that time were not easily obtained in America, especially in remote places; such, however, was his thirst for knowledge, that he frequently rode thirty or forty miles to obtain some books which he wanted. Those authors who were safe guides he could not always obtain; incorrect writings sometimes fell into his hands, the errors of which escaped not the detection of his penetrating observation. From the school of Dr. Alison he removed to the college of New Jersey: Mr. Burr was then president; and of that celebrated man he became a favourite pupil. He entered the senior class, and, impelled by pecuniary embarrassments, engaged at the same time as teacher of the grammar school which was connected with the college. In addition to this circumstance, he had, in order to prepare for his graduation, to study in private some branches to which he had not attended before his entrance in the college. Hence his labour was greater than any of his class mates, and his studies became arduous and multiplied. He, however, brought to the contest a mind which was undaunted, and which persevered and overcame. He graduated with his class in 1755, and afterwards accepted of an appointment as tutor in the college. During the prosecution of his scientific studies, and while engaged in instructing others, he devoted part of his time to the investigation of divine truths: the relish which he had for these, the progress which he made in them, and the impression which they left upon his mind, determined him, with divine permission, to become a minister of the gospel, to carry to other ears, and to other hearts, those glad tidings which had reached and impressed his own. In pursuance of this design he read divinity under the direction of Dr. Alison, and in due time was licenced to preach by the Presbytery of Newcastle; and in 1759 he received and accepted an unanimous call from the first Presbyterian congregation in Philadelphia, where he continued faithfully to discharge the duties of the pastoral office until his death. In 1773 he was sent to England to solicit subscriptions for the academy of Newark in Delaware. In England, Scotland, and Ireland, he was received with that attention which is due to the minister of God and to the man of science. Four cities presented to him their freedom*.

* Glasgow, Montrose, Dundee, Perth.

Men of eminence for literature and piety sought his acquaintance, and numbered him with their friends. Among these were Drs. Robertson, Webster, Balfour, and Blacklock. Without any application he received the degree of Doctor of Divinity from the university of Edinburgh. The President when he presented to him his diploma, declared that he had never before conferred a degree with more pleasure. In 1775 he returned to America, and in 1779 was elected to the provostship of the university of Pennsylvania. To this station he brought large stores of information, and a paternal tenderness that "pressed the youth beside him," who deserved his approbation, "and blushed at his own praise." In all the branches of science and literature which are usually taught in colleges, he was uncommonly accurate; and in his mode of communicating information he was probably never surpassed. He was frequently employed in public capacities, which brought into action his mathematical knowledge. He was a distinguished member of the American Philosophical Society, and made to them several approved communications*, which have been recorded in the volumes of their Transactions.

Dr. Ewing's mind was uncommonly strong and penetrating, he had a mild and correct taste. The more sublime and minute forms of matter were objects of his investigation; and we cannot but suppose him to have been gifted with diversified talents who could scan the illuminated glories of the heavens, and inspect the insect which is only visible to the microscopic eye: we cannot but suppose that his researches were extensive who looked into the mind of man, analysed his faculties and affections, and unfolded to him the great truths of his God; who looked through the howling wilds, and taught the properties of the brutal tribes; who looked through the fields of air, and described the race which travel on the wing. His knowledge of the learned languages was likewise considerable. The Hebrew language, which is too often neglected by the ministers of God, was one of his favourite studies. In the mornings of his latter days he always read a portion of the Scriptures in their original tongue; and a friend could not enter his room without seeing on his couch beside him his Hebrew Bible. His qualifications as a minister

* Among these, were "An Account of the Transit of Venus over the Sun, June 3d, 1769, and of the Transit of Mercury, November, 9, 1769, "An improvement in the construction of Godfrey's Quadrant."—Among his valuable MSS. are, "Mathematical Calculations," "a Course of Lectures on Natural Philosophy," and an unfinished Course of Lectures on Natural History.

of the Gospel, were many and eminent. Science was to him a powerful assistance in the labours of his sacred office. He was mighty in the Scriptures. To the fountain of all religious knowledge he went for instruction. His religious opinions were not so much founded upon systems written by fallible men, as upon the Scriptures of infallibility. He adopted neither Calvin nor Arminius, but the word of God as his guide. He read, he examined, he decided for himself. With the works of commentators and systematical writers he was familiar; but his veneration for these did not impress upon him a blind obedience to their dictates: he was first convinced by his own researches that they corresponded with the sacred volume before he acknowledged their authority. His own investigation confirmed him in his belief of the doctrines of grace. These were the doctrines which he preached, and which he endeavoured to impress upon the hearts of his people. His discourses were written with accuracy. He thought it a duty which he owed to God and to his hearers, to think before he spoke, to study and to ponder in private before he arose in the presence of an audience as a messenger from heaven. To God he looked for aid and support; but he looked for his assistance in his study, before he trusted to divine impulse in the sacred desk. The style in which he embodied his conceptions was always perspicuous, and occasionally ornamental. He sometimes poured forth "thoughts that breathed, and words that burned;" but his most usual manner was sober and temperate. His delivery was pleasing and happy; if, in his old age it was not remarkable for animation, yet it was distinguished by correctness; and it could sometimes touch the finest springs of tenderness and pity. The temper of Dr. Ewing was generous, and not often ruffled. His manner and deportment were easy and affable. He had a freeness of salutation which sometimes surprized the stranger, but which was admired by those who knew him, as it proceeded from an open and honest heart. He was in conversation remarkably entertaining. From severer studies he could unbend and become the companion of innocent mirth, and he could rejoice with those that rejoice, as well as weep with those that weep. He was free from pedantry, and every thing which bore its resemblance. In the company of philosophers, he was in his conversation the philosopher; and with the unlettered, the man of ease and accommodation. His talent of narration was universally admired. His observation of men and manners, at home and abroad, furnished him with many scenes and facts which, as painted and related by him, were extremely entertaining. In domestic life he was amiable. He had all the heart

heart of the husband, the parent, and the friend. Surrounded by a large family, he had care and tenderness for them all. His affection for his children was such, that even in his moments of severest study he received them with smiles, and laid aside his books to partake of their infantile sports.

Dr. Ewing was tall in his person, and, while in younger life, was handsome and graceful. His constitution was remarkably sound and strong. He was settled with his congregation forty years without being prevented more than once or twice by sickness from discharging the duty of his pastoral charge. The only serious disorder which he had, was the one which proved fatal, and which first seized him about six years before his death. After his first attack he frequently preached; but never regained his accustomed strength of body and vigour of mind. In his sickness he discovered patience, fortitude, and resignation to the will of his Heavenly Father. No murmur escaped his lips; and his last moments were closed, apparently, without a pang, and without a struggle. In a good old age, in his seventy-first year, he fell to the ground, "like as a shock of corn cometh in his season." A short time before his death, (which happened in 1803,) he buried the last of those members of his congregation who signed his call.

EWINS, THOMAS, was born in 1610, and had been bred up as a mechanic, but was sent out to preach by a church in London, with another person of the name of Barns. Although he was not a scholar, yet it is said he was a judicious methodical preacher. He succeeded Dr. Ingelo as pastor of a church in Bristol, in 1650, and continued there till 1670. He was very laborious and successful. One sermon of his upon blind Bartimeus was the means of conversion to many. He was remarkable for his meekness, patience, and charity. So scrupulous was he about maintenance, that he would accept no tithes, nor salary, but only free gifts. The Mayor and Aldermen in Oliver's time, called him ordinarily to preach at Christ Church in the mornings, and at Maryport in the afternoons. He also repeated at St. Ewen's and St. Leonard's; preached a Tuesday lecture at St. Nicolas, and on Fridays at St. Philip's and St. Michael's almshouses alternately, and held a conference on Thursdays. He was also ready to preach on most other days, if called upon, when he was not otherwise engaged. He was very grave and serious every where, and full of good discourse. He was sometimes abused in the street, but would not attempt to retaliate; "For, says he, vengeance is God's; my duty is patience." In his time