

A REPLY

TO THE ARGUMENTS ADVANCED BY THE

REV. THOMAS CLELAND,

AUTHOR OF THE FAMILIAR DIALOGUE BETWEEN

CALVIN AND ARMINIUS :

THE LATTER BEING NO LONGER UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF
THE FORMER, BUT ENJOYING THE HAPPY PRIVILEGE
OF STATING AND DEFENDING HIS OWN DOCTRINE.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,
A COMPREHENSIVE VIEW
OF
THAT SYSTEM OF DIVINITY.

WHICH MR. CLELAND SO WARMLY OPPOSES.

By JESSE HEAD.

Blame not the bowels of the Deity,—
Man shall be blest, as far as Man permits.
Not Man alone—all Rationals Heav'n
Arms, with an illustr'ous, but tremendous pow'r
To counteract its own most gracious ends ;
And this of strict necessity, not choice.—

DOCTOR YOUNG.

The beginning of strife, is as when one letteth out water.

SOLOMON.

Troubles must needs come ; but woe unto that man by whom
they come.

CHRIST.

I also will shew mine opinion.

ELIHU.

LEXINGTON, K.

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1805.

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TO THE READER.

YOU are here presented with a reply to the arguments, advanced by the Rev. THOMAS CLELAND, in the familiar Dialogue between Calvin and Arminius. How far the author has succeeded in answering those arguments, he leaves you to judge. One thing he would here remind you of; that to expect a display of learning or abilities, the author does not pretend to either. Yet, he flatters himself, that the arguments he has advanced, is intitled to some weight; and that those amongst his readers, who think and read for themselves, will find the arguments of his opponent answered, and the truths of the Gospel more clearly manifested.

In attempting these remarks, the author has felt no small degree of solicitude. To act the faithful part of an honest physician, in probing the wound of his patient; and yet, in doing this, to be temperate, while detecting and exposing the author's errors, he has found to be a difficulty, not easily overcome. Had the author never felt any personal attachment to his opponent, as well as many others who equally embrace the same errors, the difficulty would not have been so great.—Or, had the author of the Dialogue, announced his own opinions, without attempting fix a *brand of infamy* on the church, of which I have the happy privilege of being a member, the public would never have been troubled with this little trait.—But to see Mr. Cleland representing the METHODISTS, 1st. as a designing set of men; 2d. as prostituting the ordinances of God; 3d. as forming a *grand scheme* to overturn the PRESBYTERIAN church; 4th. as holding out friendship for sinister motives; 5th. giving to the public untrue statements of the doctrine held by us—I say, such a conduct is so insulting to the feeling, and make such a deep impression of injury, that my conflict has been to strike the medium between too soft a tenderness, and the resentment which such a conduct would naturally excite in the mind.

From Mr. Cleland, as well as my readers, I beg forgiveness, if in some instances I have appeared to use too much severity; for though I have with plainness unreservedly stated his errors, and their awful consequences and tendencies, I have not wilfully wounded his feelings. And I would here beg leave to observe, that I am aware I have touched the doctrine held by many, whose piety I highly esteem, and whose real friendship I hope never to lose. I assure them, that nothing but a regard for the cause of truth, which I hope I shall

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ever esteem dearer than life, could have moved me to enter upon any point of doctrine that would tend to wound the feelings of any of my fellow creatures. And in order as much as possible to avoid giving pain to those of other denominations, who may differ from me on those points, I have principally confined my defence to the arguments advanced by Mr. Cleland, in his illiberal attack on us, as a Body. I am aware that some expected my reply would be against the Presbyterians as a body : but this would have been (in my opinion) highly improper. The Body never ought to be blamed for the acts of an individual or two ; and I still retain my respect and esteem for that church as a body, and entertain no doubt, that, should I be so happy as to be counted worthy to enter the New Jerusalem, I shall there meet with many of my Calvinistic brethren, whose holy lives and godly conversation has often refreshed my soul here, and have manifested a happy inconsistency between their practices and principles.

My readers will no doubt discover many defects in composition, punctuation, &c. &c. But these will not lessen the weight of the arguments in the minds of judicious enquirers after truth ; especially when the author lays no claim to such a degree of learning as would enable him to prevent these defects. Add to this, that he has been under the necessity of stealing, as it were, an hour or two at a time from his ordinary calling, to compleat the work. With these observations, he submits it into the hands of his readers, praying, that *that* light "which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," may so shine upon their minds, as to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, that they may know how to choose the good and refuse the evil.

JESSE HEAD.

Springfield, September 6, 1805.

To candid Enquirers after truth.

GENTLEMEN,

AN anonymous pamphlet, intitled "A Familiar Dialogue between Calvin and Aminius," which is prefaced, or introduced, by a statement of differences, said to exist between the Presbyterians and Methodists ; and an attack made by the author on the Methodist Government and Administration, has induced me to address you in this manner. By the following letters you will find that the Rev. Thomas Cleland is the author of said Dialogue : I have therefore made use of his name as such, throughout the following sheets.

Mr. Cleland introduces the above-hinted-at differences, in terms which go to involve the above-mentioned respectable communities in a controversy of a very singular and disagreeable nature. The part Mr. Cleland has acted for some time past, has no doubt rendered him uneasy in his situation, and he has availed himself of this improper step to "*creep out at,*" and gratify his resentment. He thinks that the cause of disunion between the Presbyterians and Methodists, may be learned from the author of the piece intitled the "*Black Brotherhood* ;" and in confirmation of this opinion, produces the following as a quotation from that anonymous pamphlet. He says, "he cannot remember the particular words ; but the substance is this : The Methodists thought, from their warmth, zeal, and noise, that they had all the religion that was going in the world ; and other denominations, especially ours, were their bitter opposers. But when the revival began amongst us, and we made more noise, if possible, than themselves, they began to think the Presbyterians were all going to turn Methodists. Elated with the idea, and big with the expectation, they came forward to receive us, when they thought it was time to see their expectations fulfilled, and their desires gratified : but, to their great disappointment, found us Presbyterians still, and the greatest number of converts were joining us daily. Hence arose jealousy, then shyness, next coolness, and at last, downright contempt. This, in substance, is the account Mr. T— gives of the matter ; whose word I have no right to dispute, especially as he must know best, being, as I suppose, one of the main hands concerned in the grand scheme." page 6.

Upon this his authority, Mr. Cleland undertakes to say many unfriendly things of the Methodists, to whom he has lately professed much real friendship. However, not long after the pamphlet alluded to, made its appearance, it was cogently recommended to me by Mr. Cleland who was kind enough to

furnish me with a copy. After turning it once over, I let it go out of my hands, and have not seen it since ; so that I am incapable of saying how far the accuracy of the above quotation does justice to the author. At present I remember nothing of the passage. But supposing, for argument sake, the writer did make use of the very words Mr. Cleland has assigned to him : does not every unbiassed reader see, that his object was, to ridicule the ignorance and bigotry of a certain description of professors, which may be found, I suppose, amongst all the different denominations ?

Had he, and others, as Mr. Cleland insinuates, concerted a "*Grand Scheme*," to take advantage of the apparent christian friendship of their Presbyterian brethren, in order, if possible, to subvert that church, or hinder as far as they could its prosperity ; would he, would any man, under such circumstances, have published immediately to the world, his shameful artifice and mortifying disappointment ? It is unnecessary to say more. The early stage of the revival, at which the Methodist ministers associated with the Presbyterians at sacramental solemnities, and other occasions ; and their doing so (often, perhaps for the most part) in compliance with the earnest and affectionate solicitations from their Presbyterian brethren ; preclude all suspicion of any such combination : a suspicion, which probably never was cherished in any mind, but that of the Rev. Mr. Cleland.

Here I would observe : if the account which Mr. Cleland says Mr. T—r. gives of the matter, be correct and well founded, I acknowledge that the Methodists justly deserve reprobation. But, if it is incorrect ; if this charge be not true ; then what does not the man deserve, who will falsely expose an innocent people to the public ? Having lately conversed with a friend who has read Mr. T—r's. pamphlet, with an eye to Mr. Cleland's statement ; he assures me that his statement cannot be found therein ; and to do justice, I may say it is not in the book. That part which is most like it, may be found in the 34th page. But what Mr. T—r. there says, is evidently by way of blaming a few of the injudicious, and will by no means apply to the Body. And what is still worse for Mr. Cleland, those words which he puts in *Italics*, and that of "The Methodists supposing they had all the religion that was going in the world," is not to be found in the book. How shamefully guilty then, must Mr. Cleland be of palming his slander of the Methodists on Mr. T—r. by falsely misrepresenting him. No wonder he should usher in his quotation, or representation, with "*I cannot remember the particular words*," when in fact the book, did not contain such words as Mr. Cleland chose to

make use of. What a pity a man should seek such a refuge, and then make a pretext of the same, for an illiberal attack ; and if Mr. Cleland has made such a capital blunder in his first setting out, may we not fear that the tempest that has driven him in this instance, will land him, before he gets through his book, far beyond the shores of truth.

How has Mr. Cleland committed himself in this case !. He first cogently recommended Mr. T—r.'s pamphlet as an excellent performance ; was (I believe) the only person that sold them in the county where he resides ; and after having extolled and circulated it, he at last finds out that his excellent book contains in its bowels, a "*Grand scheme*" to overturn his church, and has held out what he says is the substance of it, to the public. But, unfortunately for Mr. Cleland, neither the thing nor the substance is to be found in the same. But admitting his statement correct : I am fully authorized to assure the public that, that pamphlet never had the sanction of the Methodists as a body.

About three or four years ago, Mr. Cleland came amongst us as a speaker, was very affable, familiar, and zealous ; and so strenuously preached salvation for all men, that many of his own members denied that he believed in the doctrine of eternal election and reprobation. At this time he made high professions of a Catholic spirit ; and seemed very desirous of having union and fellowship with the Methodists. Accordingly, we met his wish. Not by a "*concerted scheme*," to receive their members, as he insinuates. No : But to enjoy the comforts of social religion. We needed no such scheme as he supposes ; for Catholicism is interwoven in our constitution. We had, therefore, nothing to do, but to accept Mr. Cleland, when his bigotry gave way to propriety. The Methodists were pleased with what appeared to them a truly christian temper ; and Mr. Cleland soon obtained the confidence of many. But alas ! Men of observation soon found that he was privately trying to disaffect our members toward their own church ; persuading them to join him : yea, held up the Elder's office in his church, to tempt a private member. And when the member told him that he was afraid if he left the Methodist church, he would wound the feelings of a great many pious people ; Mr. Cleland replied, "*Never mind that.*" This conduct in Mr. Cleland, accompanied with professions of friendship, did not fail to depreciate him in the estimation of some of our church. This view of his conduct led one to observe, " Mr. Cleland need not take underhand measures to obtain an Elder from us : The Presbyterians in Cumberland have Methodist Elders by consent of parties, when convenience calls

for it." In this state of affairs, our preachers steadily preached, and maintained the doctrine, which Mr. Cleland *seemed* to preach : and more and more convinced our people of the danger of being carried about with every wind of doctrine. At length, when our members perceived that their professed friend was playing an underhand game, they began to treat him more coolly ; at which Mr. Cleland began to complain ; and added that our preachers preached controversy, &c. &c. Having an opportunity, I informed one of our ruling Elders of Mr. Cleland's dissatisfaction ; and gave him to understand that his preaching had given offence. He advised me to go and visit Mr. Cleland ; to take proper measures to adjust differences ; and assured me if it were necessary, he would meet Mr. Cleland on Gospel principles. This I was forward to do ; and accordingly visited Mr. Cleland ; let him know that I had understood that he had been hurt by the Methodists. I informed him, that from the intimacy that had existed between us, as well as my religious profession, I felt it my duty to come and see him on the occasion ; that I had free access to all my brethren ; that if any of them had acted improperly toward him, they should be accountable to him. I therefore desired him to tell me, and that freely, wherein he was hurt by the Methodists : and after conversing freely on both sides for several hours, when I was about to take my leave of Mr. Cleland, I wished to know of him on what terms we parted ; was it peace or war ? He informed me that Calvinism would triumph ; that he should come out on his principles. I replied, that, that should never break friendship between him and me ; that he, as well as many other Presbyterian ministers, had frequently preached in my house ; that he should still be welcome to do so ; that I was fond of honest preachers that he should be as welcome to preach his principles in my house, as any Methodist minister, provided he would suffer me to preach what I believed to be the truth, without complaining : and at the same time acknowledged to Mr. Cleland, that he had the advantage of me ; that if he did not suffer me to preach to the people, what I believed to be the truth, I had not learning enough (much less inclination) to enable me to preach one thing and believe another.

Notwithstanding I soon found that my attempt to appease or satisfy Mr. Cleland was all in vain ; that the decree had already gone forth against us, (*not from all eternity,*) that the Methodists should be branded in the forehead, as they had been on the back ; and that he was then preparing the scourge for them.

And this, gentlemen, is the Mr. Cleland, that now comes

forward with such heavy complaints, founded, as he pretends, on the authority of T—r. the author of the "Black Brotherhood;" but a brotherhood nearer at hand is the real author of the trouble. And now Mr. C. who professed so much sorrow that the union was likely to be dissolved, instead of coming forward to adjust differences and restore peace, when sought unto, substitutes this patched up evasion; and then makes a public attack on our church.

But, Gentlemen, unpromising as the prospect of an amicable adjustment of differences with Mr. C. was: yet I could not forbear making one effort more; remembering that the wise man had said, "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand," &c. Therefore, in two or three days after Mr. Cleland's Dialogue fell into my hands, I addressed to him the following letter, and received the annexed answer.

REVEREND SIR,

A FEW days ago, a pamphlet, intitled, "A familiar dialogue between Calvin and Arminius," fell into my hands. I have read it with attention; and opposed several objections. The author makes the dissatisfactions respecting union between the Methodists and Presbyterians, to have originated in design, on the side of the Methodists; and seems determined to involve the communities in a controversy of a peculiar and disagreeable nature. He then, as an individual, attacks our government. I think both these parts ought to be placed in a local point of view; and that some remarks ought to be made, on the doctrine advanced in that pamphlet. I have resolved so to do. And now, sir, I take the liberty, to inform you that I judge you to be the author of that piece; that, in my reply, I shall place the subject in a local point of view.—That I shall introduce your name, (unless you inform me I am mistaken as to who the author is.) In doing this, I may be under the necessity of laying some things before the publick, that will be painful to you. Therefore, I invite you to a private, friendly interview on the subject; in order that (tho' our confidence may be weakened in each other) we may strive to remove improper impressions, (if there is any) that may have been made on our minds; and thus do honour to our professions: while, at the same time, we may honestly and plainly oppose, what we judge wrong in each others practice, and doctrine. To satisfy you I do not belong to a designing party, if you comply with this request, I proffer you a view of my manuscript, so soon as it is prepared for the press. Accept, sir, these lines as an expression of my earnest desire

for your peace and happiness : while I conclude myself yours
in the bonds of an *equal* and *impartial* gospel.

Rev. Thomas Cleland.

JESSE HEAD.
June 24th 1805.

July 5th, 1805.

REVEREND SIR,

YOUR letter came safe to hand, and now lies before me. You jumble the words *general, individual, local* and *personal*, so much together, that I have in some degree to guess at your meaning. You say I come forward, as an individual, to attack your government. True it was an individual that wrote ; that is most certain : but he wrote, if you observe, in the preface, under the general name of Calvin. You say these points ought to be placed in a local point of view. I wish I understood you fairly ; but if you mean they ought to have a particular reference to you or me only, I am far from thinking so : because there is nothing opposed to your government, but that part which appears to be unscriptural, and without foundation, as I have endeavoured to make appear ; and of course effects hundreds more than you and I. You say you judge me to be the author of the " Familiar Dialogue." Sir, I am, at least in part. However, it was not fear nor shame that stopped me from adding my name, which is at your service ; but be careful how you use it : yea, I say be careful ! You say you expect to lay some things before the public that will be painful to me. I suppose then it is time for me to begin to tremble.

Painful ! you astonish me ! You certainly must know that I have read the newspapers too often to expect any pain from what you can do. *Painful to me ! Wonderful ! !* Did you ever read the fable of the gnat on the ox's horn ? I have. Truly I expect to be pained for *you*, and so do others. You invite me to a friendly intercourse. Any time you please, Sir, only not on the Sabbath day, again, and without calling witnesses, unless you are still afraid that I shall lie or equivocate afterwards. But, sir, go on to write ; but I again intreat thee be careful, for if your answer is not drawn from first principles, it will not be noticed ; and if you should be incorrect as to statements or arguments worth noticing ; you may be sure to see an answer ; as also one to Dow's open links, either by myself or a better hand. As to your *local, individual, &c.* I care not for them. If I write again, I shall write as it suits me : I shall be waiting in the posture of expectation and

anxiety till I see the wonderful things, that is to give me so much pain. I would just inform you that my piece was not written immediatly at you; for it was on the way before you were at my house all night. I said in my preface that Dow's piece was not seen till I had written: my meaning was, that it had not come to hand; but I did see a part of it when I was at Lexington last, at the time of its printing. I had not resolved on writing before then: neither was I anxious for opposing that piece, or I had waited till it was finished; but I wished the public to see a *chain* on our side, as well as yours. Pray don't talk about attacking governments, after you have heard Dow at Springfield, and when you look at the notes of your sermon you preached in this neighbourhood the other day; when you insinuated to the people that we were worse than high-way——high-way——what is it? pshaw! you know. I hate to write it: But, sir, as I had not the opportunity of correcting the press, and as you intend a fire, I think it my duty to save you some unnecessary trouble, perhaps by, pointing out to you typographical errors* in the following:

[But to return to the letter: mr. Cleland says,] "I am not anxious whether you answer this letter or not" From my acquaintance with your disposition, and from past observation, I believe you are fond of what children call "*last lag*;" or, as an eminent servant of Jesus Christ said not long ago, "you were like a man holding his wife while another beat her, while her husband tells her not to complain, but bear it all patiently;" A 1000 copies of Dow's horrid stuff, and misrepresentations, can be printed and circulated in Kentucky, besides other pamphlets before that, together with the general hue and cry of all your circuit-riders, and we must be silent: And because a little vindication has appeared, you are up in arms about it and it must have an answer. I see you are not for "turn about fair play," as the old saying is. But pray go on, sir, and do what you have amind: I shall endeavour to be prepaired, come what will come. I shall write no more by way of letter. Accept of my earnest well wishes for the temporal and eternal welfare of yourself and family.

THOMAS CLELAND.

J. Head.

AS to typographical errors, sir, you need not trouble yourself; they will not stand in my way; and I think it unnecessary to swell my sheets by giving this part of your letter to the public.

IN a second letter I received from mr. Cleland, dated July 11th, 1805, he wrote me as follows ; although he had assured me he would write no more :

“Dear Sir,

THE dialogue is approved of &c. &c. commended too, by the following ministers of our body, to my own knowledge, viz. Camron, Campbell, Finley, Robertson, and Wilson ; but an answer is expected by you, and if worthy of notice, or the cause of truth requires it, you may be sure of a reply. Arrangements are now making, &c. &c.

“It is expected by both your and my friends, that your attempt will be virulent and sarcastic, and chiefly personal ; but however degrading this may be, little or no notice will be taken of it if a reply should be made, but to vindicate truth and expose errors, will be the main object, &c.”

In this letter mr. Cleland tells me his pamphlet is approved of, and recommended by five of the ministers of his Body. I would here observe that I really doubt this assertion of mr. Cleland's at least in part. Nay I have good reason to believe that it was not the case at the time mr. Cleland dated his letters.

I shall only remark on mr. Cleland's answer to mine, that his words no doubt speak the very language of his soul ; and go at once to disclose the man, and place him in that point of light, in which he may not be willing to be seen. In the meantime, lest I should seem to treat with neglect the instructions, which he has vouchsafed to give us on the subject of church government, ordinances, &c. let us take a view of the several particulars, on which, he has shed such a blaze of light. The first thing in our economy, for which he tells us, page 7, there is neither *scriptural precept, nor example, is receiving unconverted adults into the church.* p. 8th. This mr. Cleland thinks highly dangerous to the subjects of that reception themselves ; and adds, with a repugnancy bordering upon honor, *these persons are called brethren.*

I would here ask, what does mr. Cleland call unconverted, and even unawakened persons, now grown to years of discretion, who were received into the church in their infancy ? Is he not at a loss to know what appellation to give them ? Whether he be at a loss, or not, he assures us in the same page, that *persons may go great lengths, and have a great anxiety to partake of the children's bread, and yet have no right to church membership.* And pray, sir, what of those who are already in the church, of which they were made members in infancy ; but who neither do nor ever did manifest a “ great desire to

eat of the children's bread?" Have they no right to church membership? And do you always treat them accordingly? Do you refuse to baptize their children? for instance, did you never baptize a child, and afterwards say that you did not believe that either of its Parents had religion?

Is there not at least as much danger, that such persons will be "Flattered by church membership, to rest without a thorough knowledge of the new birth, and the evil nature of sin;" as that those will, who already enquire with anxious solicitude *what shall we do to be saved?*

For it is not the avowed practice of the Methodists, to receive into their church *unconverted adults, i. e.* adults not turned from their evil ways; or, as Mr. Cleland expresses it, p. 9, to "open the gates of the kingdom to all promiscuously." If that gentleman will take the trouble to cast his eye upon the 133 p. of our book of Discipline, tenth edition, printed in Philadelphia, 1798, he will there learn that *A desire to flee from the wrath to come; and to be saved from their sins,* [not in them] is a condition previously required of all, who apply for admission into these societies. And they are also required to evince the sincerity of this desire, in a probation of at least six months.

Mr. Cleland thinks that none can be admitted to church membership, "In decency and in order, until, like Paul and the Ethiopian Eunuch, they profess their faith in Jesus Christ." I do not remember to have read of any profession, that St. Paul made, previously to his Baptism; other than calling Christ Jesus, Lord, and praying to him. And the same historian informs us, Acts viii. 37 that the Eunuch's profession of faith was made in these words, *I believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God.* And do we receive into the church any who do not profess this Faith? You will tell me the Eunuch's faith was operative: it led him to apply for baptism, &c. And is not that faith operative which leads a man to break off his iniquities by repentance, to come out from amongst the wicked, and in the serious and devout use of all the means of grace, to wait to see the Lord's Salvation?

As to what Mr. Cleland says, p. 9, namely, "the principle thing intended in the right of circumcision was, to initiate the children of the faithful, into the Jewish Church, so the chief design of baptism now is, to admit the children of such as profess themselves christians into the church of Christ."

Without spending time, I would ask Mr. Cleland, if, under the Jewish dispensation, a proselite of the gate, who worshiped one God, but was not circumcised, had offered his child for circumcision; if that right would have been withheld from

him? and if not, has not the children of those parents, who profess their belief of the christian religion, as undoubted a right to the ordinance of baptism? (Once more, do believing parents always have *elect* children? If not, by what authority does mr. Cleland baptize a little reprobate in the name of Christ, and constitute the greater number of Christ's Church?

Again, mr. Cleland says, p. 9, "the chief design of baptism is to admit the children of such as profess themselves christians, into the church of Christ.

Is it indeed, sir? well here you have unconverted members in the church of Christ, and in p. 8, you heavily exclaim against us for receiving unconverted adults. One more of mr. Cleland's inconsistencies, p. 8, he says "While they [unconverted souls] are debared on account of their unrenewed state, it is most likely to alarm and convince them." But when he gets into the humor of finding fault, he argues, "that for them all to come in and see, is the most likely to give conviction," p. 14. Pray, gentlemen, do not such arguments prove, that every body is wrong, when they do not as mr. C. says. But "if all creatures and all their actions were decreed from eternity," as mr. Cleland says, p. 17; I ask, how can the Methodists help doing as they do? have they any power to forbear, or, would he ask them to break the decree, to please him? Is it right for such a poor lump of clay to find fault, or say to the divine father, why didst thou raise up such a people as the Methodists to torment us.

The third thing which mr. Cleland condemns as a practice of our church, which has no foundation in the Holy Scriptures, is, the seclusion of the communicants in approaching the Lord's Table. Mr. Cleland says, he "never could see the propriety of closing doors on this most solemn occasion." p. 13. And therefore (it certainly follows) there can be no propriety in it!

That none of his readers might hesitate in adopting this fair and legitimate conclusion, from a recollection of the example of our Lord and his disciples, he assures us in so many words, "It appears to me evident that he [Christ] did it not for future example. Christ at that time only aimed at and intended the institution of this ordinance." *ibid.* Are you sure, sir, that he meant nothing more? That he did not even *aim at* or *intend* the comfort and edification of those first partakers of that holy sacrament, at its ever memorable institution?

One great end which, in our opinion, is promoted by the Lord's Supper, is, the comfort and establishment of those who *eat of this Bread and drink of this Cup*, in Faith.

Now, when we judge that this end can be most effectually

answered by retiring from the promiscuous multitude, to celebrate and enjoy this holy solemnity, where is the inconsistency of appealing, in vindication of our doing so, to the example of our Lord and his disciples, although we do not fruitlessly endeavour to ascertain precisely the hour, at which the sacramental *Bread* and *Wine* were first distributed: In other words, although after their example, we fix upon the hour in the 24, which we are all of opinion is most convenient and best suited to the end intended.

However that be, Mr. Cleland is positive, that direful consequences attend the practice under consideration. "Those," says he, "who are without, are chagrined, mortified and disappointed," and he *knows*, he says, "from former experience and observation, that at such a time there has been more sin committed in one half hour (*when the doors were shut*) than, in two, when their eyes and ears were gratified" p. 14. Pray Mr. Cleland, how are they disappointed when they know before they assemble, that it is the ordinary custom of the Methodists to administer the Lord's Supper with closed doors, where their houses will admit of it? And why should they be chagrined? Do not men of all descriptions withdraw at pleasure, for social purposes, into rooms more or less private? And no *well-bred man* takes it into his head either to intrude upon them, or to carp at them. And why should any man be displeased because the Methodists use, at their discretion, the common privilege of all citizens?

When Mr. Cleland writes again, I hope he will acquaint his readers, with the secret art, by which he determines *with such absolute certainty*, the quantum of sin in whole congregations.

The passage quoted above, from the 14th page, with many others that might be selected from Mr. Cleland's book, may lead us to believe, that he either possesses a *faculty of discernment* far beyond what most men pretend to, or that he sometimes *asserts* with a *temerity* which would be better avoided. An instance of this nature, if I conceive of it rightly, occurs in the 7th page, where he says, "We (i. e. Presbyterians) have fewer disorderly members and less squabbling and turning out, than you (i. e. Methodists) have."

This may be true; for aught I know, though I should not have thought so, if he had not told me; but I am naturally led to enquire how he *knows it*? His pamphlet strikes at the Methodists, not barely in his own neighbourhood, or county, (where he has commonly resided, I believe, ever since he was a boy) but throughout the western country, at least. Accordingly, in page 6, he represents the reputed author of an

anonymous pamphlet, mr. T—r. (the Rev. C. J. Taylor, who lives in Fleming or Mason county) as a principal member of a secret combination, who had formed a *grand scheme* against the Presbyterian church. And again, in page 60th, he exclaims, "This is the tone of preachers and pamphlets all round your circuits. Your whole force is levelled entirely at professors of other denominations."

I would here ask, is mr. C. acquainted with all the Methodist societies *all round our circuits*? Does he know how many disorderly members they contain? Has he an intimate knowledge of all the Presbyterian congregations in the counties through which those circuits extend. Mr. Taylor lives at least 100 miles, if not more, from that gentleman. If then we make mr. Cleland's place of residence the centre of a circle of 200 miles diameter, does he know how many members of the Presbyterian church, will be included, to whom the epithet *disorderly* may with propriety be applied? If then, he does not know the number of *disorderly members*, either in the one church, or the other; by what magic has he found out which has more, or fewer?

Before I dismiss this subject, I cannot forbear taking some notice of the curious excuse, which mr. C. makes Arminius offer, in order to extenuate what it seems he had no longer the audacity to *defend*. Poor Arminius, having all along to depend on the masterly dictative talents of mr. C. and being much cramped, is brought to fall, as it were, like an humble suppliant before his *powerful* antagonist, and crave, as a boon, this last resort: "I hope, sir, you will make some allowance for the people called Methodists—They have been persecuted more than any other society; and in reality were forced to this method of administering the ordinance, in former times, for fear of their enemies; and having a great respect for our fathers and leaders in those times, have never deviated from this rule." p. 14.

Thus you see, gentlemen, Arminius has stooped to the degrading character of a cringing suppliant, and yet can get no quarters. Mr. Cleland is not yet softened in the least, by the palliative to which his attention is prayed. He mingles his reply with reproaches: "*I have often,*" says he, "*heard this reason urged in behalf of the practice; and I had rather not have heard it, appearing to me more like arrogating merit, instead of proving the legality of the practice.*" Proving the legality of the practice! Is it necessary in argumentation to prove the *legality* of a practice, when no law of God or man is produced, which it is even *pretend'd* is violated by it?

If the author has produced one in the instance before us,

I have not been able to see it. Is mr. Cleland really ignorant, that the custom under consideration is a usage of the church of England? The Methodists were formerly societies chiefly belonging to that church, united under certain regulations. After the auspicious revolution, which severed the United States from Great Britain, viz. about the end of the year 1784, the Methodists in America, became an independent church; and they continued this usage of the church, to which they had belonged, because they approved of it; not for fear of the violence of their enemies, from which the laws of their country would have protected them. Nor from any superstitious veneration for *fathers* or *leaders*.

This part of mr. Cleland's book shews how accurately he is informed, respecting the past transactions of the religious community, which he has thought proper to assail. And no doubt, those amongst his readers, who have the most intimate, and extensive knowledge of that community, and particularly their ministers; who know *their* doctrine, manner of life, long-suffering, charity, patience, persecutions, afflictions, [2 Tim. iii. 10, 11.] will be of opinion, that mr. Cleland has either relied on incorrect information, relative to more recent occurrences, or that he has wilfully misrepresented that community: That whatever mr. Cleland may have known, or thought he knew, concerning individuals, neither the preaching, nor the conduct of the body is of the complexion, which he has held out, or evinsive of the sinister, the dark and malignant designs, he has ascribed to them.

To touch upon one more instance of mr. Cleland's ignorance of our doctrine, or manifest design to misrepresent us: I would call the attention of my readers, to what he makes Arminius say, respecting original sin, or in other words, what he himself says in p. 17, *is our own language*, viz. "*That all children came into the world, like a clean, white piece of paper.*" Is this, sir, the doctrine of the Methodists? Do they really deny original sin? Does any of their writings sanction such an assertion? No, sir: and to detect you in your excentric roving, and shew your want of reading, or base design, to misrepresent, I will refer our readers to mr. Wesley's Sermon on original sin, his Sermon on the new Birth, and mr. Fletcher's appeal, together with any, or all the authors of our church, that have written on the subject; and should these be thought insufficient, I will here quote the 7th article of our faith, on original, or birth sin, which the reader will find in our *Book of Discipline*, sixth edition, p. 54. viz. "*original sin standeth not in the fall of Adam. (as the Palagian's do vainly talk; but in the corruption, of the nature of every*

man, that naturally is engendered of the of offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually."

Pray, mr. Cleland, look at this, and blush, that you have been capable of telling to the world, that which is so far from truth, and have not even the *shadow* of a foundation for the same. And when your disposition shall prompt you to write again, let me entreat you, to impel that *fertile* imagination of yours, to confine itself within the limits of *truth's firm bounds*. As I shall perhaps find it necessary to call the attention of my readers to other improper, [not to say untrue] statements in mr. Cleland's pamphlet; I shall drop this part of the subject, for the present, and proceed to take notice of the doctrinal part of his book. His, did I say? Nay, it ought to be considered rather, as the ashes of ancient authors, who long since are quietly resting in their silent graves.

And it may not be improper to inform my readers, that if they can procure the Rev. Henry Pathlo's Sermon's, printed by James Adams, for the author, in the year 1788, they will at once see that mr. Cleland is a *mere transcriber*; and that there is very few, (if any) new arguments started in his *first-born* production; except that one in p. 38, where he makes out to get *the man born again*, and then as in a triumph demands, "*Where is the scripture, or reason, that says he can be unborn?*" Suffer me here to retort, by observing that the scripture informs us, that God made man in his own image; *Well now we have gotten the man made*, and I demand, *where is the scripture, or reason that says he can be unmade again?* Lame as this argument is, yet I think it fully equal to mr. Cleland's, and as applicable in the one case, as the other: However if mr. Cleland wants to know how a branch that is grafted into the *true vine*, and has partaken of the nature, of the *true olive tree*, may be again severed therefrom—I would reply in the words of the Apostle to the Romans, Chap. xi. 20, 21, 22, *because of unbelief, they were broken off*. And if any *stand*, it is by *faith*, [not by an eternal decree.] therefore, *be not high-minded, but fear*; for if God spared not the natural branches, *take heed*, lest he, also spare not thee. Behold therefore, the goodness, and severity of God, on them which fall. Severity; but toward thee goodness; *if thou continue in his goodness*; otherwise, thou also shalt be cut off. The same doctrine was taught by our Lord: *Now ye are clean, abide in me*; see John xv. 3, 4, 6. "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." And lest these should not satisfy mr. Cleland, I will call his at-

tention to Rev. ii. Chap. where our Lord tells us of some, that had left their first love—yea, hard of belief, as Mr. Cleland appears to be, yet, Christ tells us *they are fallen*; and commands them to *repent*. To *do their first works*; and threatens them if they do not, that *he will come unto them quickly, and remove their candlestick out of his place, except they repent*. Whether Mr. Cleland will call this becoming unborn again, or not; we believe that our Lord *really* meant what he said; and infer a possibility of “forgetting that we were purged from our old sins,” 2 Pet. of so abusing the grace of God as that He may “swear in his wrath, that we shall never enter into his rest.” Heb. iii. 2. Wherefore we cry to our fellow sinners, with Paul, “let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.” Heb. iv. 11.

Among the number of things in our administration, and government, that Mr. Cleland cannot *approve*—because *they appear to him founded on neither scripture, precept, nor example*, (see p. 7, and 8.) is our *love feast*. He just brings it into view, and instantly drops it as unworthy of his notice. Well, sir, as you appear to be ignorant indeed, as to what the scriptures set forth, as the primitive practice among the ancient christians, for your better instruction, I would direct your attention to the epistle of Jude, 12, verse; you will there find that *love feast*, are of no modern date, and when you write again, you may tell us that you have at least found scriptural example for that *prudential institution*. And suffer me to tell you, sir, if your reading had been very extensive, you might have seen in Watson's *apology for Christianity*; see p. 76, and that *love feasts*, were a primitive practice among christians, until about the fourth, or fifth century—when they were put down by civil authority.

Previous to my entering upon Mr. Cleland's first proposition, viz. Predestination, Election, Fore-Knowledge and Eternal Love, I will enquire what he means by Fore-Knowledge, Eternal Love, Decrees, &c.

He says, (page 19) *Whatever objection can be imagined against an absolute decree, the same can with the same force and upon the same grounds, be urged against a certain and absolute fore-knowledge, &c.*

Again, (p. 20) *If it were certain, i. e. known to God, that some would believe, this certainty must arise from the purpose, i. e. Decree, of God, for nothing future can be absolutely certain i. e. known to God, upon any other foundation.*

Again, (p. 27) *Your objection militates against God's pre-science as well as his eternal purpose which, is founded thereon, if there be any distinction.*

What, sir, after asserting again and again, that the fore-

knowledge and decrees of God is *one and the same thing*, your *trembling diffidence and modesty* have driven you to an *IF*. *If there be any distinction*. Admit there is sir, and you cannot save your *precious doctrine* from perdition ; and to assert, (as you have done) that they are *one and the same thing*, is to assume a knowledge too high, and bordering on presumption.

I would ask, if a man must not be perfectly acquainted with the constitution, before he can determine with certainty, the constitutionality of the law. And I would further ask, if mr. Cleland must not perfectly understand fore-knowledge or infinite wisdom, before he can, with certainty, determine what is and what is not consistent with fore-knowledge. Should mr. Cleland tell me, according to rules of logic, it is so ; I answer, the rules of logic were formed by man to direct such poor creatures as we are to the proposed end, and they answer that purpose. But will he affirm, that they will strictly apply to God ? Can his limited ken *grasp the infinite* ; and tell us with certainty, what is, and what is not consistent with infinite perfection ? If not, mr. Cleland's system is as a man at sea on a plank ; whether it will come to a safe harbor, who can tell ? For information, I would ask how does God foresee what man will do ? Is it because he has decreed what they shall do ? or is it because he sees they choose to do so, when they might do otherwise ? If mr. Cleland should approve of the latter, then he ruins his *sweet scheme* of election and reprobation. If he asserts the former, as he has indicated, then the horrid consequence of charging the sin and damnation of millions of creatures on God, is unavoidable : a consequence this, which in my opinion, is too blasphemous to be believed. But how or where does mr. Cleland found his principle of reasoning ? From fore-knowledge in God he cannot, for this ocean is too profoundly deep. In man he cannot, for he possesses no fore-knowledge to reason from. That God does foresee future events, I am willing to admit ; but the manner in which he knows them, is beyond the limited knowledge of angels or men, but he certainly cannot know them in opposition to his nature, or his law, which is founded on his nature ; for instance, God foreknew David would commit murder and adultery, yet he as certainly knew he might have avoided it, and therefore forbade it, but if David was impelled to commit such actions, because it was fore-known, it follows that he was obliged to do what the divine law expressly prohibited ; then if this law be founded on the divine nature, which consists of love, purity, goodness, mercy, justice, holiness, &c. it follows that the fore-knowledge of God which mr. Cleland declares is the same as his decree, is the cause of adultery, murder, &c. while the nature and law of God, are both against it. Oh ! horrible doctrine ! Well might mr. Calvin himself stile it "*horrible decretum*," that is, the horrible decree. Again. This view of the fore-knowledge of God not only sets up an eternal warfare in the nature of deity, but it sets aside universal consciousness ; for how can conscience accuse or excuse the heathen, when every

action, good or evil, is the result of fixed decrees? what propriety is there in accusing a man, or in a man's accusing himself for what is unavoidable? Certainly conscience would as readily excuse a man for a bad action as a good one, if both are the effect of an eternal decree, or fore-knowledge. Moreover, sir, your doctrine strikes at the whole nature of God; for if divine wisdom brings to pass the evil of injustice, how can justice in God require justice of his creatures, or command us to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly, &c. while he decreed the contrary. Who does not see that this doctrine tends to weaken every motive to do justice, both in church and state? Again. It equally militates against the love of God, by supposing it was not efficiently large to extend to the whole human race, and that it consequently, fixed on but a few. If a man loves God, he loves every creature that has not passed the limits of the day of grace. This accounts for ministers offering salvation to *all* when they feel the love of God, and man: and their preaching the contrary doctrines, when they have not these gracious feelings. This doctrine of your's is opposed to the truth of God, who declares he has no pleasure in the death of a sinner, and being unchangable he never had; but your doctrine supposes he always had pleasure in the death of the reprobate, because he foresaw they must and would perish. And so it might be shewn, your scheme is equally contrary to all the divine perfections. When I stand on original ground, and look at your doctrine in the blaze of the divine nature, it calls to mind that *monstrum horrendum with ne'er an eye in its bead*.

Once more. Such a view of infinite fore-knowledge as your doctrine suggests, is calculated to disgrace the divine impartiality in opposition to the express declaration of scripture, which says, he [God] is no respecter of persons. Place this text upon original ground, and let Mr. C. point out the period before the world was, when the unchangable God did *respect* the persons of the *elect*, and *reject* the persons of the *reprobate*, if he can. If he cannot do this, I shall infer that the fore-knowledge of God is perfectly consistent with his nature in willing that all without respect of persons, should have an opportunity of escaping the wrath to come. Further: while I stand on original ground, I cannot with all my efforts, see that *black spot* in the glorious sun of righteousness, or that *hypocritical principle* that offers what is called common grace to men, while it secretly consigns them to perdition, because it was fore-known the majority of mankind would choose evil, though equally fore-known they could have avoided it; and as I have been unaccustomed to view the divine being through the green glass of Mr. C's. prejudice, I still view that principle of sincerity in God, which was in him before the world was, and in his son when he wept over Jerusalem and declared he "would have gathered them as a hen gathered her chickens under her wings, and they would not."

Mr. Cleland's scheme stands in equal opposition to divine power, for if *fore-knowledge* be the same as a *decree*, Almighty

power has in every age been counteracting its decrees : for instance, the wisdom of God foresaw the fall of angels and men, and the sins of the whole world : and it cannot be denied that infinite power has been opposing sin, the work of Satan, in every age in such a manner as not to contradict the other perfections of God : but if fore-knowledge and divine decrees are the same in point of time and substance, with what propriety could the power of God oppose what his wisdom and decree have fixed.

From Mr. Cleland's idea of the fore-knowledge of God, it seems as though it is blended in his opinion with the *decrees* of God, and that they are one and the same thing. But if this be so, I would here ask Mr. Cleland if he is not rising up in rebellion against the Most High : for instance, God from all eternity saw all the sinful actions that have been committed by all the people amongst whom you labor. Now if all those sinful actions as foreseen by God, have come to pass, to use your own expressions, "at the time, in the manner, and by the instruments appointed from eternity ;" as far as you condemn your hearers for their past actions, are you not condemning the very decrees of God, which extends to "*all creatures and all their actions, and all events,*" as you have told us [page 17] and that without a shadow of exception ?" This, Sir, is what I cannot believe, because it at once makes God the author of all the sin that ever was or ever will be committed in the world. For I believe that it is a maxim that will hold good in all cases ; to wit : that the cause of the cause, is the cause of the effect, and that the cause of the effect is the cause of all the effects flowing from the cause. To illustrate this I will state this case. A gun smith sells arms to an unsuspected person, with which he immediately commits murder. The gun smith is not accountable for the action, because he knew not the particular intention : But if he knows the applicant's design, and aids him by furnishing arms, though he sells them, he is guilty, and may be justly punished. For an action is imputable when the agent may be reasonably looked upon as the real author of it, whether he is directly or indirectly the author.

Thus then, is God the real author of sin, if his fore-knowledge and decrees are so blended together as to render every action that man performs absolutely necessary.

One more. Mr. Cleland says that nothing future can be known upon any other foundation, than that of an absolute decree.

Hence the decrees of God are prior to his knowledge, and if his knowledge be from eternity, the decrees are older than his knowledge, consequently older than eternity. Mr. Cleland's friend, Mr. R. Mack, is precisely of his sentiment ; for he tells us [page 14th] "No one in Heaven or earth can know an act will come to pass, unless they have absolute power and will to effect it, and also knows that his mind will not change."

According to the opinion of those gentlemen, God's *fore-knowledge* is taken away ; and he cannot know any thing, per-

son, action or event, without his having previously decreed the thing, person, action or event; and also decreed that his mind shall not change.

We come now to take notice of the proposition which Mr. Cleland calls *predestination, election*, yea, he calls it, *foreknowledge or eternal love*; [p. 22] as if he could see no difference between *knowledge* and *love*, or by confounding things so different, he meant to insinuate that God eternally loves the Devil and all the sin and wickedness in the world, because he foresaw it would be. But this is the case---Mr. Cleland is an advocate for eternal election and reprobation---a subject that cannot maintain its ground in a plain dress, and therefore it must have an artificial garb of soft words and fair speeches. These may deceive the unguarded. But I must observe to you, gentlemen, that the controverted point between Mr. Cleland and me, is not whether predestination, election, reprobation, &c. are scriptural phrases, or that God decreed that Christ should be the Savior, or fixed the physical laws by a divine decree, nor yet whether he decreed to create angels and men, as he insinuated, p. 17. But the disputed point is this; did the all-wise God from eternity decree the damnation of a certain number of men, and did he decree the means as well as the end, that is, did he decree that Adam should fall and thereby bring all his posterity into a state of sin, and by that means qualify the reprobate for everlasting destruction? In a word, did God make one part of the human family for salvation and the other for damnation.---“We are constantly branded,” says Mr. Cleland, p. 16. “with holding that God made one part of mankind for salvation, and the other part for damnation. But what an uncandid charge is this.” Again, p. 40, he says, “But this is generally the first dash we get from your side of the house; and there is scarcely a member in your societies, from the highest to the most illiterate, who has not this argument in his mouth, as soon as he is enlisted under the standard of Methodism.” No wonder, when the thing is so plain, that every one must see it, as soon as the scales of Calvinism fall from his eyes. And to lay the sin and damnation of men upon God, is such an unequivocal mark of false doctrine, that I do not wonder Mr. Cleland should start, and try to extricate himself from the charge. Yet, this very charge I undertake from his own book, to fix upon him. With respect to the damnation of men, Mr. Cleland says, (page 27) “He (God) certainly foreknew from all eternity, that among the fallen race of Adam, he would certainly save some, and damn others; but I would ask, whether he foreknew this, without designing to do it.”

Again, p. 21: The decrees of Election necessarily implies that God hath, without any conditions, in his will and council, chosen a certain number to grace, low and glory hereafter.” I would here reply, that by an unavoidable consequence,

he has reprobated the non-elect from grace here, to damnation hereafter. "For," says Mr. C. p. 23. "if we admit there is an elect, we must admit of a non-elect (that is, in plain English, a *re-probatus*) for the one supposes the other. It was necessary therefore, to be determined how many and who in particular should be interested in this wonderful work, and saved by it." And if we ask when this choice was made, Mr. C. answers, p. 25 "It must be from eternity."

From these quotations, it is clear, I think, beyond a possibility of doubt, that, according to this scheme, God from eternity, without any condition in his will and council, decreed to save some of mankind, and damn the rest; and that it was "determined how many, and who in particular;" and thus Mr. C. lays the charge of damnation at God's feet!

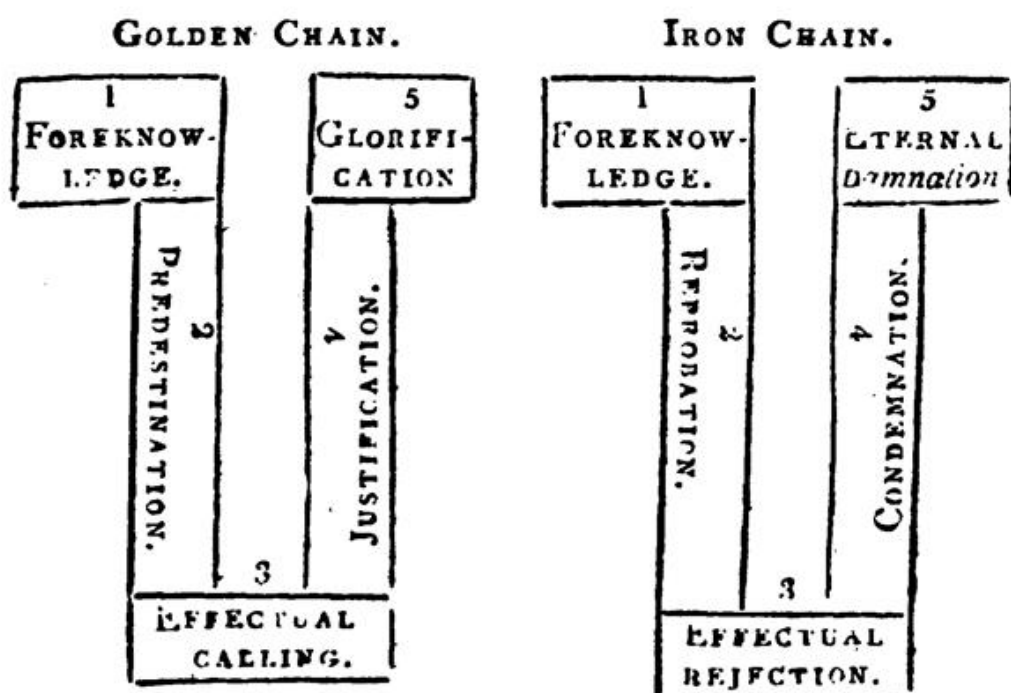
I enquire in the next place, if consistent with Mr. Cleland's scheme, they can be damned for their own bad works? For "by the decrees of God," says Mr. C. "I understand his purpose and determination concerning all men and all things." p. 18. "The object of those divine decrees or purposes, it is evident are strictly and properly universal; so much so, indeed, as not to admit of any exception, or shadow of exception—all creatures, and all their actions, and all events." p. 17.

Here then all human actions, *without exception, or shadow of exception*, are decreed, and cannot be otherwise than they are; of course, the fall of Adam, and the consequent effects on his posterity, were decreed from all eternity. For, say Mr. C. "Original sin and actual transgression, are the only two things that will keep us out of Heaven? one is the fountain or source from whence the other flows." p. 11. Hence God decreed that the fountain, i. e. original sin, should be opened when the fallen race of Adam and that of his posterity, should have no more power to stop sinning, than the stream has to stop the fountain. Yea, farther, that "all the actions of each individual without the shadow of exception, were decreed from all eternity."

If so—then so sure as he that wills and aids another to commit murder, is guilty of murder; just so sure is God the author, the proper author of all the sin in the world, which idea is absolutely enough to terrify the imagination! And yet it does not deviate one hair's breadth from Mr. Cleland's *precious* scheme.

I will now introduce his *Golden Chain*, with its five *precious* links; opposite to which you shall have its inseparable counterpart, an *Iron Chain*, composed of just as many links. You will please to read the chains a link at a time; first a link of the golden chain is No. 1. and then a link of the Iron Chain,

or No. 2.; which is the infallible counterpart. I suppose this Iron chain to be rusty, from the little use which Mr. Cleland makes of it : he just contrives it, fastens it on the non-elect, and then leaves them in the prison of reprobation, consigned over to eternal damnation, while he diverts his readers with the golden chain dangling about the favoured elect. But I beg for a full view of all the parts—and lo ! here it is :



“ These links,” says Mr. Cleland, “ are made and welded by Him, who works with fire and hammer. Cast your eyes on the 29th and 30th verses of the 8th chapter of Paul to the Romans : he informs us in the 28th verse, that they who love God, are called according to his purpose ; then begins the the chain : For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate, &c. Here are the two first links ; the other three are easily made out of the 29th verse : moreover whom he did predestinate them he also called. This is the third link ; and whom, he called them he also justified. Here is the fourth link : and whom he justified, he also glorified. This is the fifth or last link,” in the Golden Chain. Now let us follow this chain a little for our information, taking the counterpart along with it :—

Golden Chain.

Iron Chain.

No. 1.

No. 2.

And here we have in the first place God's foreknow-ledge, or eternal love* to his	From whence we may infer, in the second place, God's foreknowledge or eternal ha-
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Is FOREKNOWLEDGE and ETERNAL LOVE one and the same thing ? If so, the objects of foreknowledge must be equally the

children in Christ.

1.

That God's decree of election, is founded on his foreknowledge or eternal love, we have again asserted Pet. i. 2.

Whom he did foreknow he did predestinate: You add (or foreappoint) "and this not to future happiness, without regard to the way of holiness: Neither because he foresaw they would do so or so; but because he himself did predestinate them to be conformable to the image of his son. p. 22.

they are called by those means he appointed in his eternal council; they shall have the call at the time, in the manner, and by the instrument appointed from eternity. p. 24.

1

But I observe you always leave out this part of the 29th verse, when you go to charge our doctrine with such horrid consequences, as Fatalism or Universalism. p. 22.

for believing your system charges God with making one part of mankind for salvation, and the other for damnation.

1

"We therefore say that the number of the elect could not be indefinite and undetermined, unless we attribute doubtfulness and uncertainty to God. It was therefore necessary to be determined how

tred to all his children out of Christ.

2.

That God's decree of reprobation, or eternal hatred to the non elect, may again be inferred from your notion, is evident; but you cannot support it from St. Peter's epistle.

Whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate; I infer, or fore-appoint; and this not to future punishment, without regard to the way of sin and wickedness; neither because he foresaw that they would do so or so; but because he himself did predestinate them to be conformable to the image of the devil. For

they are called by those means he appointed in his eternal council; they shall have the call at the time, in the manner, and by the instrument appointed from eternity. p. 24.

2

And I observe you always leave out the counterpart of your doctrine, when you handle the golden chain, preach Christ to ALL, threaten to punish them for not coming, and charge us for being unfriendly

And I infer that it was equally necessary to determine the number of the reprobate, and who in particular were fore-ordained from all eternity to be uninterested in that wonderful work, and damned by it. And

objects of eternal love. But all the sinful actions of men and devils are the objects of foreknowledge, consequently must be objects of eternal love. This short deduction will at once shew the fallacy of Mr. Cleland's arguments, respecting foreknowledge and decrees.

many and who in particular, should be interested in this wonderful work, and saved by it : and thus the two first links in the chain are established." p. 23.

falls to the ground like Dagon before the Ark : and thus by establishing your two first links, you have fixed upon God the sin and damnation of all that are lost.

1

" In order that this may be done [the elect made conformable to his son] he lets down the middle of the chain to them, for they were called by those means, he appointed in his eternal council. They shall have the call at the time, in the manner, and by the instruments appointed from eternity."

the instruments appointed from eternity.

I confess the lot of the poor reprobates is intolerable ; for one decree to secure Adam's fall, by which a fountain of sin is opened, sufficient to damn a world ; and for this fountain by the same decree to impel its diabolical contents, like streams, through all the reprobates, whose actions are the objects of those decrees ; while not one particle of the grace of the Holy Spirit, which alone could dry up the fountain, is afforded, and then damned forever, for not turning from their evil ways : I say, cannot be a decree of the God of goodness and love.— This is no other than Calvin's decree. Therefore lift up thy head, O Sinner.

1

The holy Spirit in the meantime performing his part in the work of salvation, applying the grace of God to his people : for he shall take the gospel salvation, and clearly manifest it to the understanding, and bring it home with saving power to the souls of my people. p. 24.

2

And in order to complete the counterpart [that the reprobates may be made conformable to the image of the devil] he would not let down the middle of the chain to them ; but enticed them by those means he appointed in his eternal council : for they shall have the temptation to commit those actions, at the time, in the manner, and by

2

But in this blessed work the unfortunate reprobate has no part : the holy Spirit applies no grace to his soul, but leaves him in the state where Adam, by the decree of God, put him : and therefore he shall hide the gospel salvation from him, by making no application to his heart and soul ; because he is fore-appointed to destruction.

1

As many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

They believed because they were ordained, and not ordained because they believed. These words stare you so boldly in the face, and speak so plainly, that you cannot get over them, only by telling us they might be translated to the reverse. p. 24.

You must plead guilty to the charge, or give up your scheme.

1

While the blessed spirit is convincing the soul of sin, righteousness and judgment, and as a heavenly gale is blowing upon them in regeneration, the glorious Mediator is interceding for them above. He there pleads his whole active and passive obedience for them, and they are thereby justified; are made righteous by the perfect righteousness of Christ imputed, or made over to them, by an act of grace. And now we close the last link.

or made over to them by an ungracious act.

And now, sir, by following you step by step, we close the fifth or last link, of the horrid Iron Chain—the unavoidable counterpart of your *precious doctrine*, which is so sweet to your immortal soul—a doctrine this, which charges infinite goodness, first, with an eternal design of damning a part of his creatures; secondly, with decreeing all the actions of men, whereby he secured Adams fall, or original sin; which is the fountain from which all sinful actions, which are but the streams, do flow: Yea, and to complete your horrible plan, insinuates, that all those sinful actions, without a shadow of exception, are decreed and brought about, at the time, in the manner, and by the instruments appointed from eternity. And from this, your *precious doctrine*, I pray God to deliver all the people.

1

And consequently all the rest did not believe, because they were reprobated, and not reprobated because they did not believe. This inference stares you so boldly in the face, and shews the hateful part of your system so plain, that you cannot get clear by denying that God made one part of mankind for salvation, and the other part for damnation.—

2

While the blessed spirit passes by the reprobate; convinces the soul neither of sin, righteousness, nor judgment; and while the decrees of God secure their practical sin, the glorious Mediator is interceding against them above. He there pleads Adam's whole active and passive disobedience against them, and they are thereby condemned; are made unrighteous by the perfect unrighteousness of Adam; which is the fountain or original sin p 11. imputed

To impartial enquirers after truth, I appeal ; and now, gentlemen, that you may clearly understand us, and thereby see that I have not misrepresented Mr. Cleland in the least, but have only held forth the inseparable counter-part of his doctrine, with its dreadful consequences: I beg you, to attend to a few questions and answers

1st. I ask, what are the objects of God's decrees ? Mr. Cleland answers,—“ By the decrees of God, I understand his purpose and determination, concerning all persons and things,” p. 18.

2d. But how are all persons, and things secured by the decrees of God ?

Ans. “ The decrees of elections (and consequently reprobation,) *for one supposes the other,* (p. 23.) “ always and invariably include all the means and instruments by which his gracious (and consequently wrathful) purposes were to be accomplished,” p. 33.

3d. Pray let me understand : are all the instruments and second causes to human actions unalterably decreed ?

Ans. “ They,” [the elect, and consequently the reprobate] “ are called by those means appointed in his eternal council. They shall have the call at the time, in the manner, and by the instruments appointed from eternity.” p. 24. I beg leave to repeat my first question.

What are the objects of God's decrees. ?

Ans. “ The objects of those divine decrees, or purposes are strictly and properly universal. So much so indeed, as not to admit of any exception, or shadow of exception—all creatures, and all their actions, and all events.” p. 17.—what, s.r, not even a shadow of exception ? no, *not a shadow of exception !*

Gentlemen, most certainly I am now at liberty to conclude, that all the blasphemy, treachery, robbery, adultery and murder, that ever was, or ever will be committed, was decreed, and accomplished, by those means, “ in the manner, and by the instruments appointed from eternity,”—which I confess is inexpressibly shocking ! For if this be the case, I see no way in the world, but to charge God, not only with making some men for damnation, but with all the sin that ever was, or ever will be committed.

To this inference, Mr. Cleland objects; and he ought to be heard. “ This,” says he, p. 48, “ is generally the first dash we get from your side of the house.—There is scarcely a member in your broad connexion, from the highest to the most illiterate, who has not this argument in his mouth as soon as enlisted under the standard of Methodism—again, we are constantly branded with holding that God made one part of man-

kind for salvation and another for damnation ; but what an uncandid charge is this. p. 16.

If mr. Cleland can wipe off the charge, let him do it ; but I hope he will suffer us to think, that he believes the doctrine he is striving to establish.

Again, mr. Cleland says, p. 34, 5, " Now, although God has decreed all things and actions, yet he is not the author of sin, because sin is not an essential part of any action or thing, being a want of perfection arising from the evil disposition of the moral agent, in the performance of an action, on account of which the action is justly termed evil or simple ; it is a transgression of the law as well as the want of conformity to it."

What a happy thought ? here mr. Cleland " thinks he has got a little hole to creep out at." p. 39. But if I am not mistaken it will squeeze him into the consequence, which he struggles to shun, and which cannot fail to ruin his system. For if God decreed *all creatures and all their actions* ; then he decreed the actions by which the Angels fell from their original holiness and happiness. Now if sin was no part of this action, but a want of perfection arising from the evil disposition, did God put it there, or did sin ? If God, then he is the author of the evil disposition itself, from which mr. Cleland makes all sin flow. If the latter, then by mr. Cleland's mode of arguing, it will follow, the evil disposition produces sin, and sin produces the evil disposition.

And now, candid reader ; I think you must acknowledge, if mr. Cleland *squeezes out of this little hole*, he must be *squeezed* to death.

Again, If God decrees " all creatures, and all their actions," then he decreed the action by which Adam fell from paradisaical innocence, and involved his posterity in original sin. Now, if sin was no part of this being, or action, but " from an evil disposition in Adam ;" I ask, from whence that evil disposition ? Was it from God, or the tempting devil ? If the former, God must be the author of the sin, which the evil disposition produces ; and if the latter, then God decreed this act of the devil. Therefore it comes to the same thing. Once more, " if all creatures and all their actions, and all events without a shadow of exception, were decreed,"---Then it was decreed that David should commit adultery with Uriah's wife, and afterwards murder her husband. Now, if sin were no part of these actions, " but a want of perfection arising from the evil disposition of the moral agent," I wish to know if David, as a moral agent, could not have refrained from those actions ? If he could, then, in that case the decree would

not have been broken ; but if he could not, seeing they were decreed—then how could he obey the decree, which is the will of God, (for a decree is the act of the will) without committing sin, seeing the acts of adultery and murder, are positively forbidden by God. And if he could not commit adultery and murder, without committing sin ; and if God decreed that those *actions should come to pass at the time, in the manner, and by the instruments appointed from eternity*, p. 24. I ask in the name of common sense, if God is not the author, the proper author of those horrible sins ? And what is here said of David, may be urged in respect to all the sinners in the world.

But who can firmly believe that the all-good, all-wise, unchangeable God, should firmly decree the fall of man ; and then forbid the act, by which Adam was to fulfil the decree : that he should forbid adultery, murder, &c. under pain of eternal damnation ; if from all eternity, he had decreed all the acts of adultery, murder, &c. that ever should be committed in the world.

If any can believe it, I confess I cannot ; and therefore I consider the connexion between the foreknowledge of God, and the voluntary actions of *moral agents*, very differently from what Mr. Cleland does.

Once more, I beg the attention of my readers, while I follow Mr. Cleland into the inextricable dilemma in which he now stands.

Gentlemen, you have seen by plain declarations, or unavoidable consequences that Mr. Cleland's scheme of divinity, charges the acts, the sin, and the damnation of all that are lost, upon the gracious Lord of saints ; at this I am sure your wellmeaning hearts feel a degree of abhorrence ; but if you will indulge me with a patient hearing, I will present you with Mr. Cleland's efforts, to reconcile eternal election and reprobation, with the moral agency of man ; where he gets so involved in difficulties, that I venture to say, I will make him preach Calvin's funeral sermon (*his precious doctrine sweet to his mortal soul*) by as fair consequences, as any candid judges, could reasonably ask for.

Be it known to the world (says Mr. Cleland p. 37) *I do maintain that no man, consistent with scripture and reason, can hold the one (that is, the unconditional perseverance of the saints) without the other (eternal election and reprobation) and if he renounces the one, so must he the other also.*

Now if Mr. Cleland affords sufficient ground to believe, that there is a possibility of falling from grace ; then election and reprobation, will fall according to the above declaration. Gen-

them, should I be able to shew (not only from the word of eternal truth) but from Mr. Cleland's book, that the perseverance of the saints is fallible, you cannot hesitate a moment, to determine in conformity to the foregoing declaration, that Calvinism, unconditional election, and reprobation, have fell like Dagon before the Ark.

I ask then, for what end did God make man, was it for happiness or misery? if the former, how came he miserable?

Mr. Cleland answers, "We constantly affirm and believe for his own glory. Was he made upright? who made him sinful? did God make him happy? who made him miserable? did he make him after his own image? who unmade him? did he make him for damnation or did man make himself? the latter no doubt. p. 16.

So sure then, as God made man upright, in his own image, happy, and designed for his own glory—i. e. the honor and praise of God, who is infinite in goodness and wisdom—there was none, no, not one, foreordained from all eternity to destruction, for it would be manifest folly, in a common potter, to consign a large majority of his earthen vessels to destruction, just to shew that he had power over a lump of clay; and wisdom would pronounce it barbarity and despotism in an Indian, who would make three of his sons lawless favourites, and hang the other seven up in the flames and roast them alive, just to shew that he had power over his children, from 10 years old and under. And then should he issue his proclamation declaring his unlimited goodness, and sweareth that he will not the death of any; I think all would readily say from such goodness and wisdom good Lord deliver us.

It is therefore of necessity, Gentlemen, that you decide it was Calvin, and not God, who *without any condition in his will and council, chose a certain number to grace here and glory hereafter*; and consequently, foreordained a certain number to sin here, and damnation hereafter. The advocates for eternal election and reprobation, under the softer name of final perseverance; frequently tell us, mankind were like so many condemned to die, of whom the Governor might pardon some, and leave the rest to die in their sins. True, but if the judge were to condemn one man to be hanged for not doing what he had no power to do, he would be guilty of injustice; but if he was first to decree that a man's father, that is Adam, should commit murder, and then hang three parts of his children, he could not possibly be clear.

I now ask was there any difference in the children of Adam, after the fall, to move goodness, to reject some, while happiness was communicated to others, or that would authorize an impartial God to make a difference.

Mr. Cleland answers, p. 20, *none in the creature, for all mankind were viewed as in the same situation, and on a perfect level considered in themselves.*

When this testimony of Mr. Cleland's is considered in relation to infinite goodness, and we remember that Jehovah solemnly declares, *as I live saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked.* Ezek. xxxiii. chap. I feel confident that you must conclude that Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man. Heb. ii. 9. If so, none are lost but such as fall from some degree of grace.

Consequently, perseverance is fallible; for that scheme asserts where grace begins a good work, it will infallibly carry it on; and if perseverance be fallible, then Mr. Cleland may say, farewell sweet election and reprobation, for he says they must stand or fall together.

But to come to the point, I ask, are men moral agents, or are they not? I mean, has man by the grace of God, power to will moral good and power or liberty to choose that good, or is he under a fatal necessity to choose evil? If he has power to will, and liberty to choose, is not salvation conditional? If he has no such power, was he not eternally designed for damnation, and that design secured by decreeing Adam's fall.

Mr. Cleland answers, p. 18, "The rational exercise of the natural powers of the moral agent, is not abridged, nor the freedom of choice destroyed. It is true indeed there are conditions on which the elect themselves shall be saved; such as faith in Christ, and other corresponding graces; but observe, these are conditions of the event, and not of the decree." p. 21. And "What I have said, I say again, that by faith in Christ, by a life of holiness, and by perseverance in both, and in no other way, he (the elect) shall obtain eternal life." p. 27. and if this does not satisfy you, I will add, "consequently their interest in Christ, with all the blessed consequences of it, was decreed to be the object of their own free choice and earnest pursuit." p. 21. "This much we know, that the merit of Christ is sufficient for ALL." p. 29. "The free agency of man is an essential in the divine plan, and as much the object of the divine decrees as any thing else." p. 28.

Gentlemen, you will suffer me to collect the testimony from these evidences, and lay it before you.

1. "The merits of Christ are sufficient for all;" (says Mr. Cleland) and goodness will restrain them from none.

2. Man is a moral agent, endowed with the liberty of choice; i. e. he possesses power to will, and power to chuse moral good. This power was lost by Adam, but restored by Christ to him again, and all his posterity in him, of course.

3. His interest in Christ, and all the blessed consequences of it, are the object of his free choice. And

4. His salvation depends on a conditional faith in Christ, productive of corresponding graces: and the condition of faith and obedience, must absolutely be performed on man's part, and persevered in. For "*in no other way the elect can obtain eternal life.*"

And now, if all this be proposed to his *free choice*, without adding another word, I ask, if instead of believing in Christ, man may not withhold the consent of his mind, and be damned for unbelief, according to Mark 16. 16. "He that believeth not shall be damned;" and John 3. 19. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light."

And further, that if there be a *condition*, if man may not fail to comply, and be justly punished for his disobedience, without frustrating or disappointing God, who "deceed that it should be the object of his free choice."

Again. If man's interest in Christ, and all the blessed consequences of it, be the object "of his free choice," i. e. "I set life and death before you, choose life." Deut. 30. 19. Is it not in man's power, by embracing offered grace, and pardon, to turn from a life of sin and death, to a life of holiness, and sing, O Lord, I will praise thee, though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou dost comfort me. Isa. 12. "And then, like David, the incestuous Corinthian, and others, by abusing the grace of God, and doing despite to the spirit, turn from a life of holiness, to commit adultery, murder, and all manner of abominations, and "*die in them*," there is temporal death, and then "*for his sin that he hath sinned, shall he die*,"* experience eternal death, that is, completely and eternally fall from grace.

Reader, lest you should hesitate to give judgment, on account of a doubt arising from an attachment to my opponent, I will call your attention to a passage or two more from Mr. Cleland's pamphlet.

"In the fixed plan of Providence, (says Mr. Cleland, p. 28) there is a real influence of second causes, both natural and moral; and I apprehend the connection between cause and effect is similar in both cases.

"He, i. e. St. Paul, knew that he, as well as others, must use the appointed means, in order to prevent it, i. e. being a cast away, among which a fear of caution and circumspection, is of the first importance. p. 48.

"Therefore, when we speak of perseverance, we always include progress in the ways of holiness, and uniformly maintain, that those who rest in any past attainments, or experiences, without giving diligence to press forward towards the mark, not only are, but ever have been, strangers to vital Godliness."--- Page 44.

So sure, then, as farmers have power to plow, sow and cultivate their fields; which second causes have a real influence on

the grain, without which they gather no harvest, the first cause of which is God, who giveth the early and the latter rain ;--- just so sure have all moral agents power to comply with the condition of the Gospel, to wit, to receive Christ, and all the benefits consequent thereon, by faith; all of which are proposed to his free choice.

And on the other hand, just so sure as farmers have power to neglect plowing and cultivating the ground, which second causes may prevent the seed sown from bringing fruit to perfection, just so sure the believer who neglects to add to his faith, virtue, &c. will forget that he was purged from his old sins, will draw back to perdition. 2 Pet. i. 2. Heb. 10. 38, 39. Therefore we are directed to "break up the fallow ground" of the heart. Jeremiah iv. 3. Sow to the spirit. Gal. vi. 8. Give diligence to make our calling and election sure, &c. ii. Pet. i. 10. For my spirit shall not always strive with man, saith the Lord. Gen. iv. 3.

Well, therefore, might St. Paul know that the use of the appointed means was of the first importance. And when David neglected to use the means of grace, and substituted the means of adultery and murder, he was *cast away*. By neglecting "the use of the means, which is of the first importance," he had cast himself entirely out of the road to Heaven, and was then in the road to Hell. Gentlemen, the evidence is full, yet suffer me to give a finishing stroke, which clinches Mr. Cleland's sentiments, and forever ruins his *precious doctrine*.

"No murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." John iii. 15 verse.

But David was a murderer; consequently, eternal life did not abide in him. Therefore he had fallen from grace; for he had been a man after God's own heart. i. Sam. xiii. 14. I will no longer admit a doubt but you will acknowledge the perseverance of the saints to be fallible, when drawn from Mr. Cleland's principle, as well as the word of God; consequently the doctrine of eternal election and reprobation, which is so "*precious*" to Mr. Cleland's "*immortal soul*," like Dagon falls prostrate before the ark of goodness, righteousness and truth.

But oh! what confusion does this make in Mr. Cleland's system!

(1.)

He uniformly maintains, that those who rest in any past attainments or experiences, without giving diligence to press forward to the mark, (as David did) not only are, but ever have been, strangers to vital Godliness, (p. 44) and therefore may when David for such a length of time, lay under the guilt of unrepented-of adultery and mur-

(2.)

He as uniformly maintains, that God ever loves the same person and for the same reason. If you ask what is the reason, Mr. Cleland answers, None in the creature. p. 20. He never changes his purposes, though he may change his providence, (as he did towards David) yet he never resumes his special blessing, nor retracts the special

der, not only was, but ever had call which he has given. p. 47.
been a stranger to vital Godli-
ness;" and yet

And, therefore, David was as much a child of God when he lay in Uriah's bed, and imbrued his hands in his blood, as when he was attentive to "the use of means by which alone eternal life is to be hoped for and obtained. P. 42.

By such logic Mr. Cleland proves, that David not only had not, but never had, vital Godliness, at the very same time, and by the very same arguments that proves David was high in the favor of God. And-----

"But, sir, says Mr. Cleland the doctrine I advocate is sweet and precious to my immortal soul. Come on then with your objections. I am an advocate for the veracity of God. I can meet a host of arguments, and if I fail, I do not fear but he will maintain his throne in spite of all the Armenians in the world who try to tear him off, and place him at their feet. P. 41.

"But this is generally the first dash we get from your side of the house, on this article of our faith, and there is scarcely a member in your connexion, from the highest to the most illiterate, who has not this argument in his mouth, as soon as enlisted under the standard of Methodism. P. 43.

"Noisy enemies, that have risen of late against the decrees Ignorance and prejudice are up in arms against our confession of Faith, which so many are barking at of late. P. 16.

"You tantalize us by exciting our attention with something of importance, holding out friendship in one hand, till we draw near, and then with the other we have to feel the pointed dagger of controversy, which, for a while, was concealed for sinister views; but having failed, now it is drawn again with redoubled fury, and wielded against us even by many whose novelty, puerility and inexperience, speak for themselves. P. 60.

"No wonder (that presbyterians are not like methodists) when we can now a days hear of scarcely any thing from you but perfection, and falling from grace." P. 7.

Pray Mr. Cleland, be calm! I hope you will consider, that passion as ill becomes the minister, as ugly names and hard speeches does the Gospel which he preaches. Indeed sir, I have no intention of tearing the adorable King of Saints off his throne, to place him at my insignificant feet. No sir, sooner, much sooner, would I have my right arm torn from my body. This, sir, must be a fit of intemperate zeal, arising from the danger in which your scheme is in. You certainly cannot believe we would *tear* Christ off his throne; or you could not be sincere in your professions of friendship towards us. And even if this was your opinion, you ought to be among the last to complain. You say "*all creatures and all their actions,*" were decreed. If so, it was decreed for the Methodists to act just as they do. What a pity it is that such a poor lump of clay should find fault, and by so doing, indicate a want of faith in the cause he advocates. You say we tantalize you, hold out friendship, conceal controversy, for sinister motives, but having,

&c. Were I to take such liberties, you would tempt me to retort them, and say, "*out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.*" You upbraid us with our ignorance, and represent us as "*barking*" dogs, for preaching what we call controversy; that is, for preaching to the people what we verily believe to be the plan of salvation. Indeed, sir, if you will not suffer us to preach as we believe, you must stop us preaching altogether; for I confess that our learning is not of that cast, as to enable us to believe one thing, and preach another.

But I must do you the justice, sir, to acknowledge to our impartial readers, that I did not design to make them believe that you held with salvation for all the fallen race; that this salvation was conditional; that man really has liberty of choice, &c. No, sir, I only meant to shew the hard shifts you are put to, in dressing up your sentiments, to make them passable in this enlightened day. But, happy for the truth, your inconsistencies go to establish the opposite of your sentiments.

In addition to what has been already said, I shall introduce your opposition to holiness, and shew the ground of that opposition, in order to bring out your real sentiments.

I shall not take time now to expose statements. You may indulge yourself here, as in other places, with wrong statements, if you choose.

I shall proceed to shew our different opinions, and then let the impartial enquirers judge for themselves.

I believe that Christ is that Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. That "in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness," according to the light of his dispensation, "is accepted," that he is acceptable just so far as he is inwardly and outwardly conformable to this light; or the divine nature which is thereby manifested unto him---and that he may so "walk in this light," as for God to reckon him a perfect man; not by an imaginary imputation of Christ's meritorious righteousness, but by his communicated nature, implanted in the soul by the faith of the Gospel.

Patient Reader, I will now proceed to lay before you my view of the Gospel. This Mr. Cleland requires me to do on original ground. Hence he has taken the advantage of me. I am not blessed with learning; and he assures me, that no notice will be taken of my performance, unless it stands on "original ground." I hope if I should so far succeed as to be taken notice of, that he will meet me on the ground I take, and not fix on any accidental point, just to shew his abilities; for it is not abilities I am trying, but a plain enquiry after truth.

Mr. Cleland makes self-existence, independence, unchangeableness, omniscience, wisdom, and justice of God, his original ground, but of goodness not a word in his original ground.---Fore-knowledge is made the centre on which he raises eternal election and reprobation, by what appears to be undeniable conclusions from his premises.

In considering God's method of dealing with man, it is pro-

per to consider the relation in which man stands to God. But the relation in which man stands to God, is that of a rational *moral agent*, who has power to will and power to choose; who may, therefore, do or not do; and, of course, is properly accountable for his actions; and, therefore, God will judge the world of *moral agents* in righteousness; reward the obedient and punish the disobedient, consistently with his divine perfections, without decreeing the means and the end of each individual. That this is the relation in which the human family stands to God, will appear from a view of man, in relation to goodness, wisdom, power, &c. in creation, redemption and conversion.

Goodness in man, is that which makes him easy, happy in himself, useful to his fellow creatures, and instrumental to the glory of God. Goodness must, therefore, be a communicative principle. If so, wherever real goodness exists, it must be a motive to communicate happiness to others. Now God is infinitely good---good in his essence and attributes---the fountain and source of goodness---and as there was a time when no being existed but God, there was no object for goodness to communicate happiness to. It was therefore proper for rational intelligencies to be made. Hence goodness moved, wisdom directed, and power brought forth angels and men, rational intelligencies, proper recipients of happiness. And as they came immediately from the source of goodness itself, reason dictates that they must be good; but not in an absolute degree, not immutably good. Immutability is a perfection of Deity.

Now, infinite wisdom must see, that such a number of mutable creatures would not all act alike. It was necessary to make them moral agents, to enjoy good, and be accountable for their actions. Free to stand, but liable to fall. And thus God, as a wise sovereign, rewards and punishes consistent with goodness and justice.

So far, I think, I am on original ground. But man, as well as some angels, by an abuse of his power, did fall, not in obedience to an absolute decree, for God did positively forbid him to sin, and therefore man, and not the decree, brought misery on the human family.

Upon this view of the subject, I confess I cannot understand in what place or part of this holy happy man, just from the fountain of goodness, who shone out in the image of God, the supposed reprobates were contained; or how goodness could form any for eternal woe. If misery be the object on which goodness fixes, how could goodness form any for misery? Nor can I understand how wisdom, consistent with truth, could pronounce the man, that is, the whole man, consequently all the parts, very good, if all the reprobates, as so many bad particles, were then contained in his loins.

In the next place, we will view fallen man as an object of divine attention, degraded, fallen and exposed to eternal punishment, which the just demerit of his voluntary, avoidable

transgression deserved. Infinite power, abstractedly considered, could, no doubt, like a sovereign potter, break as well as make vessels at pleasure. And viewing Adam in the above described situation, I conclude that justice might have cut him off. In that case, the voluntary transgressor would have suffered a conscious punishment justly proportioned to his crime, and the unborn posterity deprived of their existence, but would have had no more consciousness of punishment than of guilt.

But this would have defeated the original design of goodness, wisdom, power, &c. Hence goodness moved, wisdom directed, a ransom is provided.

There was sufficient power had it been exerted, irresistibly and infallibly to have saved the whole human family—but according to first principles, this would deprive the creature of moral agency, and thereby render him incapable of rewards or punishments.

Once more. Almighty power could have divided the posterity of Adam, given one part to Jesus Christ, and the other to the Devil: fixed everlasting distinguishing love on the favored elect, and eternal reprobating hate on the non-elect—and have secured the salvation of the former, and damnation of the latter, by decreeing means, repentance, faith, impenitence and unbelief, which should lead with certainty to their respective ends. But oh, how Goodness shudders at the idea! Goodness fixes on the miserable; nor can justice punish the reprobate. For upon the supposition that Christ did not die for them, they absolutely could not repent and believe in obedience to the gospel. Therefore, this scheme is inconsistent with original principles, the tenor of the gospel, and reason.

And it is no wonder, that upon a review of these Calvinistic principles, Calvin himself should be constrained to call the decree horribly awful.

By the grace of God, the Redeemer was therefore given to the whole human family, who were as much in the loins of Adam, when Christ, the seed of the woman, was promised to him, as they were when he sinned; and as they lost original rectitude by the first Adam, so, by the second Adam, they were all restored to moral agency by grace—hence life and death are set before all—all are commanded to repent—all invited to the gospel supper—exhorted to come—warned of the danger of delay; and while the gospel is inviting all, the law is levelled against all disobedience and unrighteousness of men, who are to be judged by revelation, and receive according as their works shall be. I therefore conclude, 1st, That “God so loved the world,” the whole world of sinners, “that he gave his only begotten son, that they might believe in him and be saved.” John iii. 16.

2d. That “Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, did actually taste of death for every man.” Heb. ii. 9.

3d. That the spirit is sent into the world to reprove or convince all the sinners in the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. John xvi.

4th. That the terms of life and salvation are within the power of all men, and, therefore, if any are lost, "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light." John iii. 19.

Once more, I call the attention of my respectable judges, to view the converted man in relation to original principles. The object of this view, is to see whether moral agency or power to destroy himself, is taken from man when he is converted. We have already seen that man must be mutable, or he may sin. That he may sin is granted on all hands. Mr. Cleland says he must sin—is so rigid an opposer to living without sin, that he refuses to attend our meetings, because he must hear so much of living without sin.

Now, if the converted man may, and frequently does sin, as David, &c. then he must be under a law, and if moral agents transgress the law, then the unchangeable God of righteousness, justice, truth and wisdom, must see them transgressors, as they really are, and deal with them accordingly, i. e. reward them as their works shall be. Mat. xxv. Rev. xx. 12, 13.

And to this even Mr. Cleland himself seems to be agreed, notwithstanding all that he has said to the contrary. "It is true indeed," says he, p. 21, 27, "there are conditions on which the elect themselves shall be saved, such as faith in Christ, and other corresponding graces." "What I have said, I say again, that by faith in Christ, by a life of holiness, and by perseverance in both, and in no other way, he (the elect or converted man) shall obtain eternal life. No man can be a true believer, but one who wills to live in a holy manner—p. 43.

Thus far then, gentlemen, I presume I am on *original ground*, and surprising to tell, am blessed with Mr. Cleland's sanction.

Well, Mr. Cleland, in the presence of these impartial judges, I must inform you, that your scheme of eternal election and reprobation, on which your pleasing and much talked of perseverance stands, is an erroneous notion, merely farcical, and altogether the invention of a futile imagination! Do not start, sir, nor interrupt me; give me leave to proceed. If no man can be a true believer, but one who wills to live in a holy manner, then David was not a true believer, when he committed adultery and murder, for then he did not will to live in a holy manner, unless you can show that adultery and murder are holy living, or that he did will to live in a holy manner, while committing those crimes, and that adultery and murder were—

not the acts of his will ; and if you can do this, I think it will rack your philosophy and divinity too, to show the tree can be known by its fruits.

This argument might be varied, and applied to all backsliders ; but I forbear, in order to lay before my readers, the harmony which subsists between my original ground, and the general tenor of the gospel.

The gospel informs us, that all men are under the law—are called to repentance, faith and holiness, are invited to the gospel feast—exhorted to come—threatened if they refuse—warned of the danger of delay—and finally, are to appear at the judgement seat of Christ, to receive according to the deeds done in the body ; and that distribution is by the revelation of a righteous judgement.

On our original ground and principles, what beauty, propriety and harmony, are manifested ! with what majestic authority, the commands are ushered forth ! what sovereign goodness, in making provision for a ruined world ? what a flow of tender affection is displayed in the pathetic exhortation ! what a paternal dignity accompanies the solemn warning ! and oh ! how sweetly blended are unchangeable goodness, wisdom, justice, truth and righteousness, in governing a world of moral agents, and rewarding or punishing at the last day. But upon the supposition, that God from all eternity, decreed Adam's fall, by which all were made sinners ; then elected some for happiness, and reprobated the rest to misery, and secured their respective ends, by *means and instruments appointed from all eternity* : I say, upon such a supposition, what cruel tyranny to command the reprobates to repent and believe ! what sovereign malevolence, to push the non-elect into existence, when they are precluded happiness ! what a gust of cruel dissimulation accompanies the exhortation to the reprobates ! yea, what paternal partiality and design, thunder out the solemn warnings, to those whose awful fate is unalterably fixed—and oh ! how absurd, what mockery is a day of judgement.

Patient reader, having laid before you, my view of the gospel, and shewn you that (notwithstanding mr. Cleland's opposition to free and conditional salvation for all men, yet he himself has been driven by the insurmountable difficulties, consequent upon his original ground,) he is at last found, happily found, fighting on the side and in the behalf of those his imprudent zeal led him to oppose. I shall now proceed to take notice of that gentleman's opposition to the doctrines of Holiness.

“ Most of the controvercies, which arise between men, who

fear God, spring from the hurry with which some of them find fault with what they have not examined, and speak evil of what they do not understand. Why does mr. Cleland attack the doctrine of christian perfection, which we contend for? Is it because he is a sworn enemy to holiness; and a zealous protector of iniquity? I hope not. The grand reason, next to his Calvinian prejudices, is his inattention to the question, and to the arguments by which our sentiments are supported. Notwithstanding the manner in which that gentleman has treated me, and the Methodists, as a body, in his controversial untimely heat; I shall entertain this opinion of him, as to hope (at least) that if he understood our doctrine, he would no more pour contempt upon it, than upon the oracles of God. I shall therefore endeavour to rectify his ideas of the glorious christian liberty, which we press after. If producing light, is the best method of opposing darkness, setting the doctrine of christian perfection in a proper point of view, will be the best means of opposing the doctrine of christian imperfection.

We now begin, by taking a view of our Jerusalem, and her perfections; and when we shall have marked her bulwarks, and cleared the ground between her towers and mr. Cleland's battery, we shall march up to it and see whether his arguments have the solidity of brass, or only the shadowy appearance of wooden artillery, pointed and mounted like brazen ordnance.

Christian perfection! why should the harmless name offend us? Perfection! why should that lovely word frighten us. Is it not common and plain? Did not Cicero speak intelligibly, when he called accomplished philosophers, *perfectos philosophos*, and an excellent orator, *perfectum oratorum*? Did Ovid expose his reputation, when he said that *Chiron perfected Achilles in music*, or taught him to play upon the lute to perfection? And does mr. Cleland think it wrong to observe that fruit grown maturity, is in its perfection? We, whom that gentleman stigmatizes, use the word perfection exactly in the same sense, giving that name to the maturity of grace, peculiar to established believers, under their respective dispensations. And if this is an error, we are led into it by the sacred writers, who use the word perfection, as well as us.

The word predestinate occurs but four times in all the scriptures, and the word predestination not once; and yet mr. Cleland would justly exclaim against me, were I to call upon him to shew me the word predestination once in all the bible. Not so with the word perfection; it occurs with its derivatives as frequently as most words in the scripture, and not seldom in the very same sense in which we take it. Nevertheless, we

do not lay an undue stress upon the expression; and if I thought that our condescension would answer any good end, I would willingly save Mr. Cleland's *tender feelings*, and give up that harmless and significant word. But if it is expedient to retain the unscriptural word Trinity, because it is a kind of watch-word, by which we frequently discover the secret-opposers of the mysterious distinction of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in the divine unity; how much more proper is it not to renounce the scriptural word perfection, by which the dispirited spies, who bring an evil report upon the goodly land of *holiness*, are often detected. Add to this, that the following declarations of our Lord, backed by an inspired apostle, does not permit us to renounce either the word or the thing: "Be ye *perfect*"—"Every one that is *perfect*, shall be as his master."—"If thou wilt be *perfect*, go sell that thou hast, and give to the poor." Matt. xix. 21. "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine which is according to *godliness*, he is proud."

Again. "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this sinful generation, of him also shall the son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of the Father." Now these being the words of Christ, we dare no more be ashamed of them, than we dare desire he would be ashamed of us in the great day.

Again. We call christian perfection the maturity of grace and holiness, which established adult believers attain to under the christian dispensation; and by this means we distinguish that maturity of grace, both from the ripeness of grace which belongs to the dispensation of the Jews, below us, and from the ripeness of glory, which belongs to departed saints, above us. Hence it appears, that by christian perfection we mean nothing but the cluster and maturity of the graces, which compose the christian character in the church militant. In other words, christian perfection is a spiritual constellation, made up of these gracious stars—perfect repentance, perfect faith, perfect humility, perfect meekness, perfect self-denial, perfect resignation, perfect hope, perfect charity, for our visible enemies as well as for our earthly relations; and above all, perfect love for our invisible God, through the explicit knowledge of our mediator, Jesus Christ. And as this last star is always accompanied by all the others, as Jupiter is by his satellites, we frequently use, as St. John, the phrase *perfect love*, instead of the word perfection, understanding thereby the pure love of God shed abroad in the heart of established believers, by the Holy Ghost, which is abundantly given them, under the fullness of the christian dispensation.

Again. Mr. Cleland's prejudice against the doctrine of perfection, is, no doubt, increased by his confounding together Adamic and Christian perfection ; two perfections these, which are as distinct as the garden of Eden and the christian church. Adamic perfection came from God our creator in Paradise, before any trial of Adam's faithful obedience ; and christian perfection comes from God our Redeemer and Sanctifier, in the christian church, after a severe trial of the obedience of faith. Adamic perfection might be lost by doing despite to the preserving love of God our creator ; and christian perfection may be lost by doing despite to the redeeming love of God our Saviour. Adamic perfection extended to the whole man ; his body was perfectly sound in all its parts, and his soul in all its powers ; but christian perfection extends chiefly to the *will*, which is the capital *moral* power of the soul, leaving the understanding ignorant of ten thousand things, and the body *dead because of sin*.

Again. To shew that Mr. Cleland does not understand our doctrine of christian perfection, or willingly misrepresents us, I shall proceed to oppose our definition of christian perfection to some of the objections which are raised against it.

Objection 1. *Your doctrine of perfection leads to pride.*

Impossible ! if christian perfection is *perfect humility*.

Obj. 2. *It exalts believers, but it is only to the state of the vain-glorious pharisee.* Impossible—if our perfection is *perfect humility*, it makes us sink deeper into the state of the humble justified publican.

Obj. 3. *It fills men with the conceit of their own excellence, and makes them say to a weak brother, stand by, I am holier than thou.* Impossible again. We do not preach *pharisaic*, but *christian* perfection, which consists in *perfect poverty of spirit*, and in that perfect charity, which vaunteth not itself; honours all men, and bears with the infirmities of the weak.

Obj. 4. *It sets repentance aside.* Impossible—for it is *perfect repentance*.

5. *It will make us slight Christ.*—More and more improbable. How can *perfect faith* in Christ make us slight Christ : could it be more absurd to say that the perfect love of God, will make us despise God ?

When I turn back and take a retrospective view of Mr. Cleland's want of sincerity in his professional friendship—when I see in him a disposition to anathematize every sentiment in others that he is pleased to reject—I say, when I see the absence of that charity which never faileth, and of that love that thinketh no evil, I must confess I am not surprised to see him advocating the cause of sin, opposing any attainment in

religion in others, that he does not feel in himself; and, like the man that never had seen an hundred pounds at one time, would not be persuaded to believe that any ever possessed that sum. But it is, indeed, surprising to see him attempt to press two of the holy apostles into the field of this bad divinity, and introduce them as witnesses against the doctrine of holiness. Never were these holy men set upon a more unholy piece of work. Methinks I hear them say, let Mr. Cleland rank us with the Gibeonites; let him make us hewers of wood and drawers of water to the congregation forever, but let him not set us to cutting up, root and branch, the lovely tree of christian perfection. Happily for that rare tree, Mr. Cleland produced little more than the name of the apostolic woodmen, while we produce their axe and lay it at the root of antinomianism.

Mr. Cleland introduces Paul as a witness in opposition to the scriptural doctrine of perfection. But I would ask where does that holy apostle plead for christian imperfection in the heart of believers. Is it when he says, "as he who has called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; seeing you have purified your souls, &c. love one another with a pure heart fervently. Christ left us an example, that ye should follow his steps, who did not sin—who bore our sins, that we, being dead to sin, should live to righteousness. Forasmuch, then, as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same mind, for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin."

2. If St. Paul, the first of Mr. Cleland's witnesses, does not say one word to countenance antinomianism and to recommend christian imperfection, let us see if St. John pleads for Baal in the heart, any more than for Baal in the life of perfect believers. Turn to his epistle: O ye that thirst after holiness, to your comfort you will find that he shews himself a bold asserter of christian perfection.

He assigns his commission thus: "This is the message which we have received from him (Christ) and declare unto you, that God is light, (bright transcendant purity,) and in him is no darkness [no impurity] at all. If we [believers] say that we have fellowship with him [that we were united to him by an actually living faith] and walk in darkness, [in impurity or sin] we lie and do not the truth; but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, [if we live up to our christian light and do righteousness] we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his son, cleanseth us from all sin—For let no man deceive you; he that does righteousness, is righteous, even as he [Christ] is righteous—and in him is no sin."

Again. I beg Mr. Cleland, as well as my readers, to indulge

me while I drop a few more passages in favour of this glorious christian liberty. St. John in his second chapter says—"We know that we know him, if we keep his commandments, &c. Whoso keepeth his word, verily in him is the love of God perfected. He that abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked, &c. He that loveth his brother, abideth in the light, [where the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin] and there is no occasion of stumbling in him."

The same doctrine runs through the next chapter. "Every one that hath this hope in him *purifieth himself, as he [Christ] is pure.* Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth &c. and ye know that he was manifested to take away our sin, [that is to destroy them root and branch] and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him, sinneth not; whosoever sinneth, does not [properly] see him, neither know him. He that does righteousness is righteous, even as he [Christ] is righteous. He that committeth sin [as appears from the context; he that transgresseth the law] is of the devil, for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose was the son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."

If Mr. Cleland cries out shocking! who are those men that do not sin? I reply, all those whom St. John speaks of a few verses below. "Beloved, if our heart condemn us, [and it will condemn us if we sin, but God much more, for] God is greater than our heart, &c. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, we have confidence toward God, &c. because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight." 1 John, 3. 20, &c. Now we apprehend all the sophistry in the world will never prove, that, evangelically speaking, keeping God's commandments, and doing what pleases him, is sinning. Therefore, when St. John professed to keep God's commandments, and to do what was pleasing in his sight, he professed what Mr. Cleland calls sinless perfection, and what we call christian perfection.

I conclude from the above, that mr. Cleland is very unfortunate in his choice of St. John, as one of his witnesses to establish his system of Christian imperfection; for to represent that holy apostle, as an enemy to the doctrine of Christian perfection, does not appear to me less absurd, than to represent satan, as a friend to complete holiness.

Pray, mr. Cleland, bear with me (though ignorant) while I retort your own advice; *you are exhorted to study the holy scriptures with more attention, and not depend altogether on a few passages manifestly distorted from the context; in order to make them speak the language of the modern, as well as ancient imperfectionists, and support your precious doctrine, of*

eternal election and reprobation ; which is so *precious to your immortal soul*, and which seems to be tottering from its sandy foundation ; and will soon fall before the Ark of gospel truth. You will find your beloved friend Calvin, by monopolizing the conversation, not only overheated himself, but actually talked himself out of argument, as well as out of breath ; and has fallen a fatal victim to his intemperate zeal. I hope, sir, his untimely death, will be a warning to young beginners hereafter ; and that even yourself will at least so far think of that old saying, to wit, “ a little philosophy maketh a man mad ; ” that you will hereafter exhort young men to be sober minded, to avoid foolish and unlearned questions, which gender strife, and to follow righteousness, faith, charity and peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a *pure heart* ” 1 Tim. 2 chap.

But to return to my readers, we have sufficient ground to believe it is our privilege to be saved from all sin, to be made partakers of the divine nature. Holiness of heart, or perfect love, which terms are synonymous, especially when we read the sacred scriptures.

For, 1st. it is promised, 2d. it is prayed for, 3d. it is commanded, and 4th. we have examples of them who experienced it.

And first, it is promised, as you may read in the following scriptures : Deut. 30 chap. “ The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live : and Psalm 130, 8, he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities, and 2 Cor. 7. 1. having these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord—and the Apostles hold out promises to the same effect 1 John 1. 9. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from *all unrighteousness*. Read also Eph. 5. 25, 27. Christ loved his church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it, and that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle or any such thing ; but that it might be holy, and without blemish : again, Tit. 2. 14. who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from *all iniquity* and *purify* unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works ” Secondly, it is prayed for by our Lord ; see the Lord’s prayer ; deliver us from evil, and surely sin is the greatest of evils. And John, 17 chap. 17. 20. 23. “ Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth, and that they all may be one, as thou father art in me, and I in thee, that they may be one in us.” &c. See Eph. 3, 14—19. “ I bow my knees (says St. Paul) to the

father of mercies, that he would grant you, that ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, length, depth and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God—Again, 1 Thes. v. 23. The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God, your whole spirit, soul and body, be preserved *blameless* unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Thirdly, it is commanded, Math. v, 48. "Be ye therefore *perfect*, even as your father which is in heaven, is *perfect*" 2 Cor. 13. 11. Be *perfect*, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace," &c. 1 Cor. 1. 10. "I beseech you, brethren, that you be *perfectly* joined together in the same mind," &c. and again, 1 Pet. 1. 22. "Love one another with a *pure* heart fervently." Now the commands are not to the dead, but to the living, therefore they must be obeyed in this life.

Fourthly. We have scripture examples of those who experienced this christian *perfection* or *holiness* of heart in this life. Witness, St. Paul writes to his holy brethren, 1 Thes. vi. 27, "We speak wisdom among them that are *perfect*." Again, 1 Cor. ii. 6, "Let us, as many as be *perfect*, be thus minded," &c. Again, John iv. 17, "Herein is our love made *perfect*, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because, as he is, so are we in this world." 1 Pet. i. 22, "Seeing ye have *purified* your souls in obeying the truth, &c. See that ye love one another, with a *pure* heart, fervently." Again, 1 John iii. 3, "Every man that hath this hope in him, *purifieth* himself, even as he is *pure*." Again. Mat. v. 8, "Blessed are the *pure* in heart, for they shall see God." Once more—"When ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from *righteousness*, but now being made free from sin, and become servants of God, ye have your fruit unto *holiness*, and the end everlasting life"—Rom. vi. 20, 22.

So we find from the above scriptures, as well as many more that might be brought forward if necessary, that we have sufficient promises, precepts, and examples, for christian *perfection*. If there be any one who refuses, and is capable of despising this holy scriptural doctrine, after all this evidence, together with the many living witnesses whose holy lives and fruit manifest the truth of their profession; what think ye—would he be persuaded, though one rose from the dead? But, I beg Mr. Cleland to answer these few following plain questions.

1. Has God any where in scripture commanded us more than he has promised?

2. Are the promises of God respecting holiness to be fulfilled in this life or in the next?

3. Is the christian under any other laws than those which God promises to write in his heart? Jer xxxi. 33.

4. In what sense is the righteousness of the law fulfilled in those who walk, not after the flesh but after the spirit? Rom. viii.

5. Is it impossible, in this life, for any one to love God with all the heart. And is a christian under any law which is not fulfilled in this love?

6. Does the souls going out of the body effect its *purification* from indwelling sin?

7. If so, is it not something else, not the blood of Christ which cleanseth it from all sin?

8. If his blood cleanseth us from all sin, while soul and body are united, is it not in this life?

9. If when that union ceases, is it not in the next, and is not this too late?

However strongly Mr. Cleland has opposed the doctrine of christian perfection, yet he condescends to tell us, p 59, "we always aim to inculcate holiness of heart and life, and contend for it as strongly as you do, and the meanest capacity may understand what *we say*." He then sums it up in these words of the apostle—"Follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Heb. xii. 14.

From this quotation mr. Cleland admits the doctrine of holiness. But I am afraid it is only to save appearances, and that he will not yet give up pleading for Baal in the hearts of believers; for although the word *perfect* and *holy*, or *perfection* and *holiness*, are in scripture language synonymous terms; yet mr. Cleland says that, *the word perfect, is an indefinite term always depending on its connexion.*" I would ask mr. Cleland if his favorite word *holy* or *holiness*, is not an indefinite term also, and more frequently depends on its connexion, than the word *perfect* or *perfection*. Does not the word *holy* or *holiness*, more particularly refer to the nature, use and quality of the thing spoken of? whereas the word *perfect* or *perfection*, more particularly refers to the completeness or maturity of the thing or person spoken of. I would ask why does mr. Cleland carp at the words *perfect* or *perfection*, and leave their meaning vague and unsettled; and indicate, at the same time, that notwithstanding believers may be destitute of any inherent holiness, *they may be said to be perfect, as they stand complete in having the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ imputed to them.* Admit for a moment, sir, your unscriptural meaning of the imputed righteousness of Christ, to believers; and then I ask you if they (believers) may be said

to be *perfect*, having Christ's *perfect righteousness imputed or made over to them*. Is there any imperfection in the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ? And if you answer there is not, is this not preaching a higher degree of *perfection* than any Methodists ever taught? This, sir, will go to shew our readers that your phrase, "*sinless perfection*," is hung out as a mere scare-crow, to frighten the unwary, and answer your design to misrepresent.

Patient reader, I think you will conclude with me, that notwithstanding the "*hue and cry*," Mr. Cleland raises against the Methodists, for preaching christian perfection: yet he grants that men may, even in this life, attain a perfection of a much higher degree; namely, the *sinless perfection* of the immaculate Lamb of God. I know this, Mr. Cleland will start at, and deny; and it is well, if in order to ward off this consequence, and extricate himself from so deplorable (in his opinion) a dilemma, as that of being *perfect*, he does not deny that there is or ever was any such thing as perfection in the world. Did I say he would deny it? Nay! he has already denied it. P. 51, he says, *but after all you will find when brought to first principles, or a true standard, that there never has been one act of perfect obedience performed since the fall of Adam by any of his posterity in this world*. What, sir, not one act? No, not one act. Pray Mr. Cleland, do not be too positive in your assertion. Remember sir, some of your readers may take it into their heads to appeal to a higher authority, and not swallow, as a glib morsel of truth, assertions so contradictory to the word of God, to reason and common sense. From your bold and positive assertion, we appeal then to the law, and to the testimony; and if any man or set of men, speak contrary to this, it is because there is no light in them.

We find that Abraham, the father of the faithful, was commanded to offer up Isaac, his only son Isaac, in whom his seed was to be blessed.

See Gen. xxii. cha. "And he (God) said take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains, which I will tell thee of." Here reader, the above is a positive command of God; and now observe the fulfilment of it in every part.

"And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for a burnt offering, and rose up, and went to the place of which God had told him—and Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it upon Isaac his son, and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and they went both of them together—and they came to the place which God

had told him of, and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood, and Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son; and God called unto him out of heaven, saying, lay not thine hand upon the lad, for now I know that thou lovest me,' &c. Pray Mr. Cleland, come and peep—see your assertion fly like chaff before the wind. Tell me, sir, what part of the good old patriarch's obedience bears the stamp of imperfection through the whole of this transaction? And if you are not able to point out any defect in this *perfect obedience* of Abraham, will you not have to eat your own words, acknowledge your assertion untrue, and thereby confess that at least *one of the race of Adam performed one act of perfect obedience*. Oh, sir! I cannot but sympathise with you. Truth blushes to hear such unguarded expressions fall from the lips of a messenger of truth.

Once more—Have you never read of Zachariah and Elizabeth? Luke i. 6, "And they were both righteous before God, *walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless*;" of Asa, whose "*heart was perfect all his days*?" Yes, sir, I could bring scores of such stubborn facts of *perfect obedience*, but shall forbear, in order to take notice of your acknowledgment of a *perfection of parts*, p. 54. Please to tell me, sir, (for you appear to possess a fund of new-found information), are all the different parts of the man *perfect*? And if so, is not the whole equal to its parts, and the parts equal to the whole; and if this is good philosophy, if the parts are perfect, and all the parts are equal to the whole, and this whole is equal to all its perfect parts, in what part of this perfect whole will you make out to store up your shapeless being—imperfection?

Hitherto Mr. Cleland has pointed out the bad effects of the errors maintained by the methodists, chiefly as they respect themselves and others who are so unhappy as to be drawn among them; but the doctrine of christian perfection is, it seems, of so pernicious a cast, that, notwithstanding he clearly sees the fallacy, yet, some how or other, it comes to pass that he is not so good a man as he would be, if the methodists were, in this instance, as orthodox as himself. "If I know my own heart, says he, I desire nothing so much as to live near to God every day. But I suppose I cannot do that, while you are between Him and me. For we were informed by one of your most eminent preachers, not long ago, in his exhortation, that the methodists live nearer to God than any other people, and another has said they will shine brightest in heaven." p. 50.

What a happy knack Mr. Cleland has of making the methodists say whatever suits his purpose. However, these sayings of his explain what he means by our being between him and

God, viz. That the methodists think they have more vital religion than other denominations. If they do think so, that opinion is either true or false. And, upon either supposition, it is hard to conceive how it *can keep* Mr. Cleland from being holy "*every day*." Were it admitted that the purity of morals befitting the disciples of Christ, together with a rational and elevated ardour of evangelical devotion, are more common amongst us than the presbyterians, would this hinder Mr. Cleland from being holy every day? If, on the other hand, we are the ignorant and self-deceived ostentatious people which that gentleman represents us, does it follow that he must necessarily be a less deserving character than he otherwise would be?—That he cannot be holy, or to use his own style, that he cannot live near to God?

If our holding the doctrine of christian perfection be really so injurious to Mr. Cleland, or if he mistakingly thinks so, we may easily excuse the vehement zeal with which he attacks it, and account for the obvious pleasure which he takes in distorting it into a "*huge, horrid, deformed monster!*" But how shall we vindicate his asserting, p. 51, that the methodists call "*anger, pride, vanity, neglect of duty, worldly-mindedness, and the like, little infirmities,*" and in p. 59, that we have metamorphosed pride, vanity, ingratitude, defects in duty, *into the pretty soft names of mistakes, infirmities, defects, &c. &c.* and politely tells our opponents that we will not let them go by that barefaced name *sins*.

In these two passages, several cardinal vices are particularized, and the imagination of the reader farther directed by *such as the like, &c.* to add to the catalogue every vicious quality that he can think of; for surely there are none which may not be referred to one of the above, either as included or congenial. And he is told that the Methodists call them *little infirmities*; they deny that they are sins.

Now, if we discard the principle, "Let us do evil that good may come." I ask again, how shall we vindicate Mr. Cleland's character, and save his veracity?

You who frequently attend our pulpits, how does each assertion sound in your ears? Are you told from the sacred desk, that *ingratitude, pride, anger, worldly mindedness, and the like*, are not sins? Pause and consider.—So far as our preaching has had any influence upon your judgments, has it inclined you to think that such tempers were not sinful? Ask your own hearts for an answer, and pity the man who is capable of making such an unjust representation.

No, Sir, the question is not whether *pride, anger, ingratitude, and such like*, together with the odious fruits which they produce, be sins; but whether deeply experienced believers,

such as the beloved disciple styles "Fathers," who are cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit ;" who have perfected holiness in the fear of the Lord, agreeably to the apostle's exhortation, 2 Cor. vii. 1. are not saved from *pride, ingratitude, &c.* so that none of these tempers remain in their hearts ;—none of the bitter fruits of them are produced in their lives ?

That this is the point of controversy, I apprehend every reader, who has perused with attention, our writings on the subject of Christian perfection, will admit ; whether he be of our opinion as to the truth of the doctrine or not.

Why then does Mr. Cleland make Arminius ask, p. 14. "Pray what do you mean by corrupt nature in those who are born again. Doth not the apostle say, "whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." 1 John iii. 9.

Does Mr. Cleland think that the Methodists believe and teach that the words of the apostle, 1 John, ii. 5—"In him, verily, is the love of God perfected," are applicable to every one that is "born again," or even every "babe" in Christ? That there are no remains of corrupt nature—no degree of moral depravity—no degree of indwelling sin in any of them? If he does think so, he must have read our writings and heard our preaching with very little attention, and if he does not think so, why are the interrogatories put into the mouth of a Methodist. Surely Mr. Cleland does not wish to mislead his readers by insinuating to them what he does not believe himself.

I say again, the point in controversy is not whether pride, ingratitude, worldly mindedness, and such like tempers, be sinful, "For to be carnally minded is death," Rom. viii. 6 ; nor yet whether moral depravity, whether the carnal mind be at once eradicated in all who are *born again*, for the apostle Paul applies the word carnal in 1 Cor. iii. 5, to those whom, in the same verse, he styles "babes in Christ"—but the question is, whether those who are denominated young men and fathers, in the language of the sacred text, 1 John chap. ii. are in the same condition—whether every Christian must necessarily remain so to his life's end, and, in short, whether there be no balm in Gilead that has efficacy, nor any physician there who is able to subdue, completely, this awful malady while we remain in this world.

The Methodists believe that "there is hope in Israel concerning this thing." They look up to a merciful and faithful high priest, who is "able to save them to the uttermost that come to God by him," Heb. viii. 25. The very end of whose manifestation was "to destroy the works of the devil," 1 John iii. 8, and who has assured us, in so many words, "every one that is perfect shall be as his master," Luke vi. 40. Hence

they encourage such as have "redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins," to wait for the Lord's salvation in hope that the very God of peace will sanctify them wholly," 1 Thes. v. 23. Agreeable to 1 John, iv. 17, "herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world."

Herein is our love made perfect, saith the apostle. This is the only kind of perfection we hope for on this side the grave; and why should Mr. Cleland, if he believes the Bible, think it presumptuous arrogance to hope for it, so long as it is written, "thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," &c. "The Lord thy God shall circumcise thy heart and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul," Deut. vi. 5, and xxx. 6. "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him," 1 John, iv. 16, 18. 1 John, ii. 5, "He that feareth is not made perfect in love, because perfect love casteth out fear." "In him," i. e. in the established obedient believer, "verily is the love of God perfected;" and again, chap. iv. 12, "God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us." Mr. Cleland assures us that he desires nothing so much as "to live near to God every day." He surely will excuse others for cherishing and for encouraging in each other the same pious wish; and if to this wish, they should join a firm persuasion that "he is faithful who hath called them to cleanse themselves, or be cleansed, from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, *perfecting* holiness in the fear of God," 2 Cor. vii. 1. To "go on to perfection," Heb. vi. 1, and who hath promised, "I will also save you from all your uncleannesses." I say, supposing that under the influence of this persuasion, still galled with the plague of their own hearts, even indwelling sin, they should cry mightily to the Lord Jehovah, "create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me," Psalm li 19. What would Mr. Cleland say to all this? But suppose that he should by some means discover that they prayed in faith, and should hear them say, in the language of St. John in his epistle, chap. v. 15, "We know that we have the petitions that we desired of him." Why should Mr. Cleland even then join with an irreligious world, in representing their professed experience of renovating grace and holy communion with God, as the offspring of ignorance, pride, &c.? What is it he objects to? Their wishing to be filled with the perfect love of God, agreeably to the before cited scriptures? that is, we hope, to be holy in heart and life; certainly not; this he professes himself. Would he then find fault with their praying for it? If not, what then? the exercise of faith in prayer? or their believing that the Lord heard and answered?

Should it be said that Mr. Cleland does not oppose such perfection as I have contended for, or deny the possibility of being renewed in love, according to the most obvious import of several texts of sacred scripture, which have been produced, (and many more might have been ;) I answer, this will not be said by any who have read the dialogue with careful attention. This is the very perfection which he does oppose ; witness, his excellent definition, page 55. "Perfect holiness consists (says he) in having the heart wholly possessed by the love of God, without the mixture of any inferior or baser passion." By "mixture of any inferior or baser passion," Mr. Cleland must mean the mixture of any passion or temper which is morally wrong. He cannot mean simply the love of any object less than the supreme. Does it argue any defect of love to God, that a man loves his wife ? his brother or sister, whether natural or in Christ ? his neighbor, his friend, or even his enemy ? Nay, he cannot love God without loving these, with a love that will be promoted in exact proportion to his growth in grace, i. e. in proportion to the increase of his love to God.

Gentle reader, there is no occasion why Mr. Cleland should have his temper ruffled, at our attempting to prove that salvation is made possible for all men : and I think there are few among the fallen sons of Adam, who will say with him, that the doctrine of *eternal election* (and consequently reprobation) *is sweet to their immortal souls*. To rejoice that God has passed by a number of our fellow men, without affording them a possibility of obtaining salvation ; is in effect, to rejoice in their exclusion from mercy. I would here subjoin a remark of that excellent man, and great divine, Dr. Watts, as pertinent to the purpose. "The doctrine of reprobation," says that pious man, "in the most severe, and absolute sense of it, stands in such a direct contradiction to all our notions of kindness and love to others (in which the blessed God is set forth as our example) that our reason cannot tell how to receive it ; yet if it were ever so true, and ever so plainly revealed in scripture, it would only be a doctrine which might require our humble assent, and silent submission to it ; with awful reverence of the majesty, and sovereignty of the great God. But it is by no means a doctrine in which we, as men, could, or should rejoice and glory, or take pleasure in ; because it hath so dreadful an aspect on far the greatest part of our fellow creatures, considered as mere creatures. Nor do I think the blessed God would require us, so far to divest ourselves of humanity, as to take a secret satisfaction in the absolute, and eternal appointment of such numbers of our kindred in flesh and blood, to everlasting perdition ; much less should we make the awful, and terrible article, a matter of

public boast and triumph, even if we could prove it to be revealed ; but rather mourn for it——When, therefore, I hear men talking of the doctrine of reprobation, with a special gust and relish, as a favorite article ; I cannot but suspect their good temper, and question whether they love their neighbor as they do themselves."

I would then beg mr. Cleland to cease his triumph a little, and let his heart dictate an answer to a few interrogatories. Supposing, sir, you were assured it were your own unhappy case ; could you rejoice in it ? No—If you knew your tender parent—your beloved wife—your dear child—yea, your friend or neighbor were on the black list ; could you rejoice therein ? No—I am persuaded there are but few, so lost to humanity (not to say christianity) as to be capable of rejoicing in the knowledge, or belief, that God has made a free gift to satan, of even their worst enemy.

It is observable that mr. Cleland does not professedly avow the sentiment, that infants are damned, and appears solicitous to exculpate himself from the charge ; yet, that it is his real sentiment, I have no doubt ; else why does he bring forward in his indirect manner, all the proofs that can be urged in favour of the doctrine. The idea of their damnation seems to be so much connected with cruelty, that he seems loth to assert it : but are the non-elect, or reprobate, who arrive at maturity, upon any better footing ? No ; for by nature they are children of wrath ; and by the deeds of the law, cannot be justified. Upon mr. Cleland's principles, Christ never shed a drop of blood to ransom them—they have no day of grace—and consequently not in a state of probation, but under the black seal of an irrevocable decree, and stand devoted to inevitable destruction and misery. Say ye tender mothers, (whose affections for your progeny cannot be doubted) could you have infallible information, that your sucking children, were thus cut off from all possibility of mercy, and you were to consult their interest, would you give them up to sink to perdition with only the guilt of original sin upon their heads ; or, would you rather wish to continue them in life, to treasure up to themselves wrath, against the day of wrath ; and to go with the accumulated guilt of sixty or seventy years, to an unavoidable, yet vastly increased damnation ? I already know the answer your feelings must dictate. We see then, that damning infants is one of the mildest parts of that doctrine, which is so precious to mr. Cleland's immortal soul.

Before I conclude, I would inform my readers, that my reply to mr. Cleland was delayed sometime, to obtain a sight of a pamphlet lately published in Lexington, by R. Mack. At length it has fallen into my hands ; and although I detest

the doctrine advanced by that gentleman, yet I respect him for the honesty with which he advances, and endeavours to maintain his sentiment. Indeed it would seem as though, he had made Mr. Cleland's pamphlet his text; and like an honest master builder, has held out, and that without any colouring, the awful consequences necessarily flowing from the doctrine of eternal election and reprobation. And lest any should deny the just agreement in sentiment between Mr. Cleland and Mr. Mack (although I must confess the former has endeavoured to conceal, what the honesty of the latter compelled him to advance) I will proceed to compare the sentiments of the two gentlemen together.

Mr. Cleland's principles.

"He (God) certainly foreknew, from all eternity, that among the fallen race of Adam, he would certainly save some and damn others: but I would ask whether he could foreknow that he would do this, without designing to do it?" p. 27.

"The number of the elect could not be indefinite and undetermined, unless we attribute doubtfulness and uncertainty to God. And it is equally evident, the whole world of mankind could not be the objects of electing love; for then there could be no choice; and if we admit there is an elect, we must admit a non-elect, for the one supposes the other." p. 23.

"It was necessary, therefore, to be determined, how many, and who in particular, should be interested in this wonderful work and saved by it." p. 23.

"The decree of election necessarily implies, that God hath, without any condition in his will and counsel, chosen a certain number to grace

Mr. Mack's principles.

"How wonderful is the ways of the Lord omnipotent! How complex, and yet how plain in his way of working. He views the whole race of man, before he creates them; he views at the same time the services for which he creates them, and the several natures they must be of to perform those services. He knows to a grain the weight of the motives he will let on their mind, to rule them with, after he does make them. He then begins and makes them, and as he goes on in the work of creation, from individual to individual, he keeps his eye constantly fixed on the end he wills each shall answer, and the motives that is to be proposed to his mind; he then forms the mind of such a contexture and nature, that the motives to be proposed, will exactly make that nature fulfil that end. This man he now makes with such a nature, that the motives to be proposed shall make him act right in every case that comes before him. The next

Mr. Cleland's principles.

here and glory hereafter." p. 21.

"The object of divine decrees or purposes, call them what you please; it is evident they are strictly and properly universal; so much so indeed, as not to admit of any exception or shadow of exception—all creatures, and all their actions, and all events." p. 17.

"The decree of election always and invariably include all the means and instruments by which his gracious purposes were to be accomplished." p. 33.

"How unreasonable is it, therefore, to quarrel with the doctrine of absolute decrees." p. 19.

prevent them from committing those actions God's will had appointed them to at their creation. Wonder not, therefore, that the threatnings and promises, if they are given for motives, do not influence all alike, for they can only move those souls whom God made in such a manner as to admit of their operation. Such has natures prepared and fitted to be moved by such motives; but the rest will be still just, as the farmer's fan blows the chaff where he wants it to go, but cannot move the wheat from where he wants it to stay." p. 39—40.

"It is nonsense to say, God wills the man should not steal; when he is busy in giving the man a nature, objects, and judgment, that he sees will end in stealing." P. 11.

"The reason why the vicious man is not virtuous, is, because he is not willing; and the reason why he is not willing, is, because God did not give him the same nature, objects and judgment that he did the other; for if God had, he would have been willing too." P. 15.

"Should it be denied, that God proposes objects to the mind of man, that stimulates him to sin, I would ask who does then? for they are proposed! Some may say the devil; but has the devil power to propose them against the will of God? Surely not. Now, if they are not proposed against the will of God, they are proposed with it, and so are proposed by him, as much

Mr. Mack's principles.

he makes with such turbulent passions, that the same motives shall be able, in no case, to keep him from evil. Another he forms of such a stupid nature, that the same motives are scarcely any motive at all to him. So that the threatnings and promises contained in the scripture, have no chance of influencing any soul to virtue, but those whom God designed they should at the time he made them: and to whom, therefore, at that time, he gave such a nature, that such motives, would necessarily rule to virtue. For he made those that he intended for bad actions, wicked in nature, to that degree, that the motives to be proposed to them should not be able to

as those objects are, that ministers propose to stimulate men to good actions." P. 11.

"When he decrees a man shall be of a certain (say a good) character, he decrees the necessary means that his wisdom sees will effect it; be they what they may." P. 50.

What a correct preacher! How clearly does Mr. Mack's doctrine flow from Mr. Cleland's text! Yea, they are so closely connected, that they appear like twin sisters; and although we cannot say of them, as David did of Saul and Jonathan, that they were lovely in their life; yet, in their death they shall not be divided.

But although there is such agreement between them; yet, I must confess it affords a very unhandsome application; for, by the by, the devil appears to be as much employed by God, as Mr. Cleland; and far more successful in his endeavours to promote God's sovereignty, in his scheme of reprobation.

To illustrate the whole, Mr. Mack says, "we may consider duty as the line, men as ships, the passions and natural tendencies of men as the sails of those ships differently set—Some so, that should a wind come, they would sail directly to the line, some obliquely thereto, some less inclining, some parallel, and some declining therefrom; and the threatening and promises of God, we may further consider as that wind blowing upon those ships. Hence some, by the concurrence of their sails and the wind, steer into the port of virtue; while others with the same wind, sail obliquely to it, or diversely from it. For the promises and threatenings of God disregarded, makes man worse, in the same way, that their being attended to, makes him better. So that the threatenings and promises of God, answers the double purpose of making man either better or worse, according to the previous intention of God." P. 39.

So that, according to Mr. Cleland's and Mr. Mack's sentiments, if all things have not continued as they were from the beginning; yet, they continue to progress in that order which the Supreme Being intended they should. And if change after change have succeeded, it has only been the result of divine decrees; God having willed it, is careful to continue those means, which will effectually secure the end he had in view; whether it be the salvation of the elect, or damnation of the reprobate. If Mr. Cleland or Mr. Mack can receive any satisfaction in the belief of such doctrine, I envy them not—Upon their principles, they are perfectly excusable; for the construction of their minds are such, that they cannot see things in any other point of view. If they think to exculpate themselves, by reference had to their original formation, and this their only sanctuary should fail, they will feel themselves disagreeably situated, before the awful tribunal; when God shall be found

true, and every man a liar, who says God decreed both the end and the means that led to their damnation.

I will bid Mr. Cleland adieu, after asking a few questions.....

1. If you really believe the Methodists are the designing men you have represented them to be, and that their doctrine is so dangerous, and of so infectious a nature; how can you, consistent with a good conscience, and the faithful discharge of your duty, as a minister of Jesus Christ, call them forward at your meetings, to officiate, either in preaching or otherwise? What, sir! will you call in the aid of bad men on those solemn occasions? Should you reply, there are exceptions; that you did not mean your charge to apply to the body in general; I ask, why did you not discriminate in your book, and point out the good and the bad? 2. Since your book has been printed and circulated, have you not informed the people at your sacramental solemnities, that the door of communion which had been opened in your church to all denominations, was not yet shut? And did you not proceed to invite the Methodists, without any discrimination? Alas, sir! what are you doing? Are you willing, not only to commune with a prostitute, but with your own hands break that *holy bread*, and administer that holy ordinance to the very people you say are guilty of prostituting the sacred ordinances of God's house? Tell it not in Gath! publish it not in the streets of Askelon! lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice...lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph!

I assure you, sir, the Methodists do not require this at your hands. They are not those cringing sycophants, as to conceive themselves honoured by such inconsistencies. And if you are by such measures seeking popularity, you ought to know, sir, that there are thinking and discerning men of the world, that would spurn at, and condemn the idea of becoming popular upon such unbecoming and inconsistent principles.

Thus, sir, you have my thoughts and remarks upon your pamphlet. Whether they will give you no more *pain*, than the GNAT did the ox, while sitting on his HORN, is not for me to say: but I may venture to suppose, that, notwithstanding you are FULL-GROWN as to SIZE; yet it may be, *your* HORN has not attained that degree of hardness that will render it incapable of impression or sensibility: and should the uneasiness caused by the buzzing insect, move you to drive the insignificant creature away...you may once more hear from, dear sir, your friend and well-wisher, in the bonds of a free and pure Gospel,

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