



The Sabbath Recorder.

New York, January 8, 1852.

FOREKNOWLEDGE.

To the Editors of the Sabbath Recorder—

If I understand your doctrine on the subject of "Foreknowledge," as set forth by you in your paper of Dec. 11th, it may be stated as follows:—

God from all eternity certainly foreknew all things or events which ever would take place:

But things (or the certainty of things) or events not established or decreed by Him, that is, things or events which are contingent, that is, things or events which possibly may or may not be, He can not certainly foreknow, either that they will or will not take place:

Therefore, there can be no things or events which are contingent, or which possibly may or may not take place, but all things or events were established or decreed by God from all eternity.

Now, if I have misunderstood, or mistated your doctrine, (which I wish not to do,) I shall be happy to be corrected thereupon. Or, if you do not clearly understand my views of your position on this subject, by my foregoing statement of it, I hope to be able to make myself understood at length.

If my statement of your doctrine be correct, you will, I suppose, agree with me, that should either the first or second proposition there laid down prove not to be true, the third proposition, or conclusion, will, or at least may, be untrue likewise.

I must say, then, that I do respectfully, deliberately, and most solemnly dissent from the second proposition of the argument. In other words, I dissent from the doctrine that God can not certainly foreknow an event that is not established or decreed by Him, and which is contingent, or that may possibly not take place. The doctrine in question you affirm in the following words: "Now, if from all eternity He [God] certainly foreknew the event, the certainty of it must have been from all eternity established or decreed, otherwise it could not have been foreknown." Why, I ask, can not God certainly foreknow that an event will occur at any future period, without first establishing, or decreeing it, or because it is contingent, and may or may not take place?

(1.) I have long since met with this proposition, but I have never seen what I could regard as the proof of its truth. Is it indeed impossible for God to penetrate the future, and descry or ascertain the events of that future, without He decreed those events? Does this strike the mind as self evident, or is it proved when you say, "To say He foreknew it [the event] as contingent, is the same as to say He foreknew it, although there was no evidence to Him that the event ever would take place, which is a clear contradiction?" Why so? Why must God be "destitute of evidence of a future event, because it is contingent, or because He has not decreed it?" Can nothing be evidence to God of a future event, but his decree? Where is the evidence of this? Supposing a future event to be really contingent, or not decreed, why can not God trace, and exactly ascertain the effect of each cause, as it contingently, or without being decreed, combines with each and all other causes, and brings round the result or event in question?

(2.) Or, why can not God certainly foreknow that an event will in fact take place, and at the same time, as certainly foreknow, that the same event might be, and ought to be avoided? (3.) Take any human action—say, the murder of Dr. Parkman by Professor Webster, or the heart-breaking destruction of the lives of so many children in the Public School in New York the other day; why can not God be supposed to have foreseen, with unerring certainty, that those events would take place in fact, while He was absolutely, or (if you please) infinitely certain, at the same time, that He never did decree them—that they were contingent, and that they could be avoided or prevented, by those agents or individuals through whose mistakes, oversight, or designs, they were brought about? I certainly should be glad to learn how any man, or who, knows to the contrary.

Again, you reason thus, "To say that God certainly foreknows that a thing will infallibly take place, which at the same time He knows to be so contingent that it may possibly not take place, is the same as to say that He knows a proposition to be of certain truth, which He knows to be of contingent and uncertain truth, which is a contradiction." Why so? Does your statement mean any thing more than that some one might suppose that God might really know that some event would take place in future, which could be prevented by some certain agents or means? This is what I understand you to intend to represent. But what contradiction is there in all that? If I say, I believe God infallibly knew beforehand, that Benedict Arnold would turn traitor, and that He also infallibly knew, at the same time, that it was possible for Arnold to remain true to his trust, what contradiction is there in the statement? I can not see any, either in the statement, or in the nature of the thing.

(4.) Farther, you say, "God views things as they are. If an event is contingent, God views it so. If the event may possibly never take place, God knows it may possibly never take place." All this I believe; but you add, "And that is to know that the proposition which affirms that it will take place may possibly not be true." No, sir, this is not to know that the proposition in question may possibly not be true, or, which I think you wish to signify, that it would make God's knowledge possibly mistaken. It is only to know that it is really possible for things to take place, which it is known will not take place, though they might.

Again, you say, "If there was no necessity whatever that the event should take place, then it would not argue perfection of knowledge in any being to determine peremptorily that it would take place." Why not? If God knows that an event will take place, suppose there is no necessity of its taking place, how does that affect God's knowledge, to make that imperfect? I think it does argue the perfection of God's knowledge, to allow that it is such, that it enables him peremptorily to determine that an event will, or will not take place, whether there is any necessity that it should take place or not. But if God can only peremptorily determine that an event will, or will not take place, when there is a necessity of it, or when he has necessitated the event by his decree, I think the imperfection of his knowledge is clearly established, for it declares, in an event being contingent, or not necessary, God can not know certainly whether it will take place or not; and it proves also, that

he does not possess the attribute of prescience at all; because it shows that all his certain foreknowledge must of necessity result from his decrees, by which all events were at once necessitated, and made known; and that is the same as to say, that God is destitute of any attribute of the nature of prescience by which he can certainly foreknow any thing which is not otherwise, that is, by some other attribute first certainly made known. (5.)

Of God's determining peremptorily that an event will take place, of which there is no necessity that it should take place, you say, "It would rather argue ignorance and mistake; because it would argue that He supposes a proposition to be certain, which, in its own nature, and all things considered, is uncertain and contingent." This, I think, is a mistake. Suppose the event in question to be of the most contingent or uncertain kind imaginable; if God be omniscient, I see no reason why He may not be just as certain of the result, or how the thing will eventuate, as He would be, if He had decreed the event, and pledged his entire omnipotence to insure its occurrence. Why not? But God must be just as certain that the event is contingent or uncertain in its nature, as He is that it will in fact take place; for the uncertain and contingent nature of the event is just as much a fact, or just as much a truth, as the event itself is when it comes to pass. And God is no more likely to be mistaken about the one, than he is about the other; for "God views things as they are. If an event be contingent, God views it so," you say. And I add, if an event be contingent, God knows it is contingent, and his positive or certain knowledge that it will take place can no more destroy the certain truth that the event is contingent, than one certain truth can annihilate another certain truth. So then, when God supposes a proposition to be certain, it is certain, beyond the possibility of mistake, though the proposition may relate to and peremptorily determine the occurrence of an event the contingency of which is as absolutely certain, as an unmistakably known to God, as the event itself is.

(6.) That certain decreed events or actions ought to be avoided, is not called in question by us. Man's duty is not affected by the decrees of God. When it is shown that a decree implies physical force to bring about the volitions and actions of men, it will be time enough to consider this point.

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to consideration, there was nothing of such superior weight or value as to determine any understanding. And as Edwards justly remarks, "an increase of understanding, or of the capacity of discerning, has no tendency, and makes no advance, to a discerning any signs or evidences of it, let it be increased ever so much. The increase of the strength of sight may have a tendency to enable to discern the evidence which is far off, and very much hid, and deeply involved in clouds and darkness; but it has no tendency to enable to discern evidence where there is none. If the sight be infinitely strong, and the capacity of discerning infinitely great, it will enable to see all that there is, and to see it perfectly and with ease; yet it has no tendency at all to enable a being to discern that evidence which is not; but, on the contrary, it has a tendency to enable to discern with great certainty that there is none."

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every thing that men of the world hold dear. To do good to men, they have suffered reproach, hunger, thirst, cold, stripes, imprisonment, and death. And it is as true now as it ever was, "except a man deny himself daily, and take up his cross and follow Christ, he can not be his disciple."

In view of this truth, what evidence do multitudes of church members at the present time give of piety? Living in ceiled houses, riding in costly carriages, feeding on delicacies, ornamented with gold and jewels and fashionable attire, and thus defrauding God, violating the great law of love, and imitating the ungodly world, instead of the benevolent Saviour! Reader, are these following "the Lamb whithersoever he goeth?" Are these becoming meet for the inheritance of the saints in light? Can they wear the crown without running the race?

"Can they be carried to the skies On downy beds of ease, While others fought to win the prize, And sailed through bloody seas?"

O! reader, be not an idler in God's vineyard! Be not insensible to the wants and woes of suffering humanity! "Live not to thyself, but to him who died for thee, and rose again!" "Make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lust thereof!" And when you come to receive the reward of grace, you may associate with souls sowed through your instrumentality, and unite with them, and all the holy throng of redeemed ones, to praise God and the Lamb forever! C. A. O.

BRITISH CORRESPONDENCE.

Sunday Scene in France—Popish Miracles, &c. GLASGOW, December 19th, 1851.

Last number of the London Illustrated News gives a pictorial representation of a recent Sunday scene in France—"the launch of a frigate pierced for 40 guns." The journalist, while he furnishes us with the date, solicits no attention, as I now do, to the event as part of the illustration of the universal observance of the first day of the week, which ought, we are sometimes told, to silence the scruples of those who read the words of the Decalogue; "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." "The spectacle took place on the 23d ult., when, for some hours before the time announced for the launch, every road leading to the spot was thronged with vehicles and foot passengers," being in the neighborhood of Paris. None will wonder that the President of the Republic was present; but with us it reads strangely, that "the clergy of the parish of Neuilly had gone through the usual ceremony of benediction." The week following, the announcement was, "The election begun on Sunday in Paris." But, on the Sunday following, preparations were being made for bearing down the liberties of the people, at whatever expense of human life. And the same priesthood that blessed formerly the banners of the Revolution, have already given their sanction and support to the despotic President; while he, on the other hand, has indicated the favor which Popery is to receive at his hands; by converting the Paris Pantheon into a Popish Chapel, dedicated to St. Genevieve. Under Presidential patronage, the accommodating apostate Church of Rome may be expected to become still more intolerant to all that protest against its iniquities; but it may also be anticipated, that her influence will be liberally exercised in favor of the despot who supports her. To what, then, has France to look if the present movement should succeed! Yet what does the condition of France require but the severest discipline! Having cast off the fear of God, and refusing to submit to His requirements, a heavy hand is needful to teach such a people the consequences of sin.

We chronicled in the columns of the Sabbath Recorder, the Popish miracle of the appearance of the Virgin Mary on the Salette Mountain in 1846, testifying the difficulty which she had in restraining the wrath of her Son, on account of Sunday desecration, and other evil deeds. We also recorded the repudiation of the miracle by the Bishop of Gap, "as a miserable fable," but having been taken under the protection of the Bishop of Grenoble, in whose diocese the mountain is, it is now conclusively settled to have been a genuine miracle. The latter prelate, in an official mandate, certifies that the actual appearance of the Virgin on that day is proved by all the rules of human testimony, and confirmed by the many prodigies that have since occurred in the neighborhood. He therefore authorizes the worship of "Notre Dame de la Salette." Those, therefore, who put faith in the correctness of the Bishop's decision as to the value of the proof, will be permitted to resume possession of the miraculous evidence in favor of the Sunday, of which, even by a Bishop's hands, they had been so sacrilegiously despoiled.

But these Romish miracles are really difficult things to deal with. Rose Tamisier, who got up the miracle of the bleeding picture in the Church of St. Saturnus, has been condemned to six months imprisonment, with a fine of 500 francs and the costs, as an impostor. Her case had previously been before a different court, which could not come to a definitive conclusion upon her merits as to the value of the proof, will be permitted to resume possession of the miraculous evidence in favor of the Sunday, of which, even by a Bishop's hands, they had been so sacrilegiously despoiled.

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himself, have been stated to be consulting her as to their coming destinies. She is alarming all in the metropolis of Papal apostasy by "predictions of sanguinary disturbances, and popular fury." Some there are, however, who make no pretense to prophetic influence, and in whose favor no Papal Bull of canonization is ever likely to be issued, who have been prophesying the same. These, looking at the denunciations of sin in God's Word, and also studying the providential dealings, have come to the conclusion that Rome is ripening for judgment—even although she may still refuse through these to be instructed.

The British grant of £30,000 annually to the Papal College of Maynooth, is exciting much attention among Protestants—who see it only as salarating a seminary for the training of priests in superstition and sedition. Large meetings have been held in London, Edinburgh, and Glasgow, at which resolutions have been passed calling upon Government to withdraw the grant—but we have no expectation that this will be done. Petitions will, however, in all probability, be poured into Parliament, from all parts of the country, condemning of the policy, the morality, and the religion, which are exhibited in the endowment.

Dr. Achilli, whose liberation from the dungeons of Rome was effected under the influence, and I hope in answer also to the prayers of the Evangelical Alliance, is prosecuting Dr. Newman, one of the perverts to Rome from the English Episcopacy. In Lectures preached and published, Newman charged Achilli with a series of the foulest crimes while he was a Papist. Although his name is on the title page of the book, Newman at first refused to acknowledge the authorship, when this was required of him with a view to prosecution for libel. The publishers were then made responsible—on which Newman came forward and avowed the authorship. He is stated to be now procuring evidence from the records of the Inquisition, to be produced in this country at the forthcoming trial.

French Affairs—the Pope—Sir John Franklin. GLASGOW, December 19th, 1851.

Sabbath and Sunday are both appointed by the President of the French Republic as the days for polling, and thus determining whether his tenure of office is to be renewed. He has, however, silenced all the organs of public feeling that have ventured to express an unfavorable opinion of his despotism and cruelty. The moral value of the decision recorded through the ballot-box will be small. With the politics of the struggle I intermeddle not here, but I tremble for the results to true religion, should Louis Napoleon be successful, and be able afterwards to keep his place. It must have been a strong leaning to Popery—from whatever motive—that led to the inconsistency of sending troops to Rome, forcing the Pope upon his reclaiming subjects, when they proposed to do just as France had done.

On the recent outburst an early act of this man indicated a continuance of the same spirit ostentatiously displayed; that the priests might understand for whom their influence should be exercised, the Pantheon was converted by Presidential ordinance, a Christian Church, having assigned unto it a saintly title. Accordingly, the Cardinals at Rome exult in the present state of matters; the Archbishop of Paris has withdrawn his hostility to the President; and the Bishop of Chartres has addressed a circular to the clergy of his diocese, urging them to give Napoleon their support at the polls. "Providence," he says, "gives us at this moment only this means of safety." And Count de Montalembert, the ultramontane leader, who proposed the enforcement of Sunday observance in the Assembly, has addressed a long letter to the Romish Universe newspaper, pressing the claims of the Prince to be re-elected, on the ground that he "has rendered for three years incomparable services to the cause of order and Catholicism." It is, however, stated in this day's telegraphic announcement, that opposition is being more distinctly expressed; and M. Larochejaquequin, the leader of one section of the French Legitimists, has been bold enough to issue a protest against the recent measures of the President. "The time for Cæsars," he says, "cannot have come for France." God may, however, be seeing a need, on the part of an unprincipled people, who reject His fatherly government, of a full measure of man's authority over them. It is by the troubles coming upon the earth, (and we have still to pass through a time of trouble such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be,) that men will be led to desire the coming of the King who shall reign in righteousness, the Prince of Peace. The troubles predicted are various; the more prominent being God's "four sore judgments," war, famine, pestilence, and evil beasts. But the earth itself shall experience the power of Him who made it. "The Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste." "The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant; therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate; therefore hath the inhabitants of the earth been burned, and few men left." Is. 24: 1-6. There shall even be signs in the sun, moon, and stars—the sea and the waves roaring; Earthquakes in divers places, hail, and furious storms, are all part of Jehovah's weapons of punishment. Of some of these there have recently been memorable examples; and this very month the Island of Sicily has been swept by two enormous water spouts, about a quarter of a mile apart, which drew up into their vortices, men, women, cattle, sheep, and horses, bear-

ing them on to destruction, while houses were unroofed and trees uprooted. Their passage was accompanied with the fall of hail-stones of enormous size, and masses of ice. Five hundred lives have been lost, and an immense amount of property destroyed, numerous vessels in the harbor having been sunk with their crews. If such things be but "the beginning of sorrows," what will be the consequence when the full tide of divine wrath shall overtake the world? As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the day of the Son of Man. Alas! who shall live when God doeth this!

The Pope, great man as he seems to think himself to be, has "resolved to open anew the celestial treasures of the church under the form of a Jubilee." This he announces most graciously in an Encyclical Letter dated Nov. 21st, in which he tells his Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, and Bishops, of the awful disregard prevailing to what he greatly deprecates, a reverence for Popery and its priesthood. "As an anticipatory pledge of every celestial gift," he sends them even now his "apostolic benediction." Were it not that the "indulgences," which are meant by this "Jubilee," yield a handsome revenue to this misnamed "Holiness," we might well wonder that "the anticipatory pledge," if it be of any value, or "the celestial treasures of the church," should be granted at such a time; for the same document which speaks of both, breathes out fury against opposers. Against all such, he asks prayers to God, to "the most tender of Mothers," next to the Prince of the Apostles; "then," he adds, "pray to Paul," "then pray to the patron saint of each city and country." A legion of saints—such saints as some of the latter class were—are thus invoked against gainsayers. But we are really more afraid of some of the other weapons which this unscrupulous power has been wont to wield, than we are of its beaded prayers.

The purpose of seeking farther for Sir John Franklin has not been abandoned. Government has determined to send out another expedition to Wellington Channel, in the Spring. Three steamers are to be employed; and if sailing vessels are at all sent out with stores, the steamers on this occasion are to act independently of these, communicating only with each other. Another expedition, to be equipped by subscription, is also proposed to go to Behring Straits, although recent accounts from that quarter are unfavorable; and Lieut. Pim is now in Russia, on his way to Siberia, to endeavor to find his way across the ice to the Arctic Sea, which is supposed to be open, and in connection with the strait now discovered in Wellington Channel. We fear there is little ground to hope for the deliverance of those for whom these efforts are made; but it is right that all due means be employed for that purpose—with prayer. J. A. BEGG.

PERSECUTION IN MADAGASCAR.—The Queen of Madagascar seems bent upon exterminating from her dominions all who favor Christianity, or "the new religion," as it is called. She has long been engaged in this work, and it is stated that in the last outburst of her fury, four persons were burnt alive; fourteen were precipitated from a high rock and crushed to death; a hundred and seventeen were condemned to work in chains as long as they live; twenty were cruelly flogged with rods, besides 1,748 others mulcted in heavy penalties, reduced to slavery, and compelled to buy themselves back, or be deprived of their wives and families. Persons of rank have been degraded, and sent as laborers to carry stone for twelve months together to build houses; and in an endless variety of other ways have the maddened passions of one wicked woman been permitted now for years past to plunge a large, populous, and beautiful country, into misery and ruin.

THE MOVEMENTS OF GOVERNOR KOSSUTH.—Governor Kossuth has been in Washington for a week past, where he has received numerous deputations from various parts of the country, and has been called upon by the leading members of Government. On Thursday he waited on the President in an official way; and on Sabbath evening, at six o'clock, he dined with the President, in company with Madam Kossuth and Count Pulkafordy. A Public Dinner has been tendered him by the members of the two Houses of Congress, to take place on Fourth-day of the present week. Kossuth's reception at Washington has been less cordial, probably than was expected by him, and desired by the people generally.

A BISHOPRIC RESIGNED.—After a long struggle, the Episcopal Diocese of New York several weeks ago succeeded in electing as Bishop (in the place of the suspended Bishop Onderdonk) the Rev. Wm. Creighton, D.D. But long deliberation upon the question, had led him to decline the office.

THE NEW YORK STATE OFFICERS recently elected entered upon their duties with the beginning of the year. Many changes have already been made among the clerks, and others are expected. The Governor's Message to the Legislature was to be delivered at noon of Third-day Jan. 6.

JENNY LIND'S Farewell Concerts have been indefinitely postponed, if not entirely abandoned, in consequence of the death of her mother, news of which reached her in the beginning of last week. Miss Lind is still in New York, where it is supposed she will remain for some weeks.

THE HUTCHINSON FAMILY are giving a series of Musical Entertainments at Metropolitan Hall, New York. They have introduced many new songs, some of which are specially adapted to the present time; and promise to add to their already enviable popularity.



