THE CONSEQUENCE PROVED.

Note that vol. xiv pp 190–198 "should be inserted".

1. Mr. Toplady, a young, bold man, lately published a pamphlet, an extract from which was soon after printed, concluding with these words:—

"The sum of all is this: One in twenty, suppose, of mankind are elected; nineteen in twenty are reprobated. The elect shall be saved, do what they will: The reprobate shall be damned, do what they can."

2. A great outcry has been raised on that account, as though this was not a fair state of the case; and it has been vehemently affirmed, that no such consequence follows from the doctrine of absolute predestination.

I calmly affirm, it is a fair state of the case; this consequence does naturally and necessarily follow from the doctrine of absolute predestination, as here stated and defended by bold Mr. Augustus Toplady.

Indeed, I have not leisure to consider the matter at large: I can only make a few strictures, and leave the young man to be farther corrected by one that is full his match, Mr. Thomas Olivers.

3. "When love is predicated of God, it implies, (1.) His everlasting will, purpose, and determination to save his people." *(Mr. Toplady's Tract,* chap. 1.) I appeal to all men, whether it is not a natural consequence, even of this, that "all these shall be saved, do what they will."

You may say, "O, but they will only do what is good." Be it so: Yet the consequence stands.

"Election signifies that sovereign, unconditional, immutable act of God, whereby he selected some to be eternally saved." *Immutable, unconditional!* From hence then it undeniably follows, "these shall be saved, do what they will."

"Predestination, as relating to the elect, is that irreversible act of the divine will, whereby God determined to deliver a certain number of men from hell:" *Ergo,* a certain number shall infallibly be saved, do what they will. Who can deny the consequence?

"Not one of the elect can perish, but they must all necessarily be saved." (Chap. 3.) Can any assert this, and yet deny that consequence,—"therefore all the elect shall be saved, do what they will?" unless you would say, it is the proposition itself, rather than a consequence from it.

4. So much for the former part of the question: Let us now consider the latter:—

"Hatred ascribed to God implies a resolution not to have mercy on such and such men. So, 'Esau have I hated;' that is, I did from all eternity determine not to have mercy on him." (Chap. 1.) In other words,—

> I by my dire decree did seal
> His fix'd, unalterable doom;
> Consign'd his unborn soul to hell,
> And damn'd him from his mother's womb.

Well, then, does it not follow, by unavoidable consequence, that such and such men, poor hated Esau in particular, "shall be damned, do what they can?"

"Reprobation denotes God's eternal preterition of some men, and his predestination of them to destruction." And is it possible for them, by anything they can do, to prevent that destruction? You say, "No." It follows, they "shall be damned, do what they can."

"Predestination, as it regards the reprobate, is that immutable act of God's will, whereby he hath determined to leave some men to perish." And can they avoid it by anything they do? You affirm, they cannot. Again, therefore, it follows, these "shall be damned, do what they can."

"We assert, there is a predestination of particular persons to death, which death they shall inevitably undergo;" that is, "they shall be damned, do what they can."

"The non-elect were predestinated to eternal death." (Chap. 2.) *Ergo*, "they shall be damned, do what they can."

"The condemnation of the reprobate is necessary and inevitable." Surely I need add no more on this head. You see that, "The reprobate shall be damned, do what they can," is the whole burden of the song.

5. Take only two precious sentences more, which include the whole question:—

"We assert, that the number of the elect, and also of the reprobate, is so fixed and determinate, that neither can be augmented or diminished;" (chap. 4;) and "that the

decrees of election and reprobation are immutable and irreversible."

From each of these assertions, the whole consequence follows, clear as the noonday sun,—Therefore, "the elect shall be saved, do what they will; the reprobate shall be damned, do what they can."

6. I add a word, with regard to another branch of this kind, charitable doctrine.

Mr. Toplady says, "God has a positive will to destroy the reprobate for their sins." (Chap. 1.) *For their sins!* How can that be? I positively assert, that (on this scheme) they have no sins at all. They never had; they can have none. For it cannot be a sin in a spark to rise, or in a stone to fall. And the spark or the stone is not more necessarily determined either to rise or to fall, than the man is to sin, to commit that rape, or adultery, or murder. For "God did, before all time, determine and direct to some particular end, every person or thing, to which he has given, or is yet to give, being." God himself did "predestinate them to fill up the measure of their iniquities;" such was his sovereign, irresistible decree, before the foundation of the world. *To fill up the measure of their iniquities;* that is, to commit every act which they committed. So "God decreed the Jews to be the crucifiers of Christ, and Judas to betray him." (Chap. 4.) Whose fault was it then? You plainly say, It was not his fault, but God's. For what was Judas, or ten thousand reprobates besides? Could they resist his decree? No more than they could pull the sun out of the firmament of heaven. And would God punish them with everlasting destruction, for not pulling the sun out of the firmament? He might as well do it for this, as for their not doing what (on this supposition) was equally impossible. "But they are punished for their impenitency, sin, and unbelief." Say *unbelief and impenitency,* but not *sin.* For "God had predestinated them to continue in impenitency and unbelief. God had positively ordained them to continue in their blindness and hardness of heart." Therefore their not repenting and believing was no more a sin, than their not pulling the sun from heaven.

7. Indeed Mr. T. himself owns, "The sins of the reprobate were not the cause of their being passed by; but merely and entirely the sovereign will and determinating pleasure of God."

"O, but their sin was the cause of their damnation though not of their preterition;" that is, God determined they should live and die in their sins, that he might afterwards damn them!

Was ever anything like this? Yes, I have read something like it: When Tiberius had determined to destroy Sejanus and all his family, as it was unlawful to put a virgin to death, what could be done with his daughter, a child of nine years old? Why, the hangman was ordered first to deflour, and then to strangle, her! Yet even good Tiberius did not order her to be strangled "because she had been defloured!" If so, it had been a parallel case; it had been just what is here affirmed of the Most High.

8. One word more: "I will obviate," says Mr. T., "a fallacious objection, How is reprobation reconcilable with the doctrine of a future judgment? There needs no pains to reconcile these two." *No pains!* Indeed there does; more pains than all the men upon earth, or all the devils in hell, will ever be able to take. But go on: "In the last day, Christ will pass sentence on the non-elect, (1.) Not for having done what they could not help; but, (2.) For their wilful ignorance of divine things; (3.) For their obstinate unbelief; (4.) For their omissions of moral duty; and, (5.) For their repeated iniquities and transgressions."

He will condemn them, (1.) "Not for having done what they could not help." I say, Yes; for having sinned against God to their lives' end. But this they could not help. He had himself decreed it; he had determined they should continue impenitent. (2.) "For their wilful ignorance of divine things." No; their ignorance of God, and the things of God, was not wilful, was not originally owing to their own will, but to the sovereign will of God; his will, not theirs, was the primary cause of their continuing in that ignorance. (3.) "For their obstinate unbelief." No; how can it be termed obstinate, when they never had a possibility of removing it? when God had absolutely decreed, before they were born, that they should live and die therein? (4.) "For their omissions of moral duty;" that is, for not loving God and their neighbour, which is the sum of the moral law. Was it then ever in their power to love God and their neighbour? No; no more than to touch heaven with their hand. Had not God himself unalterably decreed, that they

should not love either God or man? If, therefore, they are condemned for this, they are condemned for what they never could help. (5.) "For their repeated iniquities and transgressions." And was it ever in their power to help these? Were they not predestinated thereto before the foundation of the world? How then can the Judge of all the earth consign them to everlasting fire, for what was in effect his own act and deed?

I apprehend, then, this is no fallacious objection, but a solid and weighty one; and defy any man living, who asserts the unconditional decree of reprobation or preterition, (just the same in effect,) to reconcile this with the scriptural doctrine of a future judgment. I say again, I defy any man on earth to show, how, on this scheme, God can "judge the world in righteousness."

SOME REMARKS

ON

MR. HILL'S "REVIEW OF ALL THE DOCTRINES TAUGHT BY MR. JOHN WESLEY."

Humanum est nescire et errare.

Be calm in arguing; for fierceness makes
Error a fault, and truth discourtesy.
Why should I feel another man's mistakes
More than his sickness or infirmity?
In love I should; but anger is not love,
Nor wisdom neither; therefore gently move.

HERBERT.

1. MR. HILL has an immense advantage over me: He abounds in time, and I in business. I cannot therefore undertake to write page for page; I have not leisure, if I had inclination. And indeed it is not needful: For a full confutation of whatsoever is cited from the Eleven Letters commonly ascribed to Mr. Hervey, I need only refer to Mr. Sellon; who has not only answered every shadow of an argu-