

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

OF THE

FOUNDER, AND PRINCIPAL ALUMNI

OF THE

LOG COLLEGE.

TOGETHER WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE REVIVALS
OF RELIGION, UNDER THEIR MINISTRY.

COLLECTED AND EDITED

BY

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CHAPTER IX.

REV. WM. TENNENT'S LETTER.

The Rev. William Tennent's Letter, to the Rev. Mr. Prince, of Boston, giving the character of the revival in Freehold, N. J.

The following letter is introduced here, because it gives an account of the fruits of the ministry of the Rev. John Tennent. It is given literally from Prince's Christian History.

“FREEHOLD, *October 11th*, 1744.

“REV. AND DEAR SIR,

“I desire to notice thankfully the late rich display of our glorious Emanuel's grace, in subduing by his word and Spirit, multitudes of sinners to himself, both in this and other lands. O may he go on ‘conquering and to conquer,’ until he has subdued all things unto himself! Neither can I think but that the writing of a history of the great things our Lord has done among us, has a tendency to, and will by the blessing of God upon it, excite generations yet unborn to praise his glorious name, and thereby his honour will be advanced, and his triumphs increased! Most gladly, therefore, do I comply with

your request, and herewith send such an account as I can, of what the Lord has done among us. But herein, as I must be very general, having never made any memorandums in writing of the Lord's work here, so I trust I shall be strictly true, for the Lord hates a false witness.

“This place lies southwest from New York, and is distant from it about fifty miles. It was the first, in the East Jersey, on the west side of the Raritan River, which was settled with a gospel ministry. This was owing, under God, to the agency of some Scotch people, that came to it; among whom there was none so painful in this blessed undertaking, as one Walter Ker, who in the year 1685, for his faithful and conscientious adherence to God and his truth, as professed by the Church of Scotland, was there apprehended, and sent into this country, under a sentence of perpetual banishment. By which it appears, that the devil and his instruments lost their aim in sending him from home; where it is unlikely he could ever have been so serviceable to Christ's kingdom as he has been here. He is yet alive; and blessed be God, he is flourishing in his old age, being in his 88th year.

“But to return; the public means of grace dispensed here, were at first, for a season, too much like a miscarrying womb and dry breasts; so that the major part of the congregation could not be said to have so much as a name to live. Family prayer

was unpractised by all, a very few excepted ; ignorance so overshadowed their minds, that the doctrine of the new birth when clearly explained and powerfully pressed upon them, as absolutely necessary to salvation (by that faithful preacher of God's word, Mr. Theodorus Jacobus Frelinghuysen, a Low Dutch minister, and some other English ministers who were occasionally here,) was made a common game of ; so that not only the preachers, but professors of that truth, were called in derision *new-born*, and looked upon as holders forth of some new and false doctrine. And, indeed, their practice was as bad as their principles, viz. loose and profane.

“In the year 1729, their minister removed from them, and they were so grievously divided among themselves, that it appeared improbable they would ever agree in the settlement of another. In this miserable, helpless, and almost hopeless condition, they lay, and few among them had either eyes to see, or hearts to bewail their woful, wretched circumstances. Thus they seemed to be cast out, as the prophet Ezekiel represents it in the 16th chapter of his book, and the 5th verse. But the Lord who is rich in mercy, of his unexpected and unmerited love, passed by them lying in their blood, and said unto many of them since that day, *Live* ; and live they shall to all eternity.

“About this time, my dear brother John (who is now with Jesus) was licensed as a candidate for

the sacred ministry : a youth, whom the Author of every good gift had uncommonly furnished for that important trust. To him application was made by some of the congregation, intreating that he would supply them for a time ; to which, with the leave of the presbytery, he consented. But ere he went, he often told me, that he was heartily sorry he had engaged to go among them ; for it seemed to him that they were a people whom God had given up for their abuse of the gospel. But the Lord's thoughts are not our thoughts, nor his ways our ways ; for when he had preached four or five Sabbaths in the place, which was the whole time he tarried among them at first, the Lord so blessed his labours, engaging people to attend to the things which were spoken, and in stirring them up to search the scriptures whether these things were so or not, and withal enabling him to preach to them with such uncommon freedom and earnestness, that he told me he was fully persuaded Christ Jesus had a large harvest to bring home there ; so that, though they were a poor broken people, yet if they called him he would settle among them, albeit he should be put to beg his bread by so doing. April the 15th, 1730, the congregation unanimously called him ; which he accepting of, was ordained the 19th of November following, and continued with them until April 23d, 1732, and was then translated to glory.

“During his short time, his labours were greatly blessed; so that the place of public worship was usually crowded with people of all ranks and orders, as well as professions, that obtained in that part of the country, and they seemed to hear, generally, as for their lives: yea, such as were wont to go to those places for their diversion, viz. to hear news or speak to their tradesmen, &c., even on the Lord’s day, as they themselves have since confessed, were taken in the gospel net. A solemn awe of God’s majesty possessed many, so that they behaved themselves as at his bar, while in his house. Many tears were usually shed when he preached, and sometimes the body of the congregation was moved or affected. I can say, and let the Lord alone have the glory of it, that I have seen both minister and people wet with their tears, as with a bedewing rain. It was no uncommon thing to see persons in the time of hearing, sobbing as if their hearts would break, but without any public outcry; and some have been carried out of the assembly (being overcome) as if they had been dead.

“Religion was then the general subject of discourse, though they did not all approve of the power of it. The holy Bible was searched by people on both sides of the question, and knowledge surprisingly increased. The terror of God fell generally upon the inhabitants of this place; so that wickedness as ashamed in a great measure hid itself; fro-

icking, dancing, horse-racing, with other profane meetings were broken up. Some of the jolly companions of both sexes, were constrained by their consciences to meet together, the men by themselves, and the women by themselves, to confess privately their abominations before God, and beg the pardon of them.

“Before my brother’s death, by reason of his bodily weakness, and inability on that account to officiate publicly, I preached here about six months. In which time, many came inquiring what they should do to be saved, and some to tell what the Lord had done for their souls. But the blessing on his labours to the conviction and conversion of souls, was more discernible some months after his death, than any time in his life; almost in every neighbourhood—I cannot say in every house—there were sin-sick souls, longing for and seeking after the dear physician, Jesus Christ: several of whom, I no ways doubt have, since that time, sincerely closed with him, and are healed; glory, glory to his holy name be given, for ever and ever, Amen!

“Sometime after my brother’s decease, the congregation called me to labour among them, statedly; which I accepted, and was ordained, October the 25th, 1733. Thus my Lord sent me to reap that on which I had bestowed but little labour. May this consideration be blessed to make me thankful and humble, while I live.

“I must further declare to the honour of God, that he has not yet left us, although awfully provoked by our crying crimes; but ever since that more remarkable outpouring of his Spirit has continued to bless his own ordinances, to the conviction, conversion and consolation, of precious souls: so that every year, some, more or less have been in a judgment of charity added (savingly,) to his mystical body: to his holy name be all the glory. In the mean time, I would have it observed, that two or three years last past, have afforded fewer instances of this kind, than formerly. However, through grace some have been lately awakened who are even now seeking Jesus sorrowing. What the number is of those who have tasted the sweet fruits of the Redeemer's purchase in a saving manner, in this congregation, I cannot tell: it is my comfort that the Lord will reckon them; for he knows who are his: and indeed none but the omniscient God is equal to the difficult province of determining certainly concerning the internal states of men. Yet I may be bold to say, that to all appearance, both old and young, males and females, have been renewed; though none so young as I have heard of in some other places. Some negroes, I trust, are made free in Christ; and more seem to be unfeignedly seeking after it. But after all that the Lord has been pleased to do among us, I am persuaded that the greater number, by far, are yet in the gall

of bitterness and bond of iniquity. This makes me sometimes ready to wish, that I had in the wilderness the lodging-place of a wayfaring-man, that I might leave my people and go from them; or rather that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for them! Such as have been converted were every one of them prepared for it by a sharp law-work of conviction, discovering to them in a heart-affecting manner, their sinfulness both by nature and practise, as well as their liableness to damnation for their original and actual transgressions. Neither could they see any way in themselves by which they could escape the divine vengeance; for that their whole life past, was not only a 'continued act of rebellion against God, but their present endeavours to better it, such as prayers, &c. were so imperfect, that they could not endure them, and much less, they concluded, would a holy God. They all confessed the justice of God in their eternal perdition; and thus have been shut up to the blessed necessity of seeking relief by faith in Christ alone. It would be endless to mention the evils they complained of; viz. ignorance, unbelief, hardness of heart, hatred against God, his laws, and people worldliness, wandering of heart in duty, pride, sensuality, sloth, &c. With what grief, shame and self-loathing have I heard them bewail their loss of time, and neglect of the great gospel salvation. Those

that were communicants before their awakening, have with trembling declared that their unworthy partaking grieved them more than anything ever they did ; for hereby they had as it were murdered the Lord. It is almost incredible to relate, the indignation that such awakened sinners expressed against themselves, on the account of their sinfulness. They looked upon themselves to be mere monsters of nature, and that none were worse if any so bad. Others signified that they could not find their pictures out of hell, and that they were just fit companions for the damned, and none else. Let it be here noted, that some who have expressed themselves in the manner I have mentioned, were before taken for believers both by themselves and others, being sober and regular in their walk.

“The sorrows of the convinced, were not all alike, either in degree or continuance. Some have not thought it possible for them to be saved, if God would vindicate the honour of his justice ; but these thoughts continued not long at a time, blessed be God. Others thought it was possible, but not very probable, because of their vileness. The greatest degree of hope which any had, under a conviction that issued well, was a maybe ; ‘peradventure, or maybe, God will have mercy on me,’ said the sinner. Some, in coming to Jesus, have been much rent with blasphemous and other horrible temptations, which have turned their moisture

into the drought of summer ; who now through pure grace serve God, without such distractions, in gladness and singleness of heart. The conviction of some has been instantaneous ; by the Holy Spirit's applying the law to the conscience, and discovering to the eye of the understanding, as it were, all their heart deceits very speedily ; by which they have been stabbed as with a sword. But the conviction of others, has been in a more progressive way. They have had discovered to them, one abomination after another, in life ; and from thence were led to behold the fountain of all corruption in the heart ; and thus they were constrained to despair of life by the law, and consequently to flee to Jesus as the only door of hope, and so rest entirely on his merit for salvation.

“ After the aforesaid sorrowful exercises, such as were reconciled to God have been blessed with the Spirit of adoption, enabling them to cry, Abba, Father. But some have had greater degrees of consolation than others, in proportion to the clearness of the evidences of their sonship. The Lord has drawn some out of the horrible pit of distress and darkness, and brought them into the light of his countenance. He has filled their hearts with joy, and their mouths with praises ; yea, given them the full assurance of faith. Others have been brought to peace in believing ; but have not had so great a *plerophory* of joy ; yet they go on in a religious

course, trusting in the Lord. The way they have been comforted is either by the application of some particular promise of holy scripture, or by a soul-affecting view of the way of salvation by Christ, as free, without money and without price. They were enabled to behold the valuable mercies of the covenant of grace, freely tendered to the vilest transgressors, that were poor in their own eyes, sin-sick, weary and wounded, together with the ability and willingness of the Lord Jesus to relieve them from all the evils, they either feared or felt. With this way of salvation their souls were well pleased, and thereupon, have ventured their case into his hands, expecting help from him only ; who has given them both peace and rest ; yea, filled some of them with joy unspeakable and full of glory. I remember not of any that received their first comforts otherwise. Some few have retained their confidence in God ever since, without any considerable questionings of their state, although they have not always tasted the comforts of it. But the most, by far, have questioned all, and doubted it was a delusion. This I suppose is generally owing to the remains of corruption, which blot the evidences of grace in good men, so that they can hardly read them ; and particularly, to the awful sin of unbelief ; together with the prevalence of a legal spirit, which presses them to perfect holiness on pain of death, and because they cannot

obtain that, they conclude they are unsanctified, and have no right to Christ. I might add the ignorance of mortification; they seem to think that in the justified, sin is killed in its being, as well as governing power; and, therefore, because they feel their old sins sometimes stirring in them, they conclude that all is wrong; nay, although they hate the doctrine of perfection as held by some, yet because they are not perfect they think they have no grace. But however distressing it is to them to feel their imperfections, it helps to persuade me that they are regenerate; else it would not be so; sin would not be their chief burden, in a general way.

“However, our Lord who comforts those that are cast down, even the wonderful Counsellor, teaches them, that he not only saves those who have been sinners before conversion, but even such as after it, find a law in their members warring against the law of their minds, which too often causes them to do the things they would not; and enables them to reflect upon what they have and do daily experience, and compare it with the evidences of grace in the word of God. The blessed God does likewise give them renewed tastes of his love, even after missteps; and thus they are established in faith and hope, so that they have a prevailing persuasion of their interest in Christ; except it be in times of desertion and temptation, with which some are more

exercised than others, for reasons best known to a sovereign God.

“Doubtless, Sir, you will desire to know, what effects this work produces on the minds and manners of its subjects. I answer, they are not only made to know, but heartily to approve of the great doctrines of the gospel, which they were before either ignorant of or averse to, (at least some of them) so that they do harmonize sweetly in exalting free, special, and sovereign grace, through the Redeemer Jesus Christ; being willing to glory only in the Lord, who has loved them and given himself for them, an offering and a sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savour.

“I cannot express, with what satisfaction I have heard them speak of the new covenant method of salvation. They have spoken with such affection and clearness, as I have thought was sufficient to convince an atheist, that the Lord was their Teacher. The alteration in some, from almost gross ignorance to such clear gospel light, and in others from such corrupt principles, as the Papists and Quakers hold, to the believing acknowledgment of the truth, none but he that made the understanding could effect. They approve of the law of God after the inward man, as holy, just, and good, and prize it above gold, yea, much fine gold. They judge it their duty as well as privilege to wait on God in all the ordinances of his own institution, although they expect to merit nothing thereby. A reverence for God's command-

ing authority, and gratitude for his love, conspire to incite and constrain them, to a willing, unfeigned, universal and unfainting obedience to his laws : yet they declare that in everything they come sadly short of what they ought to do, and bitterly bewail their defects. But blessed be God, they are not discouraged in their endeavours to reach forward, if by any means they may apprehend that for which they are apprehended of God ; and in all things they acknowledge that they ought to look to Jesus as the author and finisher of faith, whose alone it is to work all good in them and for them, to whom be glory for ever. They are not unmolested in their way by enemies, both from within and from without. Yet, they profess that the comforts which they receive do more than compensate all their labour, were there no good to be expected hereafter : and surely, as the psalmist observes, ‘in keeping God’s commands there is a great reward.’ But to proceed :

“They have not all made alike proficiency in the Christian course ; neither are they all equal in religious endeavours ; nor any at all times alike lively. They are sometimes obstructed in their religious progress by coldness and deadness ; but this the blessed Jesus removes at times, by the influence of his Holy Spirit ; then, O then, their hearts are enlarged, and they run the sweet way of God’s commandments with alacrity and delight, they love all such as they have reason to think, from their

principles, experience, and practice, are truly godly, though they differ from them in sentiment in lesser things, and look on them to be the excellent of the earth. They rejoice in Zion's prosperity ; glorifying God on that account, and feel a sympathy in her sorrows. They do prefer one another before themselves, in love ; except, under temptation, which they are ready to confess and bewail, when they are themselves ; generally accounting that they are the meanest of the family of God, and unworthy of the blessing ; yea, the most so of any living, all things considered. In a word, the sapless formalist is become spiritual in his conversation ; the proud and haughty are made humble and affable ; the wanton and vile, sober and temperate ; the swearer honours that venerable name he was wont to profane, and blesses, instead of cursing ; the Sabbath-breaker is brought to be a strict observer of holy time ; the worldling now seeks treasures in the heavens ; the extortioner now deals justly ; and the formerly malicious, forgive injuries ; the prayerless are earnest and incessant in acts of devotion ; and the sneaking self-seeker, endeavours the advancement of God's glory, and the salvation of immortal souls.

“Through God's mercy we have been quite free from enthusiasm ; our people have followed the holy law of God, the sure word of prophecy, and not the impulses of their own minds. There have not been that I know of, among us, any visions, except

such as are by faith, namely, clear and affecting views of the new and living way to the Father through his dear Son Jesus Christ: nor any revelations but what have been long since written in the sacred volume: nor any trances but such as all men now living shall meet with, for it is appointed for all men once to die.

“It may not be amiss to inform you, that many who have been awakened, and seemed for a time to set out for Zion, are turned back. Yea, of those who have been esteemed converts, some have made shipwreck of faith and a good conscience; though, glory to God, there have not been many such; yet some of them who have thus awfully apostatized, were highly esteemed in the church. By this, our good and gracious God has given check to too high an esteem of our own judgment, concerning the spiritual states of others, (an evil which is too common among young converts) and awfully warned all that stand, to take heed lest they fall. Many, I have cause to fear, have been hardened in their impieties and unreasonable prejudices against vital religion, by the backslidings of some professors. ‘Wo to the world, because of offences!’ But in the mean time, blessed be God, Wisdom is and will be justified of her children.

“This, Sir, is as particular an account, as I can at present give of the Lord’s work, in this place. If my Lord will accept it as a testimony for him, it

will be a greater honour than ever I deserved. I need your prayers, and earnestly desire them. O beg of God, that I may be faithful to the death, and wise to win souls. I am with all due respects, yours in the dearest Jesus,

WM. TENNENT."

"ATTESTATION to the preceding Account by the Ruling Elders and Deacons of the Congregation of Freehold.

"We the subscribers, Ruling Elders and Deacons of the Presbyterian congregation of Freehold, having had perfect knowledge of the circumstances of this place, some of us from the first settling of it, and others of a long time, do give our testimony to the truth in general, of the above letter of our Rev. pastor. May the Lord make the same of use for the carrying on his glorious work begun in these lands, and make the name of the dearest Jesus glorious from the rising to the setting sun.

WALTER KER,	ROBERT CUMMING,
DAVID RHEA,	JOHN HENDERSON,
WILLIAM KER,	SAMUEL KER.

Freehold, in New Jersey, October 11th, 1744."

CHAPTER X.

MEMOIR OF THE REV. WILLIAM TEN- NENT, JR.

Preliminary Remarks—Mr. Tennent's birth and education—sickness, apparent death, and recovery—State of his mind during his trance—Settlement and ordination as successor to his brother at Freehold—Marriage—Character as a pastor and success in the ministry—Trial for Perjury—Extraordinary means of deliverance—The close of life.

THE following memoir of the Rev. William Tennent, jr., was originally published in "The Assembly's Missionary Magazine," in the year 1806; and although it was not accompanied with the author's name, it was well understood to be from the pen of the Hon. Elias Boudinot, LL.D., who was particularly acquainted with all the members of this remarkable family. But although Dr. Boudinot prepared this memoir for the press, the greater part of the narrative was written, at his request, by the late Dr. Henderson, of Freehold, one of the elders of the Freehold church, and a man distinguished for his piety, integrity, veracity, and patriotism. This original manuscript is now in the possession of the compiler of this volume. From it we learn, that

the history of Mr. Tennent's trial, which occurred soon after his settlement in the ministry, and when Dr. Henderson was too young to be a competent witness, was received from his father, who was then an elder in the church of Freehold, of which Mr. William Tennent was the pastor. There can be no doubt about the authenticity of the facts here stated, however they may be accounted for. The writer has heard the same facts from elderly persons, who never had seen this published account; and they were so public, that they were generally known, not only to the people of this part of the country, but they were currently reported and fully believed, in other states. The writer has heard them, familiarly talked of in Virginia, from his childhood. It is a matter of some regret that the record of this trial cannot be found, yet papers have been discovered among the archives of the state, in which reference is made to this transaction. The following is the narrative.

“ Among the duties which every generation owes to those who are to succeed it, we may reckon the careful delineation of the characters of those whose example deserves, and may invite imitation. Example speaks louder than precept, and living practical religion has a much greater effect on mankind than argument or eloquence. Hence, the lives of pious men become the most important sources of instruction and warning to posterity; while their ex-

emplary conduct affords the best commentary on the religion they professed. But when such men have been remarkably favoured of God, with unusual degrees of light and knowledge, and have been honoured by the special and extraordinary influences of his Holy Spirit, and by the most manifest and wonderful interpositions of divine Providence in their behalf, it becomes a duty of more than common obligation, to hand down to posterity the principal events of their lives, together with such useful inferences as they naturally suggest. A neglect of this duty, even by persons who may be conscious of the want of abilities necessary for the complete biographer, is greatly culpable; for, if the strictest attention be paid to the truth of the facts related, and all exaggeration or partial representation be carefully avoided, the want of other furniture can be no excuse for burying in oblivion that conduct which, if known, might edify and benefit the world.

“The writer of these memoirs has difficulties of a peculiar kind to encounter, in attempting to sketch the life of that modest, humble, and worthy man, whose actions, exercises, and sentiments he wishes to record. Worldly men, who are emulous to transmit their names to following ages, take care to leave such materials for the future historian, as may secure the celebrity which they seek. But the humble follower of the meek and lowly Jesus, whose sole aim is the glory of God, in the welfare of immortal souls,

goes on, from day to day, as seeing Him who is invisible, careful to approve himself only to the Searcher of hearts, regardless of worldly fame or distinction, and leaving it to his heavenly Father to reward him openly, in the day of final account. The writer of such a man's life, must principally rely on a personal acquaintance with him, and the communications of his intimate friends, for the information which shall be imparted to the public. In these circumstances it is peculiarly embarrassing, if some of the facts to be recorded are of such a nature, that it is most desirable to have their authenticity so fully established, that incredulity shall be confounded, and the sneer of the sceptical and profane lose its effect. But the writer of the following narrative, though placed in these circumstances, and having such facts to detail, has nevertheless determined to proceed. He has refreshed and corrected his own recollection, by the most careful inquiries that he could possibly make of others, until he is well assured, that what he shall state is incontestable truth. From the very nature of several things of which an account will be given, they do not indeed admit of any other direct testimony than that of the remarkable man to whom they relate. But if there ever was a person who deserved to be believed unreservedly on his own word, it was he. He possessed an integrity of soul and a soundness of judgment, which did actually secure him an unlimited confi-

dence from all who knew him. Every species of deception, falsehood, and exaggeration he abhorred and scorned. He was an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile. With such materials, then, as have been mentioned, and for a work of such character as has been hinted, the writer has undertaken his task. He has undertaken what he would most gladly have resigned to an abler hand; but from which, as no other offered, he *dared* not withhold his own. He could wish that speculative and even unbelieving minds might be instructed and convinced by these memoirs. But his principal object, and that in which he trusts he shall not be entirely disappointed, is to direct, assist, and comfort pious souls, groaning under the pressure of the calamities which they often have to endure in their pilgrimage through the wilderness of this world."

"The Rev. Wm. Tennent, of Freehold, New Jersey, was the second son of the Rev. Wm. Tennent, sen., and was born on the 3d day of June, 1705, in the county of Armagh, in Ireland, and was just turned of thirteen years when he arrived in America. He applied himself with much zeal and industry to his studies, and made great proficiency in the languages, particularly in the Latin. Being early impressed with a deep sense of divine things, he soon determined to follow the example of his father and elder brother, by devoting himself to the service of God in the ministry of the gospel. His brother Gil-

bert being called to the pastoral charge of the church at New Brunswick, in New Jersey, and making a very considerable figure as a useful and popular preacher, William determined, as he had completed his course in the languages, to study divinity under his brother. Accordingly, he left his father's house, with his consent, and by his advice, and went to New Brunswick. At his departure from home, which was considered as his setting out in life, his father addressed him with great affection, commending him to the favour and protection of that God, from whom he himself had received so much mercy, and who had directed him in all his migrations. He gave him a small sum of money, as the amount of all he could do for him, telling him that if he behaved well and did his duty, this was an ample provision for him; and if he should act otherwise, and prove ungrateful to a kind and gracious God, it was too much and more than he deserved. Thus, with a pittance, and the blessing of a pious and affectionate parent, of more consequence than thousands of pounds, the young student set out in the world.

“After a regular course of study in theology, Mr. Tennent was preparing for his examination by the presbytery as a candidate for the gospel ministry. His intense application affected his health, and brought on a pain in his breast, and a slight hectic. He soon became emaciated, and at length was like a living skeleton. His life was now threatened. He

was attended by a physician, a young gentleman who was attached to him by the strictest and warmest friendship. He grew worse and worse, till little hope of life was left. In this situation, his spirits failed him, and he began to entertain doubts of his final happiness. He was conversing, one morning, with his brother, in Latin, on the state of his soul when he fainted and died away. After the usual time, he was laid out on a board, according to the common practice of the country, and the neighbourhood were invited to attend his funeral on the next day. In the evening, his physician and friend returned from a ride in the country, and was afflicted beyond measure at the news of his death. He could not be persuaded that it was certain; and on being told that one of the persons who had assisted in laying out the body thought he had observed a little tremor of the flesh under the arm, although the body was cold and stiff, he endeavoured to ascertain the fact. He first put his own hand into warm water, to make it as sensible as possible, and then felt under the arm, and at the heart, and affirmed that he felt an unusual warmth, though no one else could. He had the body restored to a warm bed, and insisted that the people who had been invited to the funeral should be requested not to attend. To this the brother objected as absurd, the eyes being sunk, the lips discoloured, and the whole body cold and stiff. However, the doctor finally prevailed; and all pro-

bable means were used to discover symptoms of returning life. But the third day arrived, and no hopes were entertained of success, but by the doctor, who never left him night nor day. The people were again invited, and assembled to attend the funeral. The doctor still objected, and at last confined his request for delay to one hour, then to half an hour, and finally to a quarter of an hour. He had discovered that the tongue was much swollen, and threatened to crack. He was endeavouring to soften it, by some emollient ointment put upon it with a feather, when the brother came in, about the expiration of the last period, and mistaking what the doctor was doing for an attempt to feed him, manifested some resentment, and in a spirited tone, said, ‘It is shameful to be feeding a lifeless corpse;’ and insisted, with earnestness, that the funeral should immediately proceed. At this critical and important moment, the body, to the great alarm and astonishment of all present, opened its eyes, gave a dreadful groan, and sunk again into apparent death. This put an end to all thoughts of burying him, and every effort was again employed in hopes of bringing about a speedy resuscitation. In about an hour, the eyes again opened, a heavy groan proceeded from the body, and again all appearance of animation vanished. In another hour, life seemed to return with more power, and a complete revival took place, to the great joy of the family and friends,



and to the no small astonishment and conviction of very many who had been ridiculing the idea of restoring to life, a dead body.

“Mr. Tennent continued in so weak and low a state for six weeks, that great doubts were entertained of his final recovery. However, after that period he recovered much faster, but it was about twelve months before he was completely restored. After he was able to walk the room, and to take notice of what passed around him, on a Sunday afternoon, his sister, who had staid from church to attend him, was reading in the Bible, when he took notice of it, and asked her what she had in her hand. She answered that she was reading the Bible. He replied, ‘What is the Bible? I know not what you mean.’ This affected the sister so much that she burst into tears, and informed him, that he was once well acquainted with it. On her reporting this to the brother, when he returned, Mr. Tennent was found, upon examination, to be totally ignorant of every transaction of his life previous to his sickness. He could not read a single word, neither did he seem to have any idea of what it meant. As soon as he became capable of attention, he was taught to read and write, as children are usually taught, and afterwards began to learn the Latin language under the tuition of his brother. One day, as he was reciting a lesson in Cornelius Nepos, he suddenly started, clapped his hand to his head, as if something

had hurt him, and made a pause. His brother asking him what was the matter, he said, that he felt a sudden shock in his head, and it now seemed to him as if he had read that book before. By degrees, his recollection was restored, and he could speak the Latin as fluently as before his sickness. His memory so completely revived, that he gained a perfect knowledge of the past transactions of his life, as if no difficulty had previously occurred. This event, at the time, made a considerable noise, and afforded, not only matter of serious contemplation to the devout Christian, especially when connected with what follows in this narration, but furnished a subject of deep investigation and learned inquiry to the real philosopher and curious anatomist.

“The writer of these memoirs was greatly interested by these uncommon events; and, on a favourable occasion, earnestly pressed Mr. Tennent for a minute account of what his views and apprehensions were, while he lay in this extraordinary state of suspended animation. He discovered great reluctance to enter into any explanation of his perceptions and feelings, at this time; but, being importunately urged to do it, he at length consented, and proceeded with a solemnity not to be described.

“‘While I was conversing with my brother,’ said he, ‘on the state of my soul, and the fears I had entertained for my future welfare, I found myself, in an instant, in another state of existence, under the

direction of a superior being, who ordered me to follow him. I was accordingly wafted along, I know not how, till I beheld at a distance an ineffable glory, the impression of which on my mind it is impossible to communicate to mortal man. I immediately reflected on my happy change, and thought, —Well, blessed be God! I am safe at last, notwithstanding all my fears. I saw an innumerable host of happy beings, surrounding the inexpressible glory, in acts of adoration and joyous worship; but I did not see any bodily shape or representation in the glorious appearance. I heard things unutterable. I heard their songs and hallelujahs of thanksgiving and praise, with unspeakable rapture. I felt joy unutterable and full of glory. I then applied to my conductor, and requested leave to join the happy throng. On which he tapped me on the shoulder, and said, ‘You must return to the earth.’ This seemed like a sword through my heart. In an instant, I recollect to have seen my brother standing before me, disputing with the doctor. The three days during which I had appeared lifeless, seemed to me not more than ten or twenty minutes. The idea of returning to this world of sorrow and trouble, gave me such a shock, that I fainted repeatedly.’ He added, ‘Such was the effect on my mind of what I had seen and heard, that if it be possible for a human being to live entirely above the world and the things of it for some time afterwards, I was that per-

son The ravishing sounds of the songs and hallelujahs that I heard, and the very words uttered, were not out of my ears, when awake, for at least three years. All the kingdoms of the earth were in my sight as nothing and vanity; and so great were my ideas of heavenly glory, that nothing, which did not, in some measure, relate to it, could command my serious attention.*

* “The author has been particularly solicitous to obtain every confirmation of this extraordinary event in the life of Mr. Tennent. He accordingly wrote to every person he could think of, likely to have conversed with Mr. T. on the subject. He received several answers; but the following letter from the worthy successor of Mr. Tennent, in the pastoral charge of his church, will answer for the author’s purpose.

“*Monmouth, New Jersey, Dec. 10th, 1805.*

“DEAR SIR,

“Agreeably to your request, I now send you in writing the remarkable account, which I sometime since gave you verbally, respecting your good friend, my worthy predecessor, the late Rev. William Tennent, of this place. In a very free and feeling conversation on religion, and on the future rest and blessedness of the people of God, (while travelling together from Monmouth to Princeton) I mentioned to Mr. Tennent, that I should be highly gratified in hearing, from his own mouth, an account of the *trance* which he was said to have been in, unless the relation would be disagreeable to himself. After a short silence, he proceeded, saying, that he had been sick with a fever, that the fever increased, and he by degrees sunk under it. After some time (as his friends informed him) he died, or appeared to die, in the same manner as persons usually do; that in laying him out, one happened to draw his hand under the left arm, and perceived a

“It is not surprising, that after so affecting an account, strong solicitude should have been felt for further information as to the words, or at least the subjects of praise and adoration, which Mr. Tennent

small tremor in the flesh ; that he was laid out, and was cold and stiff. The time for his funeral was appointed, and the people collected ; but a young doctor, his particular friend, pleaded with great earnestness that he might not then be buried, as the tremor under the arm continued ; that his brother Gilbert, became impatient with the young gentleman, and said to him, ‘*What ! a man not dead, who is cold and stiff as a stake ?*’ The importunate young friend, however, prevailed ; another day was appointed for the burial, and the people separated. During this interval, many means were made use of to discover, if possible, some symptoms of life, but none appeared excepting the tremor. The doctor never left him for three nights and three days. The people again met to bury him, but could not even then obtain the consent of his friend, who pleaded for one hour more ; and when that was gone, he pleaded for half an hour, and then for a quarter of an hour ; when, just at the close of this period, on which hung his last hope, Mr. Tennent opened his eyes. They then pried open his mouth, which was stiff, so as to get a quill into it, through which some liquid was conveyed into the stomach, and he by degrees recovered.

“ ‘This account, as intimated before, Mr. Tennent said he had received from his friends. I said to him, ‘Sir, you seem to be one indeed raised from the dead, and may tell us what it is to die, and what you were sensible of while in that state. He replied in the following words: ‘*As to dying*—I found my fever increase, and I became weaker and weaker, untill *all at once*, I found myself in heaven, as I thought. I saw no shape as to the Deity, *but glory all unutterable !*’ Here he paused, as though unable to find words to express his views, let his bridle fall, and lifting up his hands, proceeded, ‘I can say, as St. Paul did, I heard and I saw things all unutterable; I saw a great multitude before this glory, apparently in the

had heard. But when he was requested to communicate these, he gave a decided negative, adding, 'You will know them, with many other particulars, hereafter, as you will find the whole among my papers;' alluding to his intention of leaving the writer

height of bliss, singing most melodiously. I was transported with my own situation, viewing all my troubles ended and my rest and glory begun, and was about to join the great and happy multitude, when one came to me, looked me full in the face, laid his hand upon my shoulder, and said, 'You must go back.' These words went through me; nothing could have shocked me more; I cried out, Lord, must I go back! With this shock I opened my eyes in this world. When I saw I was in the world, I fainted, then came to, and fainted for several times, as one probably would naturally have done in so weak a situation.

"Mr. Tennent further informed me, that he had so entirely lost the recollection of his past life, and the benefit of his former studies, that he could neither understand what was spoken to him, nor write, nor read his own name. That he had to begin all anew, and did not recollect that he had ever read before, until he had again learned his letters, and was able to pronounce the monosyllables, such as *thee* and *thou*. But, that as his strength returned, which was very slowly, his memory also returned. Yet, notwithstanding the extreme feebleness of his situation, his recollection of what he saw and heard while in heaven, as he supposed, and the sense of divine things, which he there obtained, continued all the time in their full strength, so that he was continually in something like an ecstasy of mind. 'And,' said he, 'for three years, the sense of divine things continued so great, and every thing else appeared so completely vain, when compared to heaven, that could I have had the world for stooping down for it, I believe I should not have thought of doing it.'"

hereof his executor, which precluded any further solicitation.*

“The pious and candid reader is left to his own reflections on this very extraordinary occurrence. The facts have been stated, and they are unquestionable. The writer will only ask, whether it be contrary to revealed truth or to reason, to believe, that in every age of the world, instances like that which is here recorded, have occurred, to furnish *living testimony* of the reality of the invisible world, and of the infinite importance of eternal concerns?

“As soon as circumstances would permit, Mr. Tennent was licensed, and began to preach the everlasting gospel with great zeal and success. The death of his brother John, who had been some time settled as minister of the Presbyterian church

* “It was so ordered, in the course of divine Providence, that the writer was sorely disappointed in his expectation of obtaining the papers here alluded to. Such, however, was the will of Heaven! Mr. Tennent’s death happened during the revolutionary war, when the enemy separated the writer from him, so as to render it impracticable to attend him on a dying bed; and before it was possible to get to his house, after his death (the writer being with the American army at the Valley-Forge), his son came from Charleston, and took his mother, and his father’s papers and property, and returned to Carolina. About fifty miles from Charleston, the son was suddenly taken sick and died among entire strangers; and never since, though the writer was also left executor to the son, could any trace of the father’s papers be discovered by him.”

at Freehold, in the county of Monmouth, New Jersey, left that congregation in a destitute state. They had experienced so much spiritual benefit from the indefatigable labours and pious zeal, of this able minister of Jesus Christ, that they soon turned their attention to his brother, who was received on trial, and after one year, was found to be no unworthy successor to so excellent a predecessor. In October, 1733, Mr. Tennent was regularly ordained their pastor, and continued so through the whole of a pretty long life ; one of the best proofs of ministerial fidelity.

Although his salary was small, (it is thought under £100,) yet the glebe belonging to the church was an excellent plantation, on which he lived, and which, with care and good farming, was capable of maintaining a family with comfort. But his inattention to the things of this world was so great, that he left the management of his temporal concerns wholly to a faithful servant, in whom he placed great confidence. After a short time, he found his worldly affairs were becoming embarrassed. His steward reported to him that he was in debt to the merchant between 20*l*. and 30*l*., and he knew of no means of payment, as the crops had fallen short. Mr. Tennent mentioned this to an intimate friend, a merchant of New York, who was on a visit at his house. His friend told him, that this mode of life would not do, that he must get a wife, to attend to

his temporal affairs, and to comfort his leisure hours by conjugal endearments. He smiled at the idea, and assured him it never could be the case, unless some friend would provide one for him, for he knew not how to go about it. His friend told him he was ready to undertake the business ; that he had a sister-in-law, an excellent woman, of great piety, a widow, of his own age, and one peculiarly suited in all respects to his character and circumstances. In short, that she was every thing he ought to look for ; and if he would go with him to New York the next day, he would settle the negociation for him. To this he soon assented. The next evening found him in that city, and before noon the day after, he was introduced to Mrs. Noble. He was much pleased with her appearance ; and, when left alone with her, abruptly told her, that he supposed her brother had informed her of his errand ; that neither his time nor inclination would suffer him to use much ceremony ; but that if she approved the measure, he would attend his charge on the next Sabbath, and return on Monday, be married, and immediately take her home. The lady, with some hesitation and difficulty, at last consented, being convinced that his situation and circumstances rendered it proper. Thus, in one week, she found herself mistress of his house. She proved a most invaluable treasure to him, more than answering every thing said of her by an affectionate brother. She took the care of his

temporal concerns upon her, extricated him from debt, and, by a happy union of prudence and economy, so managed all his worldly business, that in a few years his circumstances became easy and comfortable. In a word, in her was literally fulfilled the declaration of Solomon, that ‘a virtuous woman is a crown to her husband, and that her price is far above rubies.’ Besides several children who died in infancy, he had by her, three sons, who attained the age of manhood; John, who studied physic, and died in the West Indies when about thirty-three years of age; William, a man of superior character, and minister of the Independent church in Charleston, South Carolina, who died the latter end of September, or beginning of October, A. D. 1777, about thirty-seven years old; and Gilbert, who also practised physic, and died at Freehold, before his father, aged twenty eight years. Few parents could boast three sons of a more manly or handsome appearance; and the father gave them the most liberal education that the country could afford.

“Mr. Tennent’s inattention to earthly things continued till his eldest son was about three years old, when he led him out into the fields on a Lord’s day, after public worship. The design of the walk was for religious meditation. As he went along, accidentally casting his eye on the child, a thought suddenly struck him, and he asked himself this question: ‘should God in his providence take me hence,

what would become of this child and his mother, for whom I have never taken any personal care to make provision? How can I answer this negligence to God and to them?' The impropriety of his inattention to the relative duties of life, which God had called him to ; and the consideration of the sacred declaration, 'that he who does not provide for his own household, has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel,' had such an impressive effect on his mind, that it almost deprived him of his senses. He saw his conduct, which before he thought arose entirely from a deep sense of divine things, in a point of light in which he never before had viewed it. He immediately attempted to return home, but so great was his distress, that it was with difficulty he could get along ; till, all at once, he was relieved by as suddenly recurring to that text of scripture, which came into his mind with extraordinary force, 'but unto the tribe of Levi Moses gave not any inheritance, the Lord God of Israel was their inheritance.' Such, however, was the effect of this unexpected scene on Mr. Tennent's mind and judgment, that ever afterwards he prudently attended to the temporal business of life, still, however, in perfect subordination to the great things of eternity ; and became fully convinced that God was to be faithfully served, as well by discharging relative duties in his love and fear, as by the more immediate acts of devotion. He clearly perceived, that every duty had

its proper time and place, as well as motive ; that we had a right, and were called of God, to eat and drink, and to be properly clothed ; and of course that care should be taken to procure those things, provided that all be done to the glory of God. In the duties of a gospel minister, however, especially as they related to his pastoral charge, he still engaged with the utmost zeal and faithfulness ; and was esteemed by all ranks and degrees, as far as his labours extended, as a fervent, useful, and successful preacher of the gospel.

“ His judgment of mankind was such as to give him a marked superiority, in this respect, over his contemporaries, and greatly aided him in his ministerial functions. He was scarcely ever mistaken in the character of a man with whom he conversed, though it was but for a few hours. He had an independent mind, which was seldom satisfied on important subjects without the best evidence that was to be had. His manner was remarkably impressive ; and his sermons, although seldom polished, were generally delivered with such indescribable power, that he was truly an able and a successful minister of the New Testament. He could say things from the pulpit, which if said by almost any other man, would have been thought a violation of propriety. But by him they were delivered in a manner so peculiar to himself, and so extremely impressive, that they seldom failed to please and to in-

struct. As an instance of this the following anecdote is given, of the truth of which the writer was a witness.

“ Mr. Tennent was passing through a town in the state of New Jersey, in which he was a stranger, and had never preached, and stopping at a friend’s house to dine, was informed, that it was a day of fasting and prayer in the congregation, on account of a very remarkable and severe drought, which threatened the most dangerous consequences to the fruits of the earth. His friend had just returned from church, and the intermission was but half an hour. Mr. Tennent was requested to preach, and with great difficulty consented, as he wished to proceed on his journey. At church, the people were surprised to see a preacher, wholly unknown to them, and entirely unexpected, ascend the pulpit. His whole appearance, being in a travelling dress, covered with dust, wearing an old fashioned large wig, discoloured like his clothes, and a long meagre visage, engaged their attention, and excited their curiosity. On his rising up, instead of beginning to pray, as was the usual practice, he looked around the congregation, with a piercing eye and earnest attention, and after a minute’s profound silence, he addressed them with great solemnity in the following words: ‘ My beloved brethren ! I am told you have come here to-day to fast and pray ; a very good work indeed, provided you have come with a

sincere desire to glorify God thereby. But if your design is merely to comply with a customary practice, or with the wish of your church officers, you are guilty of the greatest folly imaginable, as you had much better have staid at home and earned your three shillings and six pence.* But if your minds are indeed impressed with the solemnity of the occasion, and you are really desirous of humbling yourselves before Almighty God, your heavenly Father, come, join with me, and let us pray.' This had an effect so uncommon and extraordinary on the congregation, that the utmost seriousness was universally manifested. The prayer and the sermon added greatly to the impressions already made, and tended to rouse the attention, influence the mind, command the affections, and increase the temper which had been so happily produced. Many had reason to bless God for his unexpected visit, and to reckon this day one of the happiest of their lives.†

* "At that time, the stated price for a day's labour.

† "The writer having requested of the present Rev. Dr. William M. Tennent a written account of an anecdote relative to his uncle, which he had once heard him repeat verbally, received in reply the following letter :

"Abington, January 11th, 1806.

"SIR,

"The anecdote of my venerable relative, the Rev. William Tennent, of Freehold, which you wished me to send to you, is as follows ;

"During the great revival of religion, which took place under the ministry of Mr. Whitefield, and others distin-

“While on this subject, we may introduce another anecdote of this wonderful man, to show the dealings of God with him, and the deep contemplations of his mind. He was attending the duties of the Lord’s day in his own congregation as usual, where the custom was to have morning and even-

guished for their piety and zeal at that period, Mr. Tennent was laboriously active, and much engaged to help forward the work ; in the performance of which he met with strong and powerful temptations. The following is related as received in substance, from his own lips, and may be considered as extraordinary and singularly striking.

“On the evening preceding public worship, which was to be attended the next day, he selected a subject for the discourse which was to be delivered, and made some progress in his preparations. In the morning, he resumed the same subject, with an intention to extend his thoughts further on it, but was presently assaulted with a temptation, that the Bible which he then held in his hand was not of divine authority, but the invention of man. He instantly endeavoured to repel the temptation by prayer, but his endeavours proved unavailing. The temptation continued, and fastened upon him with greater strength, as the time advanced for public service. He lost all the thoughts which he had on his subject the preceding evening. He tried other subjects, but could get nothing for the people. The whole book of God, under that distressing state of mind, was a sealed book to him ; and to add to his affliction, he was, to use his own words, ‘*shut up in prayer.*’ A cloud, dark as that of Egypt, oppressed his mind.

“Thus agonized in spirit, he proceeded to the church where he found a large congregation assembled, and waiting to hear the word ; and then it was, he observed, that he was more deeply distressed than ever, and especially for the dishonour which he feared would fall upon religion, through him, that day. He resolved, however, to attempt the ser-

ing service with only a half hour's intermission, to relieve the attention. He had preached in the morning, and in the intermission had walked into the woods for meditation, the weather being warm. He was reflecting on the infinite wisdom of God, as manifested in all his works, and particularly in the wonderful method of salvation, through the death and sufferings of his beloved Son. This subject suddenly opened on his mind with such a flood of light, that his views of the glory, and the infinite

vice. He introduced it by singing a psalm, during which time his agitations were increased to the highest degree. When the moment for prayer commenced, he arose, as one in the most perilous and painful situation, and with arms extended to the heavens, began with this outcry, '*Lord have mercy upon me!*' Upon the utterance of this petition, he was heard; the thick cloud instantly broke away, and an unspeakably joyful light shone in upon his soul, so that his spirit seemed to be caught up to the heavens, and he felt as though he saw God, as Moses did on the Mount, face to face, and was carried forth to him, with an enlargement greater than he had ever before experienced, and on every page of the scriptures saw his divinity inscribed in brightest colours. The result was a deep solemnity on the face of the whole congregation, and the house at the end of the prayer was a *Bochim*. He gave them the subject of his evening meditations, which was brought to his full remembrance, with an overflowing abundance of other weighty and solemn matter. The Lord blessed the discourse, so that it proved the happy means of the conversion of about thirty persons. This day he spoke of, ever afterwards, as his harvest-day.

"I am, your's with esteem,

"WILLIAM M. TENNENT."

majesty of Jehovah, were so inexpressibly great as entirely to overwhelm him, and he fell, almost lifeless, to the ground. When he had revived a little, all he could do was to raise a fervent prayer that God would withdraw himself from him, or that he must perish under a view of his ineffable glory. When able to reflect on his situation, he could not but abhor himself as a weak and despicable worm, and seemed to be overcome with astonishment, that a creature so unworthy and insufficient, had ever dared to attempt the instruction of his fellow-men in the nature and attributes of so glorious a Being. Overstaying his usual time, some of his elders went in search of him, and found him prostrate on the ground, unable to rise, and incapable of informing them of the cause. They raised him up, and after some time brought him to the church, and supported him to the pulpit, which he ascended on his hands and knees, to the no small astonishment of the congregation. He remained silent a considerable time, earnestly supplicating Almighty God (as he told the writer) to hide himself from him, that he might be enabled to address his people, who were by this time lost in wonder to know what had produced this uncommon event. His prayers were heard, and he became able to stand up, by holding the desk. He now began the most affecting and pathetic address that the congregation had ever received from him. He gave a surprising account of

the views he had, of the infinite wisdom of God, and greatly deplored his own incapacity to speak to them concerning a being so infinitely glorious beyond all his powers of description. He attempted to show something of what had been discovered to him of the astonishing wisdom of Jehovah, of which it was impossible for human nature to form adequate conceptions. He then broke out into so fervent and expressive a prayer, as greatly to surprise the congregation, and draw tears from every eye. A sermon followed, that continued the solemn scene, and made very lasting impressions on all the hearers.*

“The great increase of communicants in his church was a good evidence of his pastoral care and powerful preaching, as it exceeded that of most churches in the synod. But his labours were not confined to the pulpit. He was indefatigable in his endeavours to communicate, in private families, a savour of the knowledge of spiritual and divine things. In his parochial visits, he used regularly to go through his congregation in order, so as to carry the unsearchable riches of Christ to every house. He earnestly pressed it on the conscience of parents

* Mr. Tennent did not confine himself to any particular length in his sermons, but regulated this very much by his feelings. The late Rev. Dr. Spring of Newburyport, informed the editor, that he and other students of Nassau Hall walked twenty miles to hear him preach, and the sermon, measured by the watch, was no more than thirteen minutes, in the delivery.

to instruct their children at home by plain and easy questions, so as gradually to expand their young minds, and prepare them for the reception of the more practical doctrines of the gospel. In this, Mr. Tennent has presented an excellent example to his brethren in the ministry; for certain it is, that more good may be done in a congregation, by this domestic mode of instruction, than any one can imagine, who has not made the trial. Children and servants are in this way prepared for the teachings of the sanctuary, and to reap the full benefit of the word publicly preached. He made it a practice in all these visits to enforce practical religion on all, high and low, rich and poor, young and old, master and servant. To this he was particularly attentive, it being a favourite observation with him, 'that he loved a religion that a man could live by.'

"Mr Tennent carefully avoided the discussion of controversial subjects, unless specially called to it by particular circumstances, and then he was ever ready to assign the reason of his faith. The following occurrence will show the general state of his mind and feelings in regard to such subjects. A couple of young clergymen, visiting at his house, entered into a dispute on the question, at that time much controverted in New England, whether faith or repentance were first in order, in the conversion of a sinner. Not being able to determine the point, they agreed to make Mr. Tennent their umpire, and to dispute

the subject at length before him. He accepted the proposal, and, after a solemn debate for some time, his opinion being asked, he very gravely took his pipe from his mouth, looked out of his window, pointed to a man ploughing on a hill at some distance, and asked the young clergymen, if they knew that man: on their answering in the negative, he told them it was one of his elders, who, to his full conviction, had been a sincere Christian for more than thirty years. ‘Now,’ said Mr. Tennent, ‘ask him, whether faith or repentance came first, what do you think he would say?’ They said, they could not tell. ‘Then,’ says he, ‘I will tell you: he would say, that he cared not which came first, but that he had got them both. Now, my friends,’ he added, ‘be careful that you have both a true faith, and a sincere repentance, and do not be greatly troubled which comes first.’ It is not, however, to be supposed by this, that Mr. Tennent was unfriendly to a deep and accurate examination of all important theological doctrines. There were few men more earnest than he, to have young clergymen well instructed and thoroughly furnished for their work. This, indeed, was an object on which his heart was much set, and which he exerted himself greatly to promote.

“Mr. Tennent was remarkably distinguished for a pointed attention to the particular circumstances and situation of the afflicted, either in body or mind, and

would visit them with as much care and attention as a physician, and frequently indeed proved an able one, to both soul and body. But his greatest talent was that of a peace-maker, which he possessed in so eminent a degree, that probably none have exceeded, and very few have equalled him in it. He was sent for, far and near, to settle disputes, and heal difficulties, which arose in congregations; and, happily for those concerned, he was generally successful. Indeed, he seldom would relinquish his object till he had accomplished it.

“But while this man of God was thus successful in promoting the best interests of his fellow creatures, and advancing the glory of his Lord and Master, the great enemy of mankind was not likely to observe the destruction of his kingdom without making an effort to prevent it. As he assailed our blessed Saviour, in the days of his flesh, with all his art and all his power, so has he always made the faithful followers of the Redemer the objects of his inveterate malice. If the good man of whom we write, was greatly honoured by peculiar communications from on high, he was also very often the subject of the severe buffetings of that malignant and fallen spirit.

“The time of which we are now speaking was remarkable for a great revival of religion, in which Mr. Tennent was considerably instrumental, and in which a Mr. John Rowland, brought up with Mr.

Tennent at the Log College, was also very remarkable for his successful preaching, among all ranks of people. Possessing a commanding eloquence, as well as other estimable qualities, he became very popular, and was much celebrated throughout the country. His celebrity and success were subjects of very serious regret to many careless worldlings, who placed all their happiness in the enjoyment of temporal objects, and considered and represented Mr. Rowland and his brethren as fanatics and hypocrites. This was specially applicable to many of the great men of the then province of New Jersey, and particularly to the Chief Justice, who was well known for his disbelief of revelation. There was, at this time, prowling through the country, a noted man by the name of Tom Bell, whose knowledge and understanding were very considerable, and who greatly excelled in low art and cunning. His mind was totally debased, and his whole conduct betrayed a soul capable of descending to every species of iniquity. In all the arts of theft, robbery, fraud, deception, and defamation, he was so deeply skilled, and so thoroughly practised, that it is believed, he never had his equal in this country. He had been indicted in almost every one of the middle colonies; but his ingenuity and cunning always enabled him to escape punishment. This man unhappily resembled Mr. Rowland, in his external

appearance, so as hardly to be known from him, without the most careful examination.

“It so happened, that Tom Bell arrived one evening, at a tavern in Princeton, dressed in a dark, parson’s gray frock. On his entering the tavern, about dusk, the late John Stockton, Esq., of that town, a pious and respectable man, to whom Mr. Rowland was well known, went up to Bell, and addressed him as Mr. Rowland, and was inviting him to go home with him. Bell assured him of his mistake. It was with some difficulty that Mr. Stockton acknowledged his error, and then informed Bell, that it had arisen from his great resemblance to Mr. Rowland. This hint was sufficient for the prolific genius of that notorious impostor. The next day, Bell went into the county of Hunterdon, and stopped in a congregation where Mr. Rowland had formerly preached once or twice, but where he was not intimately known. Here he met with a member of the congregation, to whom he introduced himself as the Rev. Mr. Rowland, who had preached to them some time before. This gentleman immediately invited him to his house, to spend the week; and begged him, as the people were without a minister, to preach for them on the next Sabbath, to which Bell agreed, and notice was accordingly given to the neighbourhood. The impostor was treated with every mark of attention and respect; and a private room was assigned to him, as a study, to prepare for

the Sabbath. The sacred day arrived, and he was invited to ride to church with the ladies in the family wagon, and the master of the house accompanied them on an elegant horse. When they had arrived near the church, Bell on a sudden discovered, that he had left his notes in his study, and proposed to ride back for them on the fine horse, by which means he should be able to return in time for the service. This proposal was instantly agreed to, and Bell mounted the horse, returned to the house, rifled the desk of his host, and made off with the horse. Wherever he stopped, he called himself the Rev. John Rowland.

“ At the time this event took place, Messrs. Tennent and Rowland had gone into Pennsylvania, or Maryland, with Mr. Joshua Anderson, and Mr. Benjamin Stevens, (both members of a church contiguous to that where Bell had practised his fraud) on business of a religious nature. Soon after their return, Mr. Rowland was charged with the above robbery: he gave bonds to appear at the court at Trenton, and the affair made a great noise throughout the colony. At the court of oyer and terminer, the judge charged the grand jury on the subject with great severity. After long consideration, the jury returned into court without finding a bill. The judge reproved them, in an angry manner, and ordered them out again. They again returned without finding a bill, and were again sent out with threatenings of severe punish-

ment if they persisted in their refusal. At last they agreed, and brought in a bill for the alleged crime. On the trial, Messrs. Tennent, Anderson, and Stevens, appeared as witnesses, and fully proved an *alibi* in favour of Mr. Rowland, by swearing, that on the very day on which the robbery was committed, they were with Mr. Rowland, and heard him preach in Pennsylvania or Maryland. The jury accordingly acquitted him without hesitation, to the great disappointment and mortification of his prosecutors, and of many other enemies to the great revival of religion that had recently taken place; but to the great joy of the serious and well disposed.

“The spirits hostile to the spread of the gospel were not, however, so easily overcome. In their view, an opportunity was now presented, favourable for inflicting a deep wound on the cause of Christianity; and, as if urged on by the malice of man’s great enemy, they resolved that no means should be left untried, no arts unemployed, for the destruction of these distinguished servants of God. Many and various were the circumstances which still contributed to inspire them with hopes of success. The testimony of the person who had been robbed, was positive that Mr. Rowland was the robber; and this testimony was corroborated by that of a number of individuals who had seen Tom Bell personating Mr. Rowland, using his name, and in possession of the

horse. These sons of Belial had been able, after great industry used for the purpose, to collect a mass of evidence of this kind, which they considered as establishing the fact; but Mr. Rowland was now out of their power by the verdict of *not guilty*. Their vengeance, therefore, was directed against the witnesses by whose testimony he had been cleared; and, they were accordingly arraigned for perjury, before a court of quarter sessions, in the county; and the grand jury received a strict charge, the plain import of which was, that these good men ought to be indicted. After an examination of the testimony on one side only, as is the custom in such cases, the grand jury did, accordingly, find bills of indictment against Messrs. Tennent, Anderson, and Stevens, for wilful and corrupt perjury. Their enemies, and the enemies of the gospel, now began to triumph. They gloried in the belief, that an indelible stain would be fixed on the professors of religion, and of consequence on religion itself; and that this *new light*, by which they denominated all appearance of piety, would soon be extinguished for ever.

“These indictments were removed to the supreme court; and poor Mr. Anderson, living in the county, and conscious of his entire innocence, could not brook the idea of lying under the odium of the hateful crime of perjury, he, therefore, demanded a trial at the first court of oyer and terminer. This proved most seriously injurious to him, for he was pro-

nounced guilty, and most cruelly and unjustly condemned to stand one hour on the court-house steps, with a paper on his breast, whereon was written in large letters, ‘This is for wilful and corrupt perjury ;’ which sentence was executed upon him.

“Messrs. Tennent and Stevens were summoned to appear at the next court; and attended accordingly, depending on the aid of Mr. John Coxe, an eminent lawyer, who had been previously employed to conduct their defence. As Mr. Tennent was wholly unacquainted with the nature of forensic litigation, and did not know of any person living who could prove his innocence, (all the persons who were with him being indicted) his only resource and consolation was, to commit himself to the divine will, and if he must suffer, to take it as from the hand of God, who, he well knew, could make even the wrath of man to praise him;* and considering it as probable that he might suffer, he had prepared a sermon to be preached from the pillory, if that should be his fate. On his arrival at Trenton, he found the famous Mr. Smith, of New York, father of the late chief justice of Canada, one of the ablest lawyers in America, and of a religious character, who had voluntarily attended to aid in his defence; also his brother Gilbert, who was now settled in the

* “His affectionate congregation felt deeply interested in his critical situation, and kept a day of fasting and prayer on the occasion.

pastoral charge of the second Presbyterian church, in Philadelphia, and who brought Mr. John Kinsey, one of the first counsellors of that city, for the same purpose. Messrs. Tennent and Stevens met these gentlemen at Mr. Coxe's, the morning before the trial was to come on. Mr. Coxe requested that they would bring in their witnesses, that they might examine them previously to their going into court. Mr. Tennent answered, that he did not know of any witnesses but God and his own conscience. Mr. Coxe replied, 'If you have no witnesses, sir, the trial must be put off; otherwise you most certainly will be convicted. You well know the strong testimony that will be brought against you, and the exertions that are making to accomplish your ruin.' Mr. Tennent replied, 'I am sensible of all this, yet it never shall be said that I have delayed the trial, or been afraid to meet the justice of my country. I know my own innocence, and that God whose I am, and whom I serve, will never suffer me to fall by these snares of the devil, or by the wicked machinations of his agents or servants. Therefore, gentlemen, go on to the trial.' Messrs. Smith and Kinsey, who were both religious men, told him that his confidence and trust in God, as a Christian minister of the gospel, was well founded, and before a heavenly tribunal would be all-important to him; but assured him it would not avail in an earthly court, and urged his consent to put off the trial. Mr. Tennent

continued inflexible in his refusal; on which Mr. Coxe told him, that since he was determined to go to trial, he had the satisfaction of informing him, that they had discovered a flaw in the indictment, which might prove favourable to him on a demurrer. He asked for an explanation, and on finding that it was to admit the fact in a legal point of view, and rest on the law arising from it, Mr. Tennent broke out with great vehemence, saying that this was another snare of the devil, and before he would consent to it he would suffer death. He assured his counsel, that his confidence in God was so strong, and his assurance that ~~he~~ he would bring about his deliverance in some way or other, was so great, that he did not wish them to delay the trial for a moment.

“Mr. Stevens, whose faith was not of this description, and who was bowed down to the ground under the most gloomy apprehensions of suffering, as his neighbour Mr. Anderson had done, eagerly seized the opportunity of escape that was offered, and was afterwards discharged on the exception.

“Mr. Coxe still urged putting off the trial, charging Mr. Tennent with acting the part rather of a wild enthusiast, than of a meek and prudent Christian; but he insisted that they should proceed, and left them in astonishment, not knowing how to act, when the bell summoned them to court.

“Mr. Tennent had not walked far in the street,

before he met a man and his wife, who stopped him, and asked if his name was not Tennent. He answered in the affirmative, and begged to know if they had any business with him. The man replied, 'you best know.' He told his name, and said that he was from a certain place (which he mentioned) in Pennsylvania or Maryland; that Messrs. Rowland Tennent, Anderson, and Stevens, had lodged either at his house, or in a house wherein he and his wife, had been servants, (it is not now certain which) at a particular time, which he named; that on the following day they had heard Messrs. Tennent and Rowland preach; that some nights before they left home, he and his wife waked out of a sound sleep, and each told the other a dream which had just occurred, and which proved to be the same in substance, to wit, that he, Mr. Tennent, at Trenton, was in the greatest possible distress, and that it was in their power and their's only, to relieve him. Considering it as a remarkable dream only, they again went to sleep, and it was twice repeated, precisely in the same manner, to both of them. This made so deep an impression on their minds, that they set off, and here they were, and would know of him what they were to do. Mr. Tennent immediately went with them to the court house, and his counsel, on examining the man and his wife and finding their testimony to be full to the purpose, were, as they well might be, in perfect astonish-

ment. Before the trial began, another person, of a low character, called on Mr. Tennent, and told him that he was so harrassed in conscience, for the part he had been acting in this prosecution, that he could get no rest till he had determined to come and make a full confession. He sent this man to his counsel also. Soon after, Mr. Stockton from Princeton appeared, and added his testimony. In short, they went to trial, and notwithstanding the utmost exertions of the ablest counsel, who had been employed to aid the attorney-general against Mr. Tennent, the advocates on his side so traced every movement of the defendant on the Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, in question, and satisfied the jury so perfectly on the subject, that they did not hesitate honourably to acquit Mr. Tennent, by their unanimous verdict of *not guilty*, to the great confusion and mortification of his numerous opposers. Mr. Tennent assured the writer of this, that during the whole of this business, his spirits never failed him, and that he contemplated the possibility of his suffering so infamous a punishment, as standing in the pillory, without dismay, and had made preparation, and was fully determined, to deliver a sermon to the people in that situation, if he should be placed in it.

“ He went from Trenton to Philadelphia with his brother, and on his return, as he was rising the hill at the entrance of Trenton, without reflecting on what had happened, he accidentally cast his eyes

on the pillory, which suddenly so filled him with horror, as completely to unman him, and it was with great difficulty that he kept himself from falling from his horse. He reached the tavern door in considerable danger, was obliged to be assisted to dismount, and it was some time before he could so get the better of his fears and confusion, as to proceed on his journey. Such is the constitution of the human mind ! It will often resist, with unshaken firmness, the severest external pressure and violence ; and sometimes it yields without reason, when it has nothing to fear. Or, should we not rather say, such is the support which God sometimes affords to his people in the time of their necessity, and such the manner in which he leaves them to feel their own weakness when that necessity is past, that all the praise may be given where alone it is due ?

“The writer sincerely rejoices, that though a number of the extraordinary incidents in the life of Mr. Tennent cannot be vouched by public testimony and authentic documents, yet the singular manner in which a gracious God did appear for this his faithful servant in the time of that distress which has just been noticed, is a matter of public notoriety, and capable of being verified by the most unquestionable testimony and records.

“This special instance of the interference of the righteous judge of all the earth ought to yield consolation to pious people in seasons of great difficulty

and distress, where there is none that seems able to deliver them. Yet it ought to afford no encouragement to the enthusiast, who refuses to use the means of preservation and deliverance which God puts in his power. True confidence in God is always accompanied with the use of all lawful means, and with the rejection of all that are unlawful. It consists in an unshaken belief, that while right means are used, God will give that issue which shall be most for his glory and his people's good. The extraordinary occurrence here recorded may also serve as a solemn warning to the enemies of God's people, and to the advocates of infidelity, not to strive by wicked and deep laid machinations to oppose the success of the gospel, nor to attempt to injure the persons and characters of those faithful servants of the Most High, whom sooner or later he will vindicate to the unspeakable confusion of all who have persecuted and traduced them.

“Mr. Tennent was a man of the most scrupulous integrity, and though of a very grave and solemn deportment, he had a remarkably cheerful disposition, and generally communicated his instructions with so much ease and pleasantry, as greatly to gain the confidence and affection of all with whom he conversed, especially of children and young people. In all his intercourse with strangers and men of the world, he so managed his conversation, that, while he seldom neglected a proper opportunity to impress

the mind with serious things, he always made them covet his company, rather than avoid it ; well knowing that there is a time for all things, and that even instruction and reproof, to be useful, must be prudently and seasonably given.

“ An instance of this disposition occurred in Virginia. The late Rev. Mr. Samuel Blair and Mr. Tennent were sent by the synod on a mission into that province. They stopped one evening at a tavern for the night, where they found a number of guests, with whom they supped in a common room. After the table was cleared, our missionaries withdrew from it. Cards were then called for, and the landlord brought in a pack and laid them on the table. One of the gentlemen very politely asked the missionaries if they would not take a cut with them, not knowing that they were clergymen. Mr. Tennent very pleasantly answered, ‘ With all my heart, gentlemen, if you can convince us, that thereby we can serve our master’s cause, or contribute any thing towards the success of our mission.’ This drew some smart reply from the gentleman, when Mr. T. with solemnity added, ‘ We are ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We profess ourselves his servants ; we are sent on his business, which is to persuade mankind to repent of their sins, to turn from them, and to accept of that happiness and salvation which is offered in the gospel.’ This very unexpected reply, delivered in a very tender though

solemn manner, and with great apparent sincerity, so engaged the gentlemen's attention, that the cards were laid aside, and an opportunity was afforded, and cheerfully embraced, for explaining in a social conversation, during the rest of the evening, some of the leading and most important doctrines of the gospel, to the satisfaction and apparent edification of the hearers.

“Resignation to the will of God in all his dispensations, however dark and afflictive, was among the excellent graces that adorned the character of this man of God. He had been tried in the course of God's providence in various ways; but domestic afflictions, as yet, had not been laid upon him. The time, however, was now come when his character was to be brightened by a severe test of his resignation and obedience, a test attended with many peculiarly distressing circumstances. His youngest son, who was one of the handsomest of men, had just come into public life; had commenced the practice of physic; was married, and had one child. To the great distress of the parents, he discovered, though possessed of the sweetest temper and most agreeable manners, no regard to the things that belonged to his eternal peace. Wholly negligent of religion, he indulged without restraint in the gaiety and follies of the world. The pious father was incessant at the throne of grace in behalf of his dissipated son; and was continually entertaining hopes

that God would, by the influences of his Spirit, arrest him in his career, and bring him into the church of Christ, before his own summons should arrive ; that he might die in peace, under the consoling hope of meeting this dear child in a better world. God, however, had determined otherwise ; and the son, while engaged in inoculating a number of persons, in a house he had obtained for the purpose, near his father's neighbourhood, was seized in an unusually violent manner, with a raging fever. With the disorder, he was brought to a sudden and alarming view of his lost condition by nature, and the grievous transgressions of his past life. His sins were all set in dread array against him. A horrible darkness, and an awful dread of the eternal displeasure of Jehovah, fell on him, so as to make him the dreadful example of a convicted sinner, trembling under the confounding presence of an angry God. The affectionate and pious father was constantly in prayer and supplication, that God would have mercy upon him. He seldom left the side of his bed. For many days the fever raged with unabated fury ; but the immediate distresses which it occasioned, were lost or forgotten in the severer pains of an awakened conscience. Such was the height to which his anguish at last arose, that the bed on which he lay was shaken by the violent and united convulsions of mind and body. The parents were touched to the quick ; and their unqualified submis-

sion to God, as a sovereign God, was put to the most rigorous proof. But in due time they came out of the furnace, as gold tried in the fire. God, in his infinite and condescending grace and mercy, was at last pleased, in some measure, to hear the many prayers put up by the parents, and many pious friends, for the relief of the poor sufferer. His views of the lost state of man by nature; of the only means of salvation, through the death and sufferings of the Saviour; of the necessity of the inward regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit, became clear and consistent, and the importance of a practical acquaintance with these things was deeply and rationally impressed on his mind. He now saw, that salvation which he had deemed almost or altogether hopeless to him, was possible. His mind became calm, and he attended to religious instruction and advice. In a short time he began to give as much evidence of a change of heart as a death-bed repentance (rarely to be greatly relied on) can easily afford. He sent for his companions in iniquity, and, notwithstanding his disorder, exerted himself to the utmost to address them, which he did in the most solemn, awful, and impressive manner, as a person, who, by the infinite mercy of a prayer-hearing God, had been delivered from a hell gaping to receive him. He besought them, by all the terrors of everlasting destruction, by all the love they ought to bear to their own immortal souls; by the love of

a crucified Jesus, who poured out his soul unto death, that they might live forever ; by his own awful sufferings and terrible example ; that they would repent and turn to God. This happy change was a reviving cordial to the distressed and suffering father. His soul was overjoyed, and his mouth was full of the praises of redeeming love. His mind and spirits were hereby prepared, with true resignation, to surrender the son of his advanced age to the God who gave him. After a few days more of severe suffering in body, but rejoicing in mind, the son was removed from time to eternity. There being no minister in the neighborhood, the father undertook to preach a funeral sermon. All the son's old companions that could be sent to, were especially invited, and the old gentleman preached in such a manner, with a particular address to the young men, as to astonish every hearer ; and while the seriously inclined wondered and adored, the careless were confounded and greatly alarmed.

“ Scarcely had Mr. Tennent got over this heavy affliction, and returned to an active and useful course of life for a few years, when God again called him to another severe and arduous struggle of the same nature. His eldest son, John, promised fair to make a distinguished figure in life, had possessed a large share in the affections of both father and mother, and was more dear to their hearts than ever, since the death of his brother. It so happened, that the

father was called to New-York to heal some differences between the members of the church there.—The next morning after his arrival, he went into a bookstore, when one of the ministers of the Episcopal church came in, and on being introduced to him, after the common salutations, told him he condoled with him on the death of his eldest son in the West-Indies. The old gentleman was at first struck dumb. With difficulty he soon inquired how the news came; being informed that it was by a circuitous route, he suddenly turned, and said, ‘The will of the Lord be done.’ The clergyman observed, that it was happy for him to be able so cordially to submit to it. Mr. Tennent replied, ‘The Lord is my God, his will be done.’ On being asked by the bookseller, who was his particular friend, to retire into the house, and endeavour to settle his mind, he answered, ‘I am come on the Lord’s business; my duty requires that I should finish it; when that is done I shall have time enough to mourn for my son.’ He immediately set off to attend his appointment, finished the business to his satisfaction, and next day returned home, where he found that a letter had been received by a neighbour, containing the same information which he had before received. Thus, on the most trying occasion, he showed the same submission to the allotment of divine providence that was discoverable in all his former conduct. The following extract from a letter, written at this time to the

writer of this narrative, will show the temper of his mind in his own language. ‘Freehold, March, 1776. My dear sir, perhaps before this comes to hand, you will be informed, that He who gave me the honourable epithet of a father, has, in his wise and unerring providence, written me childless.* My son is dead. This account I had yesterday from a letter written to a friend; the account is so straight (though not circumstantial) that I cannot doubt its truth. The tender mother has not heard it, nor do I intend she shall, until authenticated. This I mention as a caution to you, in case you should write me before the matter is published. Let the dear heart have all possible ease, before the load, which it is likely will try her life, falls upon her. I know her attachment to that child; his conduct has been such as greatly endeared him to us. Our pains and expense in his education have been great, but infinitely short of what God has done for him. He has, therefore, the best right to him. Should we then, were it in our power, obstruct his taking full possession of his own property? God forbid! This, sir, through God’s goodness, is not only what I say, but it is the temper of my soul, for which God only deserves the honour. It is now above fifty years since my soul resigned itself to God in Jesus Christ.

* “He seems, in the depth of his distress, to have forgotten, that he yet had one son left, although he was 800 miles distant from him.”

I had then neither son nor daughter; I was completely satisfied with Him, and, blessed be his name, I am so now. Have I then reason to cry out as if ruined? O! no: on the contrary, I have the utmost reason for thanksgiving, that he has not, in righteous judgment, deprived me of himself, in whom all fulness dwells. My wife and myself are now hastening to childhood; if spared a few years, we shall need one to lead us; and we shall look to you, under God. All the benefit you can expect from so doing, will consist in the satisfaction of your own mind, that you have helped two old people through the last steps of their pilgrimage.' Thus did this pious man turn every event of life, however afflictive, to the praise and glory of God, and he seldom omitted an opportunity of inculcating the same disposition on all his acquaintance.

"When the late Rev. George Whitefield was last in this country, Mr. Tennent paid him a visit as he was passing through New Jersey. Mr. Whitefield and a number of other clergymen, among whom was Mr. Tennent, were invited to dinner by a gentleman in the neighborhood where the late Mr. William Livingston, since governor of New Jersey, resided, and who, with several other lay gentlemen, were among the guests. After dinner, in the course of an easy and pleasant conversation, Mr. Whitefield adverted to the difficulties attending the gospel ministry, arising from the small success with which their

labours were crowned. He greatly lamented, that all their zeal, activity and fervour availed but little ; said, that he was weary with the burdens and fatigues of the day ; declared his great consolation was, that in a short time his work would be done, when he should depart and be with Christ ; that the prospect of a speedy deliverance had supported his spirits, or that he should, before now, have sunk under his labour. He then appealed to the ministers around him, if it were not their great comfort that they should soon go to rest. They generally assented, excepting Mr. Tennent, who sat next to Mr. Whitefield, in silence ; and by his countenance discovered but little pleasure in the conversation. On which, Mr. Whitefield turning to him, and tapping him on the knee, said, ‘ Well ! brother Tennent, you are the oldest man amongst us, do you not rejoice to think that your time is so near at hand, when you will be called home and freed from all the difficulties attending this chequered scene ? ’ Mr. T. bluntly answered, ‘ I have no wish about it. ’ Mr. W. pressed him again ; and Mr. T. again answered, ‘ No Sir, it is no pleasure to me at all, and if you knew your duty, it would be none to you. I have nothing to do with death ; my business is to live as long as I can—as well as I can—and to serve my Lord and Master as faithfully as I can, until he shall think proper to call me home. ’ Mr. W. still urged for an explicit answer to his question, in case

the time of death were left to his own choice. Mr. Tennent replied, ‘I have no choice about it; I am God’s servant, and have engaged to do his business, as long as he pleases to continue me therein. But now, brother, let me ask you a question. What do you think I would say, if I was to send my man Tom into the field to plough; and if at noon I should go to the field, and find him lounging under a tree, and complaining. ‘Master the sun is very hot, and the ploughing hard and difficult, I am tired and weary of the work you have appointed me, and am overdone with the heat and burden of the day: do master let me return home and be discharged from this hard service?’ What would I say? Why, that he was an idle, lazy fellow; that it was his business to do the work that I had appointed him, until I, the proper judge, should think fit to call him home. Or, suppose you had hired a man to serve you faithfully for a *given time* in a particular service, and he should, without any reason on your part, and before he had performed half his service, become weary of it, and upon every occasion be expressing a wish to be discharged, or placed in other circumstances? Would you not call him a wicked and slothful servant, and unworthy of the privileges of your employ?’ The mild, pleasant, and Christian-like manner, in which this reproof was administered, rather increased the social harmony and edifying conversation of the company; who became satisfied

that it was very possible to err even in desiring, with undue earnestness, 'to depart and be with Christ,' which in itself is 'far better' than to remain in this imperfect state; and that it is the duty of the Christian, in this respect, to say, 'All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come.'

"Among Mr. Tennent's qualifications, none were more conspicuous than his activity both of body and mind. He hated and despised sloth. He was almost always in action—never wearied in well-doing, nor in serving his friends. His integrity and independence of spirit were observable on the slightest acquaintance. He was so great a lover of truth, that he could not bear the least aberration from it, even in a joke. He was remarkable for his candour and liberality of sentiment, with regard to those who differed from him in opinion. His hospitality and domestic enjoyments were even proverbial. His public spirit was always conspicuous, and his attachment to what he thought the best interests of his country, was ardent and inflexible. He took an early and decided part with his country in the commencement of the late revolutionary war. He was convinced that she was oppressed, and that her petitions to the sovereign of the mother country were constitutional, loyal, moderate, and reasonable; that the treatment they received, was irrational, tyrannical, and intolerable. As he made it a rule, however, never to carry politics into the pulpit, he had no

way to manifest his zeal for the public measures, but by his private prayers, and by his decided opinions delivered in private conversations. But, in this way, his sentiments became universally known, and he was considered as a warm friend to the American cause. Notwithstanding these political opinions, he was not blind to the errors of his countrymen, and especially to their moral and religious conduct. The following extract from a letter to the author of these sketches, dated Feb. 14, 1775, strongly marks the temper of his mind. ‘My very dear Sir, your kind letter came to hand, three days since. Your comforts and sorrows are mine in no small degree ; I share with you in both ; the tie is such as death cannot dissolve. This is a day of darkness in my view, and few are in any degree properly affected with it. I have, through grace, perhaps, as little to fear for myself, or mine, as any living. I humbly hope we are housed in Jesus ; but I am distressed for the nation and land. The ruin of both is awfully threatened ; and, though now deferred, may ere long be accomplished, unless reformation takes place. It behoves every one to cry, ‘spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach.’ I know God is merciful ; he has, notwithstanding, disinherited a people as dear to him as ever we were, whose sins were not more aggravated than ours. The Lord can deliver, but have we reason to think he will, having told us that he will ‘wound the head

of his enemies, and the hairy scalps of such who go on in their trespasses?' Is there any appearance of reformation? Yea, is it not the reverse? Are not our meetings for the preservation of our liberty, often abused by excessive drinking? &c. &c. Have not politics taken place of religion in all our conversations? Is it not become unconstitutional (to use the vulgar language) to mention God's name in company, unless by way of dishonouring him? Are not things sacred neglected by some, and burlesqued by others? Is not the newspaper substituted for the Bible, on Lord's days, yea, at church? What will the end of these things be? Blessed be God, through Jesus Christ, He is for a sanctuary.'

"Mr. Tennent was on a visit, within less than twenty miles of New York, when a British frigate attempted to pass the batteries, and to proceed up the North River, while General Washington lay with the American army in the city. A very heavy cannonading took place, which was mistaken by the surrounding country for a general attack on our army. Mr. Tennent was deeply affected, and after a violent struggle within himself, he turned to a friend or two present, and said, 'Come, while our fellow citizens are fighting, let us retire to prayer.' They, accordingly, went up into his room, where he most devoutly poured out his soul for about half an hour, in the most fervent prayers, wrestling with, God in behalf of his suffering country.

“In the winter of 1776-7, the British overran a great part of the state of New Jersey, and particularly the county of Monmouth, where a number of the inhabitants were in the British interests. Such was their apparent power, and the distressed situation of the American army, retreating before them, that it was generally supposed by the people in the country, that the dispute was almost at an end, and that all hopes of successful opposition were nearly extinguished. A British party arose in the county, who seized their fellow citizens, and dragged them to a British provost, where they were treated in the most cruel manner, as rebels and traitors. Even citizens from other parts of the state, who had taken refuge in the county, depending on the known hospitality of the inhabitants, were not respected. In this situation, Mr. Tennent very justly thought himself in great danger; but having no place to flee to for safety, he remained at home, committing himself to the protection of Almighty God. In the month of Dec. 1776, a number of the inhabitants came to his house, and insisted that he should go to Princeton, without delay, and take the benefit of General Howe’s proclamation, offering a pardon to those who should seek it within a limited time. He refused, till he found himself in danger of being taken off and committed to a British provost, which he well knew, was but another word for a lingering death. He also found that, in his present state, his

usefulness as a minister of the gospel was at an end, unless he complied with the wishes of the people, most of the whigs of influence having fled. Concluding, that present duty enforced the request which was thus urged upon him, he promised to go to Princeton. On his way, he lodged at the house of a young clergyman, and, on rising in the morning, he seemed greatly oppressed in spirit. On being asked what troubled him, he answered, with a heavy sigh, ‘I am going to do a thing for conscience sake, directly against my conscience.’ Soon after his return home, to the surprise of every body, the British quarters at Trenton were beaten up, and a British regiment taken at Princeton; the American army again advanced, and took a strong position at Morristown, by which the British in their turn, were obliged to retreat and contract their lines to Brunswick and Amboy. The Americans again got possession of the county of Monmouth, where the whigs returned in force. Mr. Tennent’s mind was greatly oppressed with his untoward situation, and he severely blamed his untimely submission.

“About the latter end of February, or beginning of March, 1777, Mr. Tennent was suddenly seized with a fever, attended by violent symptoms. He sent for his family physician, who was in the act of setting off for the legislature of the state, of which he was a member. He called on his patient on his way, but could spend but a few minutes with him.

He, however, examined carefully into Mr Tennent's complaints, and the symptoms attending the disorder. With great candour, the physician informed his patient, that the attack appeared unusually violent; that the case required the best medical aid, and that it was out of his power to attend him. He feared that, at his advanced age, there was not strength of nature sufficient to overcome so severe a shock, and that his symptoms scarcely admitted of a favourable prognostic. The good old man received this news with his usual submission to the divine will; for, as he had always considered himself as bound for eternity, he had endeavoured so to live, that when the summons should come, he would have nothing to do but to die. He calmly replied, 'I am very sensible of the violence of my disorder, that it has racked my constitution to an uncommon degree, and beyond what I have ever before experienced, and that it is accompanied with symptoms of approaching dissolution; but, blessed be God, I have no wish to live, if it should be his will and pleasure to call me hence.' After a moment's pause, he seemed to recollect himself, and varied the expression thus: 'Blessed be God, I have no wish to live, if it should be his will and pleasure to call me hence, unless it should be to see a happy issue to the severe and arduous controversy my country is engaged in; but, even in this, the will of the Lord be done.'

“During his whole sickness, he continued perfectly resigned to the divine will, until death was swallowed up in victory, on the 8th day of March, 1777. His body was buried in his own church, at Freehold, a numerous concourse of people, composed, not only of the members of his own congregation, but of the inhabitants of the whole adjacent country, attending his funeral.

“Mr. Tennent was rather more than six feet high, of a spare thin visage, and of an erect carriage. He had bright, piercing eyes, a long sharp nose, and a long face. His general countenance was grave and solemn, but at all times cheerful and pleasant with his friends. It may be said of him, with peculiar propriety, that he appeared, in an extraordinary manner, to live above the world, and all its allurements. He seemed habitually to have such clear views of spiritual and heavenly things, as afforded him much of the foretaste and enjoyment of them. His faith was really and experimentally ‘the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things unseen.’ Literally, his daily walk was with God, and he lived ‘as seeing him who is invisible.’ The divine presence with him, was frequently manifested in his public ministrations, and in his private conduct. His ardent soul was seldom satisfied, unless he was exerting himself, in some way or other, in public or private, in rendering kind offices and effectual services of friendship, both in spiritual and temporal

things, to his fellow-men. Take him in his whole demeanor and conduct, there are few of whom it might more emphatically be said, that he lived the life and died the death of the righteous.

“He was well read in divinity, and was of sound orthodox principles. He professed himself a moderate Calvinist. The doctrines of man’s depravity; the atonement of the Saviour; the absolute necessity of the all-powerful influence of the Spirit of God, to renew the heart and subdue the will; all in perfect consistence with the free agency of the sinner, were among the leading articles of his faith. These doctrines, indeed, were generally interwoven in his public discourses, whatever might be the particular subject discussed. His success was often answerable to his exertions. His people loved him as a father; revered him as the pastor and bishop of their souls; obeyed him as their instructor; and delighted in his company and private conversation as a friend and brother. He carefully avoided making a difference between his doctrines publicly taught and his private practice. Attending a synod, a few years before his death, a strange clergyman, whom he never had before seen, was introduced to the synod, and asked to preach in the evening. Mr. Tennent attended, and was much displeased with the sermon. As the congregation were going out of the church, Mr. Tennent in the crowd, coming up to the preacher, touched him on the shoulder, and said, ‘My bro-

ther, when I preach, I take care to save myself, whatever, I do with my congregation.' The clergyman looked behind him with surprise, and seeing a very grave man, said, 'What do you mean, Sir?' Mr. Tennent answered, 'You have been sending your whole congregation, synod and all, to perdition, and you have not even saved yourself. Whenever I preach, I make it a rule to save myself,' and then abruptly left him, without his knowing who spoke to him.

"At Mr. Tennent's death, the poor mourned for him as their patron, their comforter and support; and the rich lamented over him as their departed pastor and friend. The public at large, lost in him a firm assertor of the civil and religious interests of his country. He was truly a patriot, not in words and pretences, not in condemning all who differed from him to proscription and death, but in acting in such a manner, as would have rendered his country most happy, if all had followed his example. He insisted on his own rights and freedom of sentiment, but he was willing to let others enjoy the same privilege; and he thought it of as much importance to live and act well, as to think and speak justly.

"To conclude these imperfect sketches. May all who read the memoirs of this amiable and useful man, fervently and constantly beseech that God, with whom is the residue of the Spirit, that their life may be that of the righteous, so that their latter

end may be like his : and that the Great Head of the Church, while he removes faithful and distinguished labourers from the gospel vineyard, may raise up others, who shall possess, even a double portion of their spirit, and who shall be even more successful in winning souls unto Jesus Christ, the great bishop of souls.”

CHAPTER XI.

REMARKS ON THE PRECEDING NARRATIVE.

Mr. Tennent's trance not supernatural—Numerous diseases the cause of the phenomena—Case of Susannah Orrendorf—Mohammed—Lackinford—The dreams of the witnesses, cannot be accounted for on natural principles—God still, occasionally gives admonitory dreams.

It must be acknowledged, that some of the facts recorded in the preceding narrative, are of a marvellous nature ; but we are inclined to believe that they all may be accounted for on natural principles, except one. The appearance of death, when life is not extinguished, but only suspended, has been often observed, on the termination of nervous fevers, and in epileptic and apoplectic fits. The temporary loss of memory on recovery, has also been often observed. Persons have been known to lie in one of these trances, for weeks together. And there is too much reason to fear, that many persons have been buried alive, by being prematurely carried to the grave. This undoubtedly would have been the unhappy case of Mr. Tennent, had not his young friend in-

terposed. And as to the happy state of his mind, during this period, and his imagining that he was in heaven, it is all very natural, and does not require that we should suppose the soul to have been separated from the body. We would not deny, that a man through life so highly favoured in receiving extraordinary manifestations of God's perfections, and especially of his love, might, even when in this state of apparent death, have been the subject of a gracious influence, which filled his imagination with the rapturous views, which he enjoyed. We are disposed, however, to admire Mr. Tennent's prudence, in not being forward to speak of his experience, during this period; and we do not feel disposed to regret, that he never committed to writing an account of his visions; or if he did, that his executor never could lay his hands on the manuscript. When Paul was caught up to Paradise, and heard and saw the glory of the third heaven, he uttered not a word respecting the nature of his vision. He merely said, that he "heard unspeakable things, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." The writer would further remark, that in certain states of the nervous system, when the common functions of life seem to be suspended, it is no uncommon thing for the imagination to be strongly affected. In the year 1791, he went several miles out his way, in company with three distinguished clergymen, to visit a young woman, the daughter of a wealthy German farmer, not

far from Hagerstown, Md., who had been for more than a year, subject every day, at the same hour, to certain epileptic paroxysms, during which, she had the appearance of one dead, or in a deep sleep, and always came to herself, singing. And professed, that, every day, she visited heaven; and gave a particular account of what she saw in the celestial world. During the whole time that this nervous disease lasted, the family solemnly declared, that she ate nothing, except that she wet her mouth occasionally with a few drops of sugar and water. The description which she gave of heaven, and her passage thither, had a strong resemblance to Mohammed's accounts of paradise; so that, as he was in early life subject to epileptic fits, the writer has been induced to think it probable, that his whole imposture had its origin in the visions which he experienced during these paroxysms; and that, at first, being persuaded that he had divine communications, he afterwards resorted to fraud to keep up his pretensions. However this may be, the young woman attracted multitudes from a distance, who were fully persuaded, that she did really visit heaven, and some weak people, who had recently lost dear friends, come to consult this girl, whether she saw any such persons in heaven; and for a while, so great was the fame of her celestial visits, that preachers who had visited her, publicly mentioned what they heard from her lips, in their sermons.

On one occasion, a number of fiery zealots, under the strong influence of party spirit, believing that they and they only were the favourites of heaven, visited her and seriously inquired, which of the several denominations of Christians had the approbation of Christ. To the great gratification of most, they received a signal rebuke to their sectarian spirit; for the young woman, looking sternly at them, answered, "persons are not judged of in heaven by their denomination, but by the purity of their hearts, and lives." And when, in their prayers, they employed deafening vociferation, she asked them when they were done, whether they thought that their Maker was deaf, that they made so much noise. As many as two hundred persons were known to have visited Susannah Orrendorf, on the same day.

The writer has now before him, a printed narrative of the apparent death of Charles Lackingford, Allegheny county, Maryland. This account is confirmed by the affidavit of four of his neighbours, who declare, on oath, that they had been acquainted with the said Lackingford for at least twelve years, and that he had ever supported the character of an upright, honest man, and a good citizen; and that the utmost reliance may be placed on his word. In their affidavit, before a justice of the peace, these four men, whose names are given, declare, "That on, or about the 14th day of August, 1803, they

were sent for to the house of Mr. Charles Lackingford about six miles from Fort Cumberland ; that on their arrival, they found said Lackingford, lying stretched out as dead, to all human appearance ; his eyes closed, his hands clenched, and limbs stiff. “ That they were informed by his family, that he had died on that morning, apparently in an apoplexy : That they were solicited to render the family assistance in discharging the last rites of humanity ; that the deponents caused a coffin to be made ; but that on the night between the 14th and 15th of the month, while watching with the supposed corpse, precisely at 12 o’clock, some inarticulate sounds were heard by all the deponents, as proceeding from the abdomen of the said Lackingford ; on which account, on the morning following, they deferred the intended interment. That the sounds were again repeated at 12 o’clock, on the noon of the 18th, when symptoms of returning life appeared ; and at a quarter after 4 o’clock, P. M., the said Lackingford opened his eyes, and in a violent voice exclaimed, ‘ where am I ? ’ On which he was released from his winding-sheet, and placed in bed, when he declared, that the *arcana* of the infernal regions had been opened to him, and that he had actually seen and conversed with devils. Deponents further say, that during the four days above stated, the body of the said Lackingford received no nourishment of any kind ; and except the noise above stated, was to all appearance,

a dead corpse ; and deponents further say, that to the best of their opinion and belief, the trance of the said Lackingford cannot be ascribed to any physical cause ; or to any other than one of the hidden and mysterious visitations of Providence. Further deponents say not.

“ Taken and subscribed before me,

“ WILLIAM CUSHING, J. P., A. C.”

* SEAL.*

We have seen accounts of many instances of persons lying for days, and even for weeks, in what are called *trances*, and of their telling of very marvellous things which had been seen by them, during the apparent suspension of life ; but we have selected this account because of its being so well authenticated.

The man's own narrative of his visit to hell, as he imagined, occupies about twelve pages. This we do not wish to transcribe. It serves, however, to show, how differently, different persons are affected in such a state of syncope. Mr. Tennent imagined himself in heaven ; so did Susannah Orrendorf ; but Mr. Lackingford was persuaded that he was in hell, and held much conversation with Belphegor, the high constable of the place, who took great pains to show him all the apartments, where different classes of sinners were confined and punished.

It may, however, be satisfactory to hear Mr.

Lackingford's account of his former life, and of the circumstances attending his falling into this trance. "I am now," says he, "fifty-seven years of age. In my early days, I was brought up to the mercantile business, at a store on Elk Ridge Landing, near the City of Baltimore. In this situation, I made acquaintance with most of the fashionable vices of commercial life, and must confess, that I indulged in no small practice of them; but, however, thank heaven, without impairing my naturally athletic constitution. Early in the contest for our glorious independence, I became a soldier, in defence of my country's rights, and in that capacity, continued to fight her battles, until Great Britain was forced to acknowledge our sovereignty.

"I am now settled on my share of land-rights, granted by congress for my services; and in the capacity of a plain farmer, have earned my bread for the last twenty years. I never had any ambition to see my name in print, or to hear myself talked of, beyond the limits of my little farm; but I could not resist the solicitations of my neighbours, to give to the world the extraordinary adventures which I experienced, during the four days and nights, when nature suspended her functions in my system, and left the soul unclogged by the massy materials of the body, to roam at large into the hidden regions of the damned spirits.

"On the 14th of August, 1803, just after sun-

rise, as I was stacking some hay, I heard a voice, as if it proceeded from the middle of the stack, exclaim, 'Charles, go to thy bed.' Terrified and struck dumb, I instantly threw down the stack, supposing some one was concealed therein, but to my still greater amazement, found no one; I looked all around me; no living object was visible. I threw myself on my knees, to implore the aid of Providence; but, alas! my power of utterance was deprived me—my tongue refused its office. Every limb trembled with fear, and still the same voice struck with redoubled energy on my astonished ears. I rose up,—a dimness overshadowed my eyes, and I went trembling towards my house, resolved to obey the invisible mandate. I had scarcely reached my bed, when one of the most welcome sleeps closed my eye-lids." Then he goes on to narrate what he imagined he saw and heard, in the infernal regions.

The only thing in the foregoing history of William Tennent, which cannot be accounted for, upon the ordinary principles of human nature, is, the dreams of the man and his wife, which brought them from Maryland to Trenton, and whose testimony was absolutely necessary to save this good man from an ignominious punishment. In this case, if the facts are true—concerning which there can be no reasonable doubt—there must have been a supernatural interposition. These simple people could have had

no knowledge of what was transacting in New Jersey; and when they came to Trenton, they knew not for what purpose their presence was needed. In all ages of the world, suggestions and impressions have been made in dreams, which have been important to the safety or interest of certain persons, for whose sake the communication was made. And we learn from the Bible, that dreams of this supernatural kind, have not been confined to the pious, but have been granted to heathen kings, and other persons who knew not the true God, as in the case of the butler and baker, of Pharaoh, and Nebuchadnezzar. Such dreams are still on certain occasions granted, probably by the ministry of angels, for the admonition or direction of the people of God; or for reasons unknown to us. Although it is true, "in the multitude of dreams there are divers varieties," and although false prophets pretended to receive communications in dreams, and at this time, many persons are superstitiously affected by dreams, yet the truth of the fact ought not to be denied, that even in our day, dreams are sometimes admonitory, and seem to preserve certain persons from evils, which they could not otherwise escape. God has nowhere informed us, that this mode of communication with men should entirely cease; and if there are, however rarely, such communications to certain persons, in sleep, it furnishes some proof of the existence of a world of spirits, in-

visible to us, but near ; and that we are surrounded, and often guarded, by kind angels, who minister unto us, and preserve us from many evils of which we are not aware. Such dreams are not properly called miraculous, nor can the persons to whom they are vouchsafed, be said to be inspired. They are merely extraordinary intimations to the mind, probably as was said, by the agency of guardian angels. The only unaccountable thing in this whole business is, that Mr. Tennent and his fellow travellers, had not sent off immediately to this distant place for witnesses ; for there were many there who had heard him and Mr. Rowland preach. Conscious of innocence, they seem to have apprehended no danger ; and when one of their number was found guilty, and actually punished for perjury, there might not have been time to bring persons from such a distance. But in regard to Mr. Tennent, he was not only conscious of innocence, but had such unshaken confidence in God, that he feared nothing ; being fully persuaded that He would, in some way, interpose by his providence, for his deliverance ; or would overrule his unjust condemnation and punishment, for his own glory. This last seems to have been especially on his mind ; for we are informed, that he had prepared a sermon for the occasion, to be preached while standing on the pillory.

CHAPTER XII.

ANECDOTES OF REV. WM. TENNENT.

Mr. Tennent loses some of his toes—Attempted explanation—Anecdotes supplied by Dr. Miller—Anecdotes from the Assembly's Magazine, with an account of his interview with Murray the Universalist.

WE have never known a man in modern times, concerning whom so many extraordinary things are related. The most important of these are contained in Dr. Boudinot's memoir of his life; but many others were omitted; either because he judged them of not sufficient importance to be recorded in such a work, or because, writing for a periodical, he was limited as to the space which the memoir was allowed to occupy. Many of these anecdotes, however, he took a pleasure in relating in conversation with his friends; and those which have been kindly furnished by my friend and colleague, the Rev. Dr. Miller, were received from him. I have been in some doubt about introducing the contents of this chapter into the volume; but as the anecdotes here given, are all believed to be authentic, it was thought that they would tend to exhibit in a more distinct

light, the true character of this extraordinary man. Many others have been current in his vicinity, but as they have been handed down by tradition, they have not been considered as sufficiently authenticated, to be inserted in this memoir; and some of them are of too ludicrous a nature to have a place in a serious narrative.

There is one remarkable thing which happened to Mr. Tennent, not recorded in the memoir written by Dr. Boudinot, which has to most appeared more inexplicable than any other event of his life. One night, as the story goes, when Mr. Tennent was asleep in his own bed, he was waked up by a sharp pain in the region of the toes of one of his feet; and upon getting a light, and examining the foot, it was discovered that several of his toes had been cut entirely off, as if by some sharp instrument. But though the wounded part was bleeding, nothing was seen of the excinded members; nor any means by which such a dismemberment could have been effected.

In the room was found no animal, rat, cat, or dog, although diligent search was made; neither could there be discovered any sharp instrument, by which such a wound could have been inflicted. Mr. Tennent himself, confidently believed that the injury was done by the prince of darkness, of whose power and malice he was deeply convinced. Others supposed, that it must have been effected by some do-

mestic animal, which might have made its escape before a light was obtained; as both rats and cats have been known violently to attack and wound persons while asleep. But neither of these explanations give satisfaction. For as to Satan, it cannot be doubted that his malice is great, and that it is especially directed against holy men, and particularly faithful ministers. But we have no evidence that he is now permitted to injure or wound the bodies of the saints. Our fathers were more credulous on this point than we are, and we may dismiss all further notice of this account, as an opinion properly belonging to a former age. And as to the idea, that it might have been the bite of a hungry and voracious rat, or mad cat, the thing is very improbable. Neither of these animals could have, with their teeth, severed the toes from the foot so suddenly; and in that case, the wound would have had marks of the gnawing of such an animal; whereas it was said to have had the appearance of being cut by a sharp instrument. Perhaps the difficulty of accounting for the accident, prevented Dr. Boudinot from inserting the story in Mr. Tennent's memoir; for there can be no doubt that he was well acquainted with the fact, and all its circumstances.

The author of this compilation has the more readily consented to record the event, because he has a hypothesis by which he thinks he can account for such an accident.

Upon a survey of the circumstances of the affair, it seems highly probable, that Mr. Tennent was a somnambulist, and received this injury by treading, in his rambles, on some sharp instrument; soon after which he returned to his bed, but did not feel the pain of the wound until he awoke. It is well known, that persons in this kind of sleep, are very little susceptible of the feeling of pain from any accident of this sort; and they seldom ever retain any recollection of the exercises of their minds at the time, or of the scenes through which they have passed. Many instances might be given of persons receiving bodily hurts while in this state, without being awakened thereby; and apparently, without any feeling of pain from wounds which would cause very acute suffering to one awake. And it may not be improper to refer for proof of this, to undoubted facts, witnessed by many, in regard to persons in a mesmeric sleep, who undergo surgical operations, which give intense pain in a common state, without any appearance of sensibility.

The writer recollects to have heard of an instance precisely in point, which occurred in Philadelphia, in relation to a son of the late Dr. Sproat, who being a somnambulist, got out of his room at a window on a shed, and jumped on the ground, but lighting on something sharp, cut his foot; and being soon missed, was pursued by his bloody tracks on the snow, with which the ground was at the time

covered. But he was not awakened from his sleep by the wound which he received. Other cases of serious injury sustained in the night by persons who could give no account how they occurred, have fallen under the notice of the writer, and which can only be accounted for by this hypothesis. If it be alleged, that Mr. Wm. Tennent was not known to be a somnambulist, it may be answered, that he certainly had a nervous system strung in a very peculiar manner, and many are subject to this kind of sleep, who never know anything about it. And we would adduce the fact under consideration, as a strong presumptive evidence of the thing supposed.

Anecdotes of the Rev. William Tennent, kindly communicated to the author, by the Rev. Doctor Miller, of Princeton.

“This remarkable man was greatly distinguished for *decision of character*. Many good men of his day, had more intellectual vigour than he possessed. But few of his contemporaries possessed as much as he did of that moral courage,—that fixedness of purpose, and that firmness of Christian heroism, which could not be turned to the right or the left. This trait in his character was once very strongly exemplified at a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the College of New Jersey. It is well known that Mr. Tennent was one of the most active and zealous of the founders of that College; and that the great

object of those worthy men, in all the labour and expense which they incurred in its establishment, was to train up a pious and learned ministry for the Presbyterian Church. For the attainment of this object, and to guard the College against every species of perversion or abuse, he was ever on the watch, and especially to promote the religious interests of the Institution.

“Soon after William Franklin (son of Benjamin) was appointed Governor of the Province of New Jersey, he took his seat, according to the provision of the Charter, as *ex officio* President of the Board. On one of the early occasions of his presiding in quality of Governor, after coming to that office, he formed a plan of wheedling the Board into an agreement to have their charter so modified, as to place the Institution more entirely in the power of the Provincial government, and to receive in exchange for this concession, some inconsiderable pecuniary advantage. The Governor made this proposal in a plausible speech, and was receiving the thanks of several short sighted and sanguine members of the Board of Trustees—when Mr. Tennent, who had been prevented by some dispensation of Providence from coming earlier, appeared in the Board, and took his seat. After listening for a few minutes, and hearing from one and another of his brother Trustees, the nature of the Governor’s plan and offer; after several of them had, in his presence, recognized the

Governor's proposal as highly favourable, and such as ought to be accepted; and praised 'his Excellency's generous proposal,' as what all must think well of—Mr. Tennent, looking round the Board with the sharp and piercing eye, for which he was remarkable when strongly excited, rose and said: 'Brethren! are you mad? I say, brethren, are you mad? Rather than accept the offer of the President, I would set fire to the College edifice, at its four corners, and run away in the light of the flames.' Such was the effect of this rebuff from a Trustee of such known honesty, influence and decision, that little more was said. The proposal was laid on the table, and never more called up.

"Mr. Tennent was full of expedients for winning souls to Christ. He was remarkably fond of horses; had a good deal of skill in the choice and management of them; and was seldom known to ride or to keep an inferior one. There was a young man in his congregation, the son of one of his church-members, also distinguished for his attachment to horses, and for his skill in horsemanship. Mr. Tennent was very desirous of gaining access to this young man, and of securing his confidence. But after every effort to accomplish this object, was disappointed; the young man, trembling at the thought of being addressed on the subject of religion, avoided his pastor with the utmost vigilance; escaped from his father's house whenever Mr. Tennent called;

and in every possible way evaded an interview with him. Mr. Tennent observed this, and resorted to every contrivance in his power to overcome the young man's aversion to his company. But in vain. Things went on in this way for a considerable time. In the mean while Mr. Tennent's desire for an interview became more intense, from hearing that the young man had an active mind, and an amiable temper, and was considered as, in most respects, very promising by those who knew him best. One day, when Mr. Tennent was riding out in his course of family visitation, on a remarkably fleet horse, he saw this young man about a hundred yards before him, coming out from a neighbour's gate, and going toward his father's house. Mr. Tennent immediately quickened the pace of his horse, for the purpose of overtaking him. The young man, looking back and seeing Mr. Tennent coming, did the same. Each spurred on his horse, until the contest became a race at full speed. After running in this manner between one and two miles, Mr. Tennent, having much the fleeter horse, overtook the young man, and, on coming up to him, said, in a very affable, pleasant manner, 'Well Johnny, I thought I should overtake you. I see you ride a good animal; but I had a notion that mine could beat him.' He then entered into familiar conversation with the young man, adapting all his remarks to what he supposed to be his favor-

ite pursuits and topics. After riding a mile or two together, Mr. Tennent said to him, when they were about to separate, 'Johnny, come and see me. I shall be very glad to see you; I know you love a good horse. I think I have some horses and colts, that will please you. It will give me real pleasure to show them to you.' With this invitation and these remarks, they parted. In a few days the young man, greatly pleased with the manner in which Mr. Tennent had treated him, accepted his invitation, and called at his house. Mr. Tennent fulfilled his promise; took him through his stables, and round his farm, and entertained him greatly to his gratification, without saying one word to him of religion. The young man no longer shunned his company, but put himself in his way, not only without fear, but with pleasure, whenever he had an opportunity. Mr. Tennent very soon took occasion, after gaining his confidence, to address him on the most important of all subjects; and it was not long before he listened with serious attention; became hopefully the subject of renewing grace; and was soon united with the church of Christ.

"This excellent man was remarkably skilful, discriminating and faithful in dealing with those who came to him professing to be in a state of anxiety or inquiry respecting their salvation. He was once visited by a female, advanced in life, one of his stated hearers, who had not borne a very good

character, but who now professed to be deeply anxious concerning her eternal welfare. She wept, acknowledged herself a great sinner, and abounded in language of severe self-crimination, and professions of deep penitence. Mr. Tennent thought he saw in her whole air and manner something like over-acting, which, taken in connexion with her former life, led him to suspect, that her professions were not very sincere. He, therefore, determined at once to put them to the test, and said: "Mrs. — you speak of yourself as a great sinner: that is just what we have always thought of you. I have no doubt it is very much as you say." The woman, who was indeed a hypocrite, fully expecting to be hailed with pleasure and confidence as a genuine convert by her minister, was thrown off her guard by this rebuff, and replied with strong resentment: 'It's no such thing. I'm not chargeable with these sins, I'm as good as you any day;' and immediately left the house; and with this interview dismissed her serious impressions.

"At another time Mr. Tennent, in riding out, stopped opposite the door of a small tavern in his neighbourhood to make some inquiry. While waiting a moment to obtain the desired information, a man, evidently intoxicated with strong drink, came out of the house, and accosted him by name. Finding that Mr. Tennent did not return his salutation with the readiness and familiarity of an acquaint-

ance, he said : ‘ Mr. Tennent, I believe you do not know me ; why, you converted me a few months ago.’ ‘ Ah ! my friend,’ said Mr. Tennent, ‘ its like some of my bungling work. If the Spirit of God had converted you, we should not have seen you in this situation.’ ”

In the same volume of the Assembly’s Missionary Magazine which contains the biography of the Rev. William Tennent, jr., we have, from another hand, the three following anecdotes.

“ He was crossing the bay from New York to Elizabethtown, in company with two gentlemen, who had no great fondness for clergymen, and who cautiously avoided him for some time after getting on board the boat. As he usually spoke loudly, they overheard what he said, and finding him a cheerful companion, who could converse upon other subjects besides religion, they ventured a little nearer to him ; and at length they and he engaged in a conversation upon politics. One of his congregation, who was a fellow-passenger, happening to overhear a remark he made, stepped up to him, and said, ‘ Mr. Tennent, please to spiritualize that.’ ‘ Spiritualize that,’ said Mr. T. ‘ you don’t know what you are talking about.’ ‘ Why, sir, there is no harm in talking religion, is there ?’ ‘ Yes,’ replied Mr. T. ‘ there is a great deal of harm in it ; and it is such good folks as you, that always lug religion in, by head and shoulders, whether it is pro-

per or not, that hurt the cause; if you want to talk religion, you know where I live, and I know where you live, and you may call at my house, or I will call at yours, and I will talk religion with you till you are tired; but this is not the time to talk religion; we are talking 'politics.' This reply, and his conduct in other respects, so much ingratiated Mr. Tennent with the two gentlemen, as to furnish him with an opportunity for advantageously introducing conversation upon more important subjects; and the younger of the two was so much pleased, that on their arrival at Elizabethtown Point, he insisted upon Mr. Tennent taking his seat in a chair, and he walked from the Point to Elizabethtown, through a muddy road, which, to a person of Mr. Tennent's age, would have been very inconvenient, if not impracticable.

“At New York, Mr. Tennent went to hear a sermon delivered by a transient clergyman, who was often and well spoken of, but whose manner was singular, and who frequently introduced odd conceits into his sermons, which tended to excite mirth, rather than to edification. Upon leaving the church, a friend asked Mr. Tennent's opinion of the sermon. He said, it made him think of a man who should take a bag, and put into it some of the very best superfine wheat flour, a greater quantity of indian meal, and some arsenic, and mix them all together: a part of the sermon was of the very best

quality ; more of it was coarse, but very wholesome food ; and some of it rank poison.”

“Upon another occasion, he went with a friend to hear an illiterate carpenter preach at New York ; and it appeared to him that the man denied the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. The next morning Mr. Tennent called upon his friend, and asked if it appeared so to him ? Upon his friend’s replying in the affirmative, Mr. Tennent said, “then I must go and talk with him, and you must go along with me.” His friend begged to be excused, but Mr. Tennent insisted upon his going, as he had heard the doctrine denied. They found the carpenter at breakfast. Mr. Tennent asked if he was the person who had preached last evening ? he said he was. Then, said Mr. Tennent ‘it appeared to me that you denied the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints ; did I understand you rightly ?’ ‘Yes, sir, be sure I did,’ said the carpenter ; ‘that is a doctrine which no man in his senses can believe.’ ‘I’ll tell you,’ replied Mr. Tennent ‘that is the most precious doctrine in all the book of God : I will give up my life before I will give that up : I must talk with you about it.’ The man alleged that he was a mechanic, who depended upon his trade for the support of his family, and could not stay to *talk* ; he must mind his business. ‘I am glad to hear that,’ said Mr. Tennent ‘I love to see men diligent in their lawful callings : it is their duty ;

but yours is of such a nature that you can work and talk at the same time; and I will go with you to where your business lies, so that your time shall not be wasted :’ the carpenter said he did not want to talk, took his hat, and abruptly went off. Mr. Tennent followed him: the man walked faster: Mr. Tennent quickened his pace. At length the man ran; so did Mr. Tennent. But the carpenter was too fleet for his pursuer; by his speed he evaded his arguments, and remained in error.”

The following anecdote has been handed down by tradition, and in substance is confirmed by a one-sided account of the affair, contained in the life of Murray the Universalist, who is the person concerned. Mr. Tennent’s zeal for the truth, and opposition to what he viewed to be error, were very strong; and were manifested whenever an occasion occurred which called for their exercise. It so happened that Mr. Murray, an Englishman, who had adopted from Rely, the doctrines of Universalism, was landed on the Jersey shore, not very remote from Mr. Tennent’s residence. Though he had not been a Universalist preacher in England, yet having while in connexion with the Methodists, both in Ireland and England, been accustomed to public speaking in the way of exhortation, he was induced upon his landing at a place on the Jersey shore, called “Good Luck,” to commence preaching to the people. At first his doctrine of universal salvation was not clearly and

openly announced, but rather covertly insinuated. Possessing some wit and eloquence he attracted many hearers, and travelled about the country, addressing the people wherever he could get an opportunity. Soon after he commenced this career, he came into the congregation of Freehold, and lodged with one of Mr. Tennent's hearers. As soon as this watchful pastor heard that the wolf had entered among the sheep of his flock, taking with him some of his neighbours, he went to the house where Mr. Murray was staying; and demanded of him 'by what authority he had assumed the office of preacher.' Murray answered him, by asking, "by what authority he asked him such a question." An altercation ensued, Mr. Tennent continuing peremptorily to demand his authority to preach, and he as pertinaciously evading a direct answer. It does not appear, however, from Mr. Murray's account, the only written one which we have seen, that Mr. Tennent then knew that he was a Universalist; for in the interview nothing was said on that subject; nor on any other point of doctrine. It would seem that Mr. Tennent considered him as an irregular, unauthorized itinerant, who, not being in connexion with any denomination of Christians, ought not to be encouraged. And, this, according to Mr. Murray's own account, was the exact state of the case. He stood entirely alone; and professed to hold ecclesiastical connexion with no body on earth; yet

this man became the founder of a large sect, in this country ; for the Universalists acknowledge him as a *father*. But as the course of error is always downward, most of his followers have departed far from his opinions, on other doctrinal points, as appears by his life.