

THE
EVANGELICAL WITNESS.

VOL. III.

AUGUST, 1825.

NO. VIII.

REVIEW.

1. *The path of the just is as the shining light. A funeral discourse, pronounced in the Reformed Dutch church of New-Brunswick, occasioned by the decease of the Rev. John H. Livingston, D. D. S. T. P. By John De Witt, D. D. Prof. Bib. Lit. Ecc. Hist. and Past. Theol. in the theological seminary of the Reformed Dutch church. He being dead yet speaketh. Published by request. New-Brunswick, 1825. pp. 39. 8vo.*

2. *A funeral sermon, preached on Sabbath evening, Nov. 23, 1823, after the death of the Rev. Josias Alexander, A. M. late pastor of the Reformed Presbyterian congregation in Belfast, by Wm. Henry, A. M. pastor of the Reformed Presbyterian congregation of Newtownards. "The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance." Belfast, 1823. pp. 27.*

It has long been customary, we believe, in the Reformed Dutch church to preach and publish funeral sermons; but the sermon of Mr. Henry, is the first publication that we have met with, from the pen of a Reformed Presbyterian. So far as we know, the church to which the pastor of the Newtownards is attached, and

heavenly land of promise, to which the faith of Moses was elevated from Nebo's top— that heavenly country bought by the Redeemer's blood, let such fine scenery as this, awaken my thoughts, and enkindle my desires. On this noble mansion, on its inmates, on all who shall saunter in its halls, and porticoes, and groves, or lodge in its chambers, let blessings descend !

On the next morning the whole valley of the Hudson in front of the mansion house, was covered with clouds, which had come in from the south during the night. They were below us, and appeared like the ocean, when its waves swell and rage, agitated by a furious tempest. These were the clouds that we had seen in the south-west the evening before.

TRAVELS OF TITUS IN THE UNITED STATES.

Donald—“ Is this where I meet you, my friend Titus, unexpectedly in the city of Washington ? Since you accepted the invitation of the young man, who was travelling in our company, to make some stay in the neighbourhood of Chilcothe, and I was obliged to go on, I have never heard of you.” *Titus*—“ I am truly glad to meet you again. Have you, like myself, just arrived in this city ?” *Don.*—“ I have been here several days, and have found good lodgings, where there is room for you. Will you go with me, and become, while here, an inmate in the same house ?” *Tit.*—“ Your recommendation is sufficient.”

This salutation took place in the evening. The two friends retired to their lodgings to spend the evening together. *Don.*—“ I must request you to give me an

account of the incidents of your journey since we parted." *Tit.*—Though they are of the common kind, I may perhaps select a few for your entertainment at another time. But, now, as we are in the capitol of the United States, and as you have been here for several days, tell me I beg of you, what you have found interesting." *Don.*—“Well be it so. There is much here that must awaken interest in any man of benevolence and reflection. Here assemble once a year the representatives of 12,000,000 free people, the only people on earth who really can be called free. Here is the great centre of their political operations, conducted by the general government which exerts a powerful beneficent or malign influence, on the destiny not merely of this commonwealth, but on that of the numerous family of independant nations, that in this western continent are entering on the great theatre of action ; as well as on the whole of the civilized world.” *Tit.*—“I have felt it all within two hours. But I want more from you, my friend, than those generalities. Let me have some details. *Don.*—“You know I think, that I look at man, not merely as an animal, made to breathe, eat, drink and die ; but also and chiefly as an immortal being, subject to the moral government of God Almighty, and accountable to him for all his actions.” *Tit.*—“I know it, and you are aware that I unite with you in this matter.” *Don.*—“Since I have been at the seat of government, this reflection has often occurred to me, were man a mere sentient animal, who had temporary wants only ; then, the manner in which political affairs are transacted here, might be upon the whole, very praiseworthy, in that case it is very plain, the officers of no government

could commit any sin against the Supreme Legislator and judge of the universe. Indeed, I fear from all I see and hear of the officers of the general government, they rarely think that as public characters, they have an account to render to any other superior, but the people. Of an account to render to those whom they represent, they have evidently a pretty strong sense. I am sorry to hear that sober and reflecting persons say there are strong indications that this powerful check on the rulers is becoming weaker. But there is not much to be feared on this quarter, for whenever the people discover that their rulers do not fear them, they will soon make their power felt in the prostration of those, who despise them.

“The dread of popular displeasure holds in some check the cupidity, the ambition, the pride and other evil passions of irreligious civil rulers in the United States, more powerfully than in any other nation under heaven. It is precisely this circumstance that makes them the only people in the world really free. If the rights of the people are trampled under foot or their money squandered in pampering useless or unworthy favourites, it must be by deception: it cannot be by force. Should any of these evils come enormous, the people will see them and apply the remedy, before they become extremely and seriously oppressive, at least this is my hope.

“But I am no politician. I look at all these matters, under a moral aspect. I have studied the Federal Constitution, and I find in it no recognition of the sovereign authority of Jehovah, no acknowledgment of the paramount obligations nor indeed of any obligations of his law, nor any hint that man is a moral agent and immor-

tal. That the God of battles did protect this nation in its infancy, and make visible the power of his arm in leading the revolutionary armies on to victory, I have heard generally and I hope gratefully acknowledged, by religious people in my travels. But it is strange that there is no acknowledgment even of his being, in the constitution of the general government.

“I had heard so much, and seen so much of the efforts for the diffusion of the scriptures among all classes, there is so much said on the subject of religion, and so great a number of religious magazines, and newspapers published in the country, that I thought, surely the men, who in this land occupy public stations, will so far respect public opinion, as for the sake of their own popularity, at least, to live sober and moral lives, and appear to respect religion. Now, my dear Titus, in this expectation, I have been painfully disappointed. Of some of the public men, here, this is true ; but there are many very many, who are immoral men!” *Tit.*—
“What species of immorality do you refer to?” *Don.*—
“I may mention first, the profanation of the Sabbath. It is true congress does not commonly transact business on the Lord’s day. But the members of the national legislature read political newspapers on the Sabbath, discuss generally political subjects, and talk on all worldly topics, as freely and fully on that day, as on any other. So common is this that I fear a great majority of those entrusted with the management of the national affairs, would consider any censure of the practice, no better than bigotry, and stupidity. Visiting and walking for recreation, and dining parties are esteemed here quite proper on the day of holy rest. Indeed, except the

two circumstances of going occasionally to church and of not assembling in the legislative halls for business, a great majority of the officers of government here, have no sabbath. Lately the most distinguished personages here, made a formal visit to a national ship on the sabbath. The seventh commandment But you will not be many days here, until without inquiry, you will hear much to shock you. Then how few are there that make any profession of religion! How many that would blush, to be thought religious! How many that openly mock at the sacred institutions of religion! A general Smythe, a member of congress from the south, has published, this winter a little, contemptible, infidel essay, in which it is hard to say whether, he has discovered the most ignorance, or vanity or impudence, in attacking the authenticity of the Apocalypse." *Tit.*—"I have seen his advertisement." *Don.*—"Many members of congress and the public men here, were subscribers to this feeble and ridiculous attack on revealed religion. It is true, they ridiculed the writer, not because his lack of Biblical knowledge, and his ignorance of ecclesiastical history, but for his writing at all on the subject of religion, they bought and paid for his books. And this, together with his display of enmity against the Bible, was probably all the gratification he sought for. The example of men so ungodly must exert a most malignant influence on the faith and the morality of the citizens generally. Indeed, the moral sense of the mass of the people must be graduated on a low scale, when they elect such men to office; and there must be an alarming apathy not to say torpor among the professors of

religion ; as we hear of so little opposition made to the election of such men. However christianity begins to awake. But you ask me for news in the capitol. I must not wander through the nation.

“I have seen the public buildings, and the royal display at the president’s levees. I must say that these splendid edifices, which cost the nation so much, do not comport with that simplicity and plainness which should be cherished by republics : they savour of an attempt to ape the grandeur of monarchical palaces. The state papers which issue from these imperial structures, are far inferior to those which were framed by the first American congress, in the humble state house at Philadelphia. I am told that when the levees of the president were first introduced, many enlightened politicians opposed them, on the ground that they resembled the routes of monarchs and were unworthy of the chief magistrate of a republican people. What good end can it possibly answer for two or three hundred fashionables to meet once or twice a week, and make twice as many hundred bows, learned in dancing schools ? Why should the precious hours of a president be occupied with these ceremonies of etiquette, which better become *petit maitres* than great statesmen ? Why should the nation feed at the president’s table these assemblages of gay idlers, who at the plough or the spinning wheel, might be profitably employed in adding to the stock of national wealth ? Of the 12,000 inhabitants of this city, it is said that 9000 live on the funds of the nation. This state of things fosters folly, vanity and idleness. The people here

are not a sober, moral, industrious reading and intelligent population. Grave thought, reflection, industry, morality and religion, languish and die, in the halls, routes, frippery, immorality and irreligion, of the court and court dependants. The heads of departments are generally very respectable men in point of intelligence, and plain and unassuming in their dress and manners. But we ought to reflect that from the character of our population, and the enlightened extension of the rights of suffrages to nearly all classes of the citizens, a large proportion of the senators, members of congress, and subordinate officers of the general government, are educated in a plain manner, in the country. When introduced to the president, at his routes, to the heads of department, at theirs, and to the officers of the army and navy, at theirs, they must be dazzled by the displays of dress and fashionable folly in the royal saloons. They are flattered by the honour of an introduction to the great and by the smiles of the ladies. Honest, substantial, but plain countrymen, however well read and sensible, are bewildered in the mazes of fashion, and judge of national measures by the opinions of the great and their creatures, rather than the unsophisticated dictates of common sense. The patronage of office, and the force of intellect are amply sufficient to create an adequate court influence without this facination of the senses."

"It seems to me that 'God is not in all their thoughts.'" *Tit.*—"We may however congratulate the country, that religion has not been made an engine of state policy, as it is in Europe." *Don.*—"That may safely be affirmed of all the administrations, which preceded Mr. Monroe's. I fear there is not much room for congratulations

on that subject now. *Tit.*—"What facts are there to justify such a fear?" *Don.*—"In the administration which preceded the present, a college was chartered in this city, by the general government. *Tit.*—"I have heard something of this. I think the professors are of the Baptist denomination." *Don.*—"They are. This body of professors say, they have between two and three hundred thousand members. It was foreseen that the contest in the presidential election for Mr. Monroe's successor, would be violent and that the present incumbent who was the cabinet candidate, would be elected with difficulty, if elected at all. He was in the cabinet and knew how powerful an influence religious considerations have on political affairs in New-England and in Europe, where he had resided many years, as an ambassador. The College was chartered, called the Columbian College and the professorships filled with Baptists, and the head of the institution, had been a Baptist theological professor. In fact it may be said to be a Baptist theological institution founded by the general government; and who can doubt that this measure was adopted on the principle of making religion an engine of state policy? He who now fills the presidential chair is a Unitarian, and worships, if it may be called worship, in a Unitarian chapel. But at the same time, he is a pew holder in a Presbyterian, and in an Episcopal church. It is generally thought that through his influence, a Unitarian was elected in the preceding administration, a chaplain to congress. The enemies of the Saviour's divinity must be flattered in Boston, to preserve the northern interest for the next election. Beyond all question politicians here began to understand,

how powerful the religious principle is, and that, provided it can be well managed, nothing is more effectual for procuring success to political projects. While the Almighty is disregarded, the Holy Scriptures disrespected, and the dominion of the Lord Jesus over the nations set at nought by political men, all religion is considered as folly, and it is thought like all the other follies of men, it may be managed so as to subserve party purposes, and schemes of personal aggrandizement. The judgment of the Almighty a few years in the burning of the capitol and the palace, has not been regarded. Ungoldliness is as unblushing as ever, the defalcations of public officers undiminished. Sabbath violation more gross, and intriguing for honours and emolument growing still more active." *Tit.*—"Do the clergy here reprove the vices of the great?" *Don.*—"You know that it is rarely done in any place remote from the seat of government. Here, so far as I can learn, it is not once thought of? All are flattering the great." *Tit.*—"O that we had here a Daniel, a Jeremiah, an Ezekial, or an Amos!"

(For the Witness.)

HOME.

Where is the being whose heart does not feel a thrill of pleasure at the thought of Home? The sympathies of whose nature are not strongly excited at a thousand endearing recollections, a thousand sweet associations which the idea of home, always creates? It is the haven of rest, of hope, and joy, to every sojourner in this world of care and disappointment; it is the watch word to every better feeling of the heart.

If we are prosperous and happy what a heaven of