

manist, you might have lived and died a Romanist;" let it be your reply: "Possibly so it might have been; but it is not less cause for my humble gratitude to Him who makes me to differ, that the Bible and not the Koran came into contact with my mind, and that I was trained to know the true traditions of the inspired word of life, and to turn a deaf ear to those inventions of men which might have corrupted my heart, and perilled my soul." Do men less value civilization because it may be true that, if born in other times or in other circumstances, they might have been contented with what now they would esteem as barbarism? Is liberty the less prized, or is the distinction between freedom and bondage less real, because the degraded vassal of tyranny loves his chains, or in other circumstances might have been as free as we are? Our thanksgiving for distinguishing grace is to include the circumstances of our lot, the means, the appliances, the providential arrangements by which the result on which we congratulate ourselves was brought about. Paul blesses God for electing love! We can do this without despising others, and without extolling ourselves.

2. We see how eternal election, so alarming to many, may be viewed as a doctrine fraught with comfort. Only know your election; what is this but to know that God loves you, that his covenant is established with you? What a repose to the soul, and what a stimulus to spiritual action, that every gain made in the spiritual life is the development of an eternal purpose of grace! That every step taken in the spiritual journey is a nearer approach to a blessed consummation infallibly secured! Only let our election be once made sure by our calling; and let our calling be proved by the appropriate tests. And hence,

3. We may observe how different a thing election is, in its connection with life and practice, from what by many it is supposed to be. In is no less an election to holiness than to glory. We cannot know that God hath chosen us or others, apart from the consciousness or perception of the fruits of faith, and progress in sanctification. What a motive here to holy diligence! what an answer to every plea of indolence, or false security, as if once elected and knowing ourselves the elect, we may con-