

this first class hold that God has foreordained the sins of the wicked in the sense (as appears from a subsequent statement) of being the efficient cause of their sins, whereas all classes of Calvinists utterly abhor such a sentiment, and hold that, while God is the author of all good, His decree with reference to sin is permissive merely, and that He neither is, nor can be the author or approver of sin. Thus, in the Shorter Catechism, it is said that "our first parents, being left to the freedom of their own will," (so that the decrees of God did not interfere in any way with that freedom) "fell from the estate wherein they were created;" and the Confession says, "this their sin God was pleased according to His wise and holy counsel to permit, having proposed to order it to His own glory." No one, we may state, ever held that God had anything more to do with subsequent sins than He had with the first; though Arminians talk about necessitated damnation, as if Calvinists held that the decree of God interfered with the free agency of men, and laid them under a necessity of sinning. We might point out other equally gross misrepresentations on the same subject by this writer; but our readers will infer *his* pretensions to be considered competent to deal with such questions from the fact that, if his accounts were true, the late Dr. Chalmers, than whom few indeed have ever been honoured to render more distinguished services to the interests of religion, and who is known the world over as a great man of the deepest piety, held that God is the efficient cause or author of sin, and never made a free offer of salvation to sinners!

This writer says that "many Calvinists deny the foreknowledge of God, by asserting that He can know the future only because, and only so far as He has foreordained it." With how much justice he makes the charge, is evident from the fact that not a single Calvinistic writer can be found in any age who does not maintain the omniscience and foreknowledge of God; while, on the other hand, there are Arminian writers who have denied these attributes, and others have shewn that they would gladly enough have done so, could they have seen any likely way of evading the Scripture evidence on the subject. Calvinistic divines have on Scriptural grounds ascribed to God the knowledge of all possible things, of all things that His almighty power could effect, whether these should ever be brought into existence or not; and His foreknowledge of all things that should actually come to pass they have represented as being based on His eternal decree to effect or permit these things. His eternal foreknowledge, for example, of the existence of the world was based on His purpose to create the world; and His foreknowledge of the fallen state of man was based on His purpose to permit the fall, when He knew that man in the circumstances in which he was placed would fall into sin. Because they have done so, this writer represents them as denying the foreknowledge of God! Would any Arminian say that the foreknowledge of God that the world should exist, was irrespective of His purpose to create it? On the other hand, Dr. Adam Clarke, the Methodist commentator, was driven to deny the essential omniscience of God in order to escape from the peculiarities of Calvinism. Porter in his *Compend of Methodism* (which is used in the Methodist church in the United States as a text book in the training of local preachers), when he answers the question, "did not God foreknow who would reject the gospel and be lost,"