

Accordingly, God's guardian love deliberately purposes that his children should attend this perfecting school and calls them to it.

school, and that they are called to it for this purpose.

As a call cannot be from eternity, but must be given in time ; so those to whom this call came, were, when it arrived, ones that had the love of God in them. It is they "that love God" that are called according to the purpose here mentioned. The special object of this call is again stated and submitted for our approval.

This appointment to suffer is expressly and fixedly made by the Divine will, because it is only by being conformed to the image of the Son in suffering, that they could be conformed to his image in the glory that shall follow.

would read thus : For them that love God whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate, &c. Or, in other words, whom he did foresee, he did foreappoint, &c.

It has been truly remarked, that in point of order, St. Paul makes God's prescience precede God's predestination ; not God's predestination precede God's prescience.—(Faber on Election, p. 272.) To place predestination before foreknowledge, is to destroy foreknowledge altogether, by reducing it to present knowledge of existing decrees.

As the apostle speaks of foreknowledge as preceding predestination, so this foreknowledge has reference to character,—to them that love God, that had already acquired the true principle of personal holiness. And personally holy ones being the characters foreknown, are the ones that are predestinated. Now when it is as such they are predestinated, it must be for the attainment of something that is subsequent to the genuine commencement of a holy life. Accordingly, the whole context shows, that it is a predestination of THEM THAT LOVE GOD, to be "conformed to the image of the Son" as "*a man of sorrows and*

If, then, a scene of suffering is the place to learn the highest kind of obedience, if those who already hate sin and love God may be perfected here ; we are prepared to hear that their Heavenly Father purposes to place them in this training

Ver. 28. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be conformed to the image of his Son*, that he might be the first-born among many brethren."

"Whom" obviously refers to them that love God, and that are called according to the purpose here alluded to. If, then, the antecedent of the relative were expressed again, the passage

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