

"In fine, (says Piscator) it must be confessed that God has from eternity so absolutely and efficaciously decreed all things, that no man can do any more good than he actually does, or omit more evil than he actually omits." "Evil exists," (says Dr. Vaughan) "but the question is, how not as to the particular process, for that is revealed, but how, as to the origination and authorship of the plan. Was it by *surprise* upon God, or was it with his *permission*, with his *concurrence*, by his *appointment*? I venture to affirm BY HIS APPOINTMENT. To say God *permitted* the fall is a foolish term; he ordained the fall, that he might get himself glory out of it."*

Such statements as these coming as they do from such sources, we are bold to say, are fitted to make more infidels than the writings of Voltaire, Rousseau and all other sceptics put together. In his work on the human will, JONATHAN EDWARDS says:

There is no inconsistency in supposing that God may hate a thing as it is in itself, and considered simply as evil, and yet that it may be his will it should come to pass considering all consequences. I believe, there is no person of good understanding, who will venture to say, he is certain that it is impossible it should be best, taking in the whole compass and extent of existence, and all consequences in the endless series of events, that there should be such a thing as moral evil in the world. And, if so, it will certainly follow, that an infinitely wise Being, who always chooses what is best, must choose that there should be such a thing; and, if so, then such a choice is not an evil but a wise and holy choice; and if so, then that providence which is agreeable to such a choice, is a wise and holy providence."†

Turnbull, quoted by Edwards, says:

"If the author and Governor of all things be infinitely perfect, then whatever is, is right; of all possible systems he hath chosen the best: and consequently, there is no *absolute evil* in the universe.—This being the case all the seeming *imperfections* or *evils* in it are only in a *partial* view; and, with respect to the *whole* system, they are *goods*."

If such statements as these are correct, then it follows as a necessary consequence that all the views of infidels, and deists, and atheists, and fatalists, and Calvinists, and socialists are upon the whole not wrong but right. All the slavery, and Sabbath breaking, and war, and wickedness of every degree and description, perpetrated in our world, are upon the whole best, they are upon the whole just what God wishes them to be. Evil is upon the whole not evil but good. In one word, whatever is, is right; and there can be nothing wrong in any part of the universe. But surely

* See Evangelical witness, page 190.

† Part. IV. section 9.