

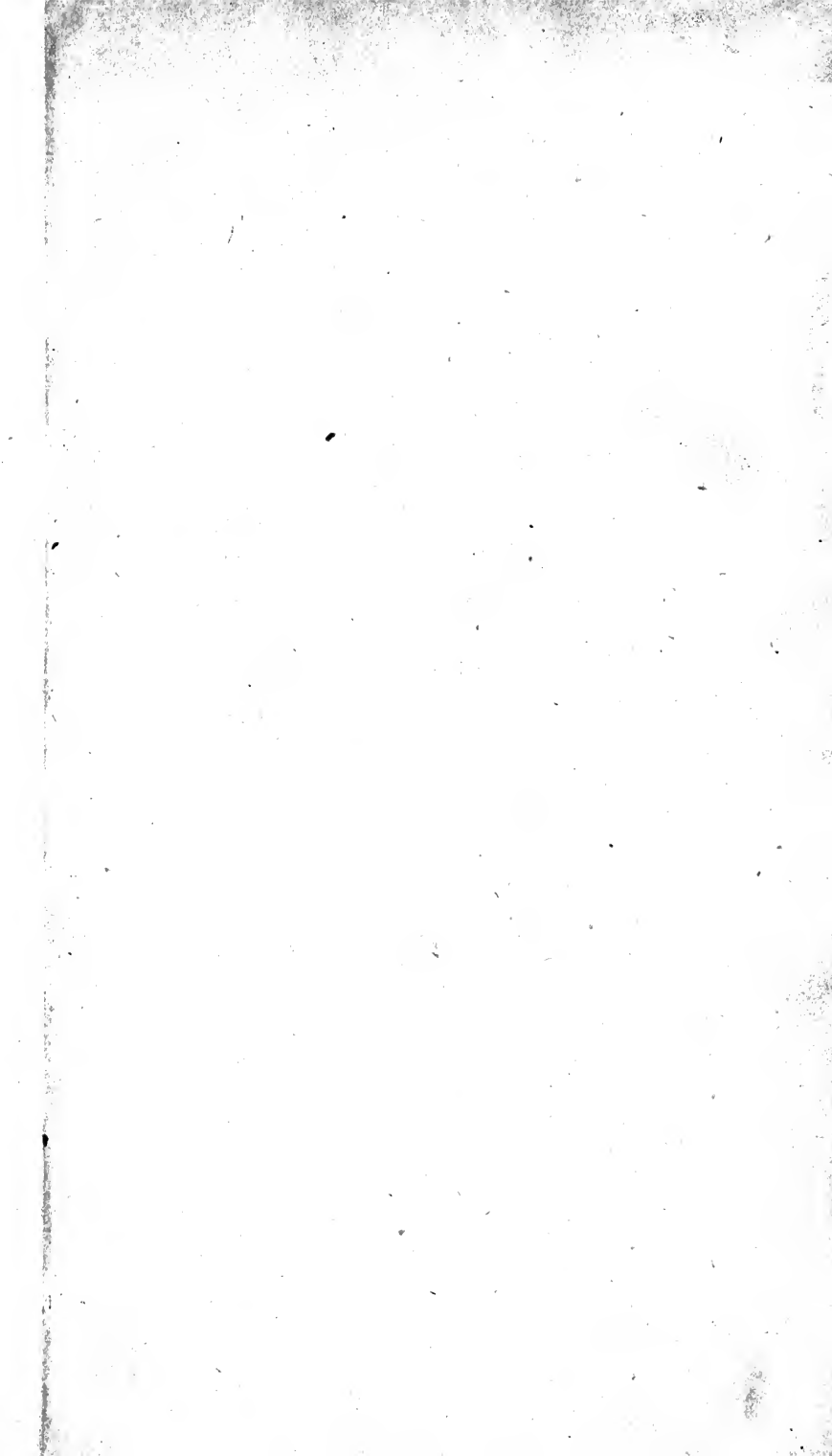


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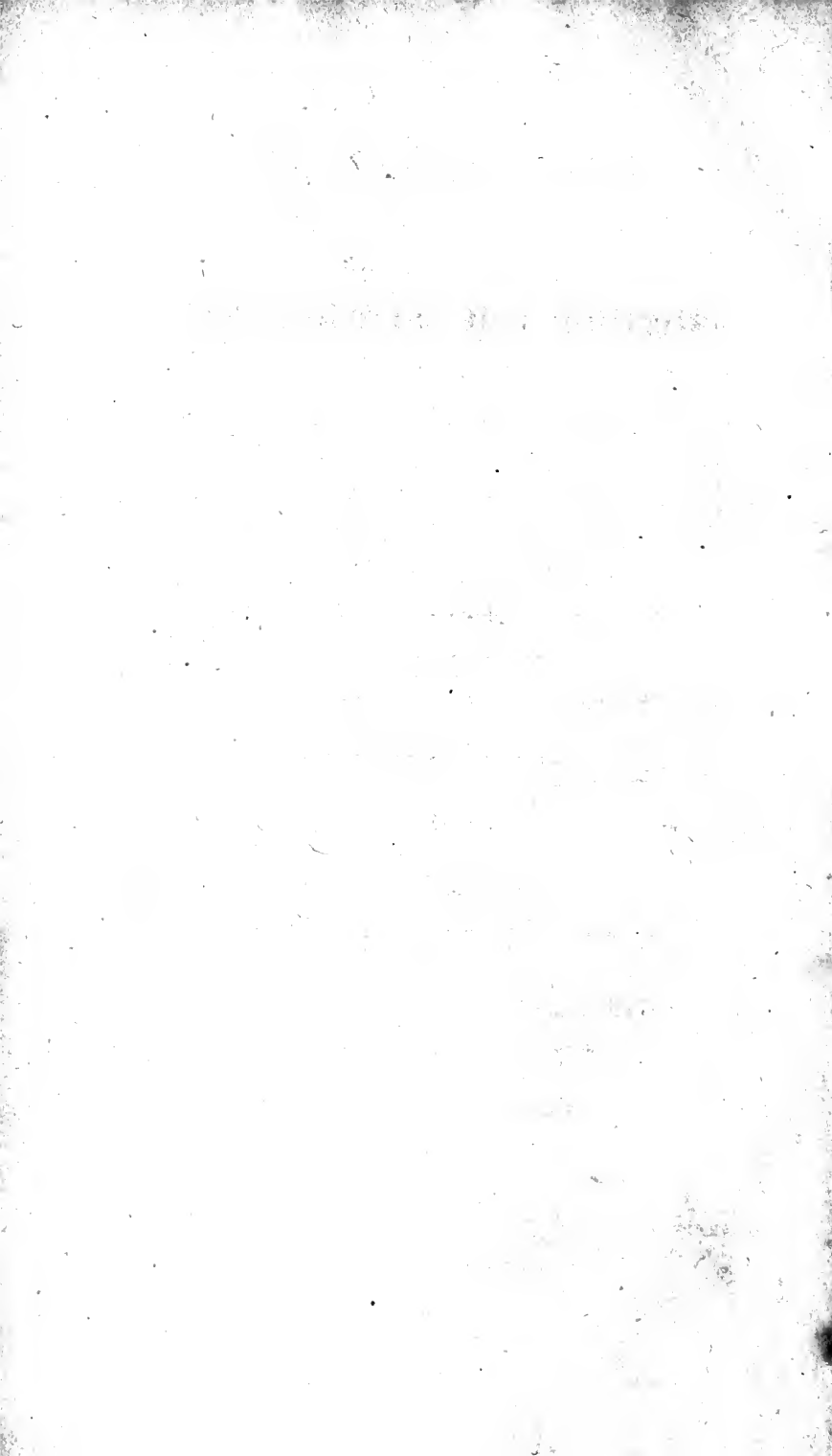
DR. WHITBY

ON THE

FIVE POINTS,

&c. &c.





A

DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

I. THE TRUE IMPORT OF THE WORDS

Election and Reprobation,

AND THE THINGS SIGNIFIED BY THEM IN THE HOLY SCRIPTURE.

II. The Extent of Christ's Redemption.

III. THE GRACE OF GOD;

WHERE IT IS ENQUIRED, WHETHER IT BE VOUCHSAFED SUFFICIENTLY TO THOSE WHO IMPROVE IT NOT, AND IRRESISTIBLY TO THOSE WHO DO IMPROVE IT; AND WHETHER MEN BE WHOLLY PASSIVE IN THE WORK OF THEIR REGENERATION.

IV. THE LIBERTY OF THE WILL

IN A STATE OF TRIAL AND PROBATION.

V. The Perseverance or Defectibility of the Saints,

WITH SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE STATE OF HEATHENS, THE PROVIDENCE AND PRESCIENCE OF GOD.

AND LASTLY,

AN ANSWER TO THREE OBJECTIONS AGAINST THE DOCTRINES ASSERTED.

To which is added,

A Postscript,

IN ANSWER TO SOME OF DOCTOR EDWARDS'S REMARKS.

BY DANIEL WHITBY, D. D.

And late Chantor of the Cathedral Church of Sarum.

THIRD EDITION, CORRECTED.

LONDON:

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TO THIS EDITION



THE present is generally designated “a wise and thinking age;” and of this, perhaps one of the best proofs that could be adduced, is the encouragement which it affords to the republication of excellent literary productions by famous men of former ages. It is a circumstance highly honourable to the character of the times, that the labours of our predecessors are thought deserving, not only of preservation, but of publicity: And equally creditable is the inference implied,—that the attempt in modern writers to equal them, in their several walks of excellence, would be one of extreme difficulty. On this principle it is, and with hopes of such countenance, that the present edition of Doctor Whitby’s masterly DISCOURSE ON THE FIVE POINTS has been undertaken.

Besides, Doctor Gill’s book, which professes to be an answer to these Five Points, has recently been republished; and it seems requisite that the readers of that work should have an opportunity of hearing both sides of the dispute.

It is no inconsiderable honour to the Established Church, and must prove a high gratification to every true member of her, to know, that the best defenders of the truths of God against the assumptions of Calvinism, have been clergymen in communion with her. While her general constitution has been drawn up on the broad basis of indulgence to weak consciences in particular opinions respecting the non-essentials of religion, her services contain repeated and unequivocal avowals of the willingness of God, that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. See the following Preface, page viii.

Whole pages might be occupied in recording the names of her illustrious men, who have declared their belief that Jesus Christ died for all mankind. Of this class were Overall, Thompson, Hales, Taylor, Goad, Womack, Heylin, Pierce, Barrow, Cudworth, Tillotson, Stillingfleet, Pearson, Plaifere, Patrick, Burnet, Waterland, Bull, Sellon, Horsley, Fletcher, and Wesley;*—men, whose talents,

* One of his friends, the Rev. Doctor Adam Clarke, has now in course of publication an extensive and learned work on the Holy Scriptures, which reflects the highest credit on himself, for the execution of it, and on the enterprising character of the body of Christians with whom he is united, for their liberal encouragement of it. On all the passages which relate to this controversy, the author speaks “as one having authority:” his language is remarkably decided.

learning, and piety, will be had in everlasting remembrance. Nor will posterity be unmindful of the literary merit and moral worth of Tomline, Ryder, Whitaker, Gisborne, Cunninghame, Eyton, Daubeny, Smyth, and several other excellent clergymen of the present day, whose attachment to the doctrine of General Redemption is no secret.

It is also greatly to the credit of our national establishment, that she has of late years produced no writers of eminence in favour of pure Calvinism. Toplady, Hervey, and Scott, are the only clergymen who have, in modern times, distinguished themselves by their attempts in its defence. They have in consequence been much admired by men of the same kidney, and have collected around them a great number of retainers. The FIRST evinced himself to be deficient in learning and genius: his main talent lay in the exercise of the low arts of calumny, impudence, falsification, and buffoonery. His works, as might have been expected, are now in little repute, and seldom quoted, except for the purpose of shewing to what lengths, in support of his opinions, a violent Calvinist may be driven. The style of the SECOND is a turgid outrage of all that is natural and lively. Not content with placing Calvinism on stilts, and decking out her decayed carcase in gorgeous apparel, a zealot in her service, he spoiled all his semblance of humility and pretensions to superior sanctity, by penning, almost in the article of death, those scandalous "Eleven Letters to Wesley,"* in defence of his darling Aspasio, which are a disgrace to his memory, and of which his greatest admirers are ashamed. The THIRD, who is still living, professes to be of a somewhat more moderate cast in his Calvinism; but his *exquisite* knowledge of any other doctrines than those of his favourite, may be discovered by perusing one of the notes† in his "Force of Truth," in which he relates his conversion from Arminianism. One thing is evident from the tenor of the whole note, that Mr. Scott was at no period of his life an Arminian, and that he never ascertained by actual inspection even the outlines of the sentiments espoused and propagated by the celebrated Arminius.‡

Among those of her sons of whom the Church of England has just reason to boast, is DOCTOR DANIEL WHITBY, who, in his admirable Paraphrase and Commentary on the New Testament, has done

* See a more particular account of this affair in Volume second, page 165, of the Rev. Walter Sellon's Works, of which a new edition, in two volumes octavo, has lately been published.

† Ninth Edition, 12mo, page 7, &c.

‡ What the genuine sentiments of this amiable and greatly-injured man were, the British public will soon have an opportunity of learning; as an English translation of all his works has been some time in a course of preparation for the press. A life of Arminius, by a clergyman in every respect qualified to do justice to his subject, is also in a state of great forwardness.

more than any single preceding writer in defending the doctrines of Christianity, and in clearing up the difficulties which occur in that portion of Holy Writ, but especially in the Apostolical epistles. His authority on biblical subjects is very highly respected; and his decisions have many times been quoted, with every mark of approval, by Commentators and Divines of different views and persuasions. Uncommonly valuable as his labours on the New Testament have been deemed, his "Discourse on the Five Points" has not been held in any inferior estimation. It has been recommended, by some of the highest dignitaries of our Church, and by other profound divines, as a work in which may successfully be sought an able elucidation of the doctrines of Arminianism, and the arguments by which they are supported. And, certainly, it must be admitted, by all impartial judges of the controversy, that the Doctor's is, in every respect, an astonishing production; and it will remain in the church of Christ a lasting monument of his vast erudition, his masculine genius, and his unwearied industry. The testimonies of the Ancient Fathers in favour of Universal Redemption, have, in his hands, and by his mode of applying them, been most decisive in the award of victory to the cause which he espoused. Every Arminian will cordially unite with him in his general arguments, except in a few places where his opinions respecting original sin, and the operations of the Holy Spirit, are not very clearly expressed, but have in some instances the appearance of leaning too much towards Semi-Pelagianism. He seems also, in cutting off some of the enemy's resources, to have been too confined in his descants on particular texts, which by no canon of criticism are to be restricted to the Apostolic age, but which relate to every subsequent period of the Christian Church.

When the publication of a standard work similar to this, is announced, the Calvinists generally assure us, that "the arguments which it attempts to refute, have been long since abandoned." This objection is partly founded in fact; for no other system of religious doctrines has so changed its scenery as Calvinism has done. In the last age, this old hag was remarkable for her unblushing effrontery in preaching up absolute reprobation, infant-damnation, and the other horrible consequences of her unscriptural dogmas. In the present age, conforming herself to the advancement made in knowledge, she has by various expedients tried to cast a veil over her ugly features; and by means of certain modern refinements, she has partially succeeded.* But into whatever differing forms it may be

* To smooth down the unsightly asperities of Calvinism, appears now to be *the order of the day*. This system of refinement is carried into every department of literature into which a Calvinist is capable of conveying it. Calvin's Institutes are said to have been lately translated again from the Original

moulded, and however specious and imposing its present garb may be, Calvinism is alike an insult to the expressions of God's universal compassion to man, and a prolific principle of vanity to the individual who entertains it. It is true, that its premises, when untenable, are periodically changed; but whether openly avowed by a Crisp, or wrapped up in mysterious terms by a Williams, it, in both instances, when examined, bears the same revolting character as a perversion of Christianity, and is derogatory to the government of a merciful God. And the arguments which formerly sufficed to counteract its evil influence, and overturn its superficial reasoning, will not experience any additional difficulty in penetrating through its present thin disguises, and shewing it in all its native deformity.

It has also been objected, that "works like this enter into learned disputes about the antiquity of either set of doctrines, and the opinion of the Christian Fathers on these matters, for which nobody chooses now to contend"—Very true; because this question has long since been set at rest, by its being determined in favour of Arminianism. The combatants on Calvin's side are not now the Puritan divines, who in learning and abilities were at least equal to their opponents. In the hands of such men, the close examination of this point, so far from being accounted of trifling consequence, at that period excited much interest. But those mighty ones have passed away; and, with them, the qualifications requisite for conducting with any probability of success that part of the controversy. Their places are occupied by men, the primary object in whose tuition has apparently been to qualify them for quibbling on the oracles of God, and for controverting his plainest and most gracious declarations. Ashamed of speaking out as distinctly as Father Calvin had done, they invent a new vocabulary of terms in which to shroud their meaning; and, instructed in the art of display, they utter with an air of plausibility this jargon, which they nick-name *Metaphysics*. But on the minds of men who study things as well as words, and

Latin, by one Mr. John Allen; that is, he being a literary jobber, has been employed to amend and modernise the language and sentiments of the former translator, who, in his version, is too sternly faithful for the delicate feelings of the present generation. In performing this piece of service, Mr. A. has adopted the modish contrivance of his party. It is known to every scholar, that the virulent Calvin, in this work of piety, as well as in his others, occasionally indulged the malignity of his natural disposition in pouring forth a torrent of abuse on all that dared to contradict his doctrines or statements. To keep his "unpolished" epithets out of sight, mark the artifice of this his notable translator;—He says in the preface, "Almost all the writers of that age, writing chiefly in a dead language, were accustomed to speak of their adversaries in terms which the polished manners of the modern times have discarded, and which would now be deemed illiberal and scurrilous. Where these cases occur, the Translator has not thought himself bound to a literal rendering of every word, or at liberty to refine them entirely away, but has adopted such expressions as he apprehends will give a faithful representation of the spirit of the author to modern readers."—By this ingenious process of filtration, the works of Rabelais himself might be cleansed and made unexceptionable. To a translation, in which such liberties are taken with the Original, Mr. A. should have prefixed the more characteristic title of *Calvin Travesty*.

who wish to attach a correct idea to every expression which they hear or read, the labours of these modern retailers of Calvinism will have no baneful effect. They can only operate and impose on the unthinking, or those who have been educated under strong prejudices, or on those who have their own special reasons for wishing that Calvinism in any of its modifications may in the end prove to be a true system.

The latest scion grafted on Calvinism, and that which is in most fashionable repute, is the scheme invented by the late Doctor Williams. In the construction and completion of it, which was the work of several years, this pious man thought that he was doing God service. The allusion which has already been made to it, is a proper indication of its tendency. His name, rather than those of Doctor Whitby's admirers, is introduced here, for the purpose of evincing how far prejudice can actuate the mind even of a good man, and cause him to misrepresent what he does not like and is unable to refute. In the direction for the choice of books, at the close of his "Christian Preacher," which is dedicated to his students, he has given his opinion of this work, among others. And when it is viewed as announcing the fears of an enemy, it must be construed into negative praise of no mean consideration. His words are, "*Whitby's Discourse on the Five Points, Election, Redemption, Original Sin, Efficacious Grace, and Perseverance*, is a bold effort to overturn the leading doctrines of the Protestant Reformers, by learned obscurity, artful sophistry, and disgusting tautology."—It would seem, from this abridged and false title, in connexion with what follows it, that Whitby had written against the doctrines enumerated: Whereas, in truth, this great man did not write against the scriptural doctrine of Election, but against the doctrine of the *absolute and unconditional election* of some men to life eternal, and, what Calvin considered to be its inseparable attendant, the *eternal and unconditional reprobation* of all the residue of mankind.* He did not oppose the doctrine of the Redemption of men by the sacrificial death of Christ; his object was to vindicate this glorious doctrine in its scriptural extent, against the encroachments which have been made upon it, in comparatively modern times, by Calvin and his disciples. The term "efficacious grace" is ambiguous, and does not occur in Whitby's title-page. He undertakes to prove, that the grace

* "Many indeed, as if they wished to avert odium from God, admit ELECTION in such a way as to deny that any one is REPROBATED. But this is puerile and absurd, because ELECTION itself could not EXIST without being opposed to REPROBATION. Whom God PASSES BY, therefore, he REPROBATES, and from NO OTHER CAUSE than his DETERMINATION to exclude them from the inheritance which he predestines for his children."

Calvin's Institutes, by Allen; Lib. iii, Cap. 23, Sec. 1.

of God is so far "efficacious" as to produce, in the minds of all who hear the gospel, during their probationary state, moral power to comply with its requirements; and to refute that doctrine which represents "the elect" as necessitated to repent and believe the gospel, while the immense multitude of the non-elect are required on pain of everlasting damnation to do that, which God in his word declares to be impossible,—to come to Jesus Christ without being "drawn" by a divine influence. (John vi, 44.) The like may be said of the "Perseverance of the Saints:" Whitby's object is to refute the Genevan doctrine which secures eternal salvation to those who have once been sanctified, though they should afterwards, like David, fall into the most horrid crimes.

With regard to *Original Sin*, it is well known that it is not one of "the Five Points" in dispute between Calvinists and Arminians; and, consequently, there is no discourse on it in Doctor Whitby's book, nor is it once mentioned in his title-page. Why Doctor Williams, in giving the title of it, neglected to mention the discourse on *the Freedom of the Will*, and inserted *Original Sin* in its place, his friends must explain. Whether done by mistake or design, it is equally disreputable to his accuracy and candour. How correct his report of its contents is, may be inferred from the following observations:—

He charges Doctor Whitby with making "a bold effort to overturn the leading doctrines of the Protestant Reformers." He might with greater truth have accused him of an effort to overturn "the leading doctrines" of the Popish Jansenists and Dominicans and of the Mahometan Fatalists. Some of the Reformers did not receive any of the peculiarities of Calvinism as the truths of God; and of many more of them it could not with propriety be said, that Calvin's dogmas were their "leading doctrines."† If it be a sin to disbelieve and endeavour to overturn a doctrine patronized by a Reformer, then Dr. Williams himself must plead guilty. For, to the grief of many of his Calvinistic Friends, to whom the preterition of the greater portion of men was a familiar and comfortable idea, he has attempted (with what degree of success, is another question,) to separate the doctrine of *unconditional election* from that of *unconditi-*

† When the Protestant religion began first to be published, there was a variety of opinions among the Reformers upon the subject of predestination; for Luther, Calvin, and Beza maintained one system, while Erasmus, Melanethon, Bullinger, Sarcenius, Latimer, and many other eminent Divines, were of contrary sentiments; and they were followed in the University of Heidelberg by George Sohnius, at Cambridge by Peter Baro, in the United Provinces by John Holman, Anastatius, Veluanus, Hubert Duifhysius, Sncanus, and other considerable men. But notwithstanding these differences, a brotherly charity and harmony was preserved among them.—See Brandt's *Life of Arminius*. Heylin's *Historia Quinqu-Articularis*. General Dictionary, Article, Arminius, Note [A].

onal reprobation,—an attempt, of which the Reformer Calvin most heartily disapproved. See a preceding note, page 9.

Mark here the force of this Rhetoric: we are told that the book is designed to “overturn,” not opinions of comparatively small moment, but “the LEADING DOCTRINES of the Protestant Reformers,” and that the execution is as bad as the design, being replete with “learned obscurity, artful sophistry, and disgusting tautology.” Who, after reading this account, will venture to examine such a wretched “effort?” It is manifest that Doctor Williams understood what he was doing, when he thus affected to despise the learned and judicious Whitby.

He commences his remarks by paying a kind of tribute of approbation to Whitby’s learning. But he intimates that this *learning* is of such an *obscure* sort as to be unintelligible to him. It is related of Dr. Samuel Johnson, that when he was once engaged in a dispute, his opponent said to him, “I do not understand you, Sir.”—“Perhaps not,” replied the stern combatant, “I can give you *arguments*, but I cannot give you an *understanding* to comprehend them.” This keen remark might be applied to the complaint here preferred against Whitby’s “learned obscurity,” were it not obvious that the defect lies rather in the *mills* than in the *understandings* of the Calvinistic brotherhood. They do not find it convenient to retain an attachment to their favorite principles, and at the same time to *understand* Whitby’s arguments. Here is the true origin of the alleged “obscurity.”

The charge of “artful sophistry” is then introduced; and thus, in a manner most singularly offensive, it is intimated, that this venerable author did not write from conviction, but with a fixed design to delude his readers,—an allegation which is utterly groundless, and not proper to be made by any man that has the least pretensions to the manners of a christian and the courtesy of a scholar.

The Doctor also complains of Whitby’s “disgusting tautology.” Whitby’s cogent and powerful reasoning seems to have hurt the Doctor’s feelings. And who would not have been as highly provoked as the Doctor, on finding, into whatever sinuous path a Calvinist turned, he was sure to meet with the same sturdy warrior dealing his blows around him with terrible effect? But, it should be observed, that if such a thing as “tautology” is to be discovered in this book, (of which some proof is needed,) the blame falls, not so much on Whitby, as on the patrons of that cause which he thought it his duty to oppose. They have produced the same wranglings, under a great variety of forms; and, on this account, Whitby was compelled on some occasions, when he met the same objections,

to repeat the substance of his former arguments: And when their tremendous bearing on the Doctor's favourite system is considered, it is no wonder that the repetition of them proved highly "disgusting." Ungenerous Whitby! to "disgust" your opponents, as Achilles "disgusted" the Trojans, when he dragged the dead body of Hector round the walls of Troy.

It is natural to enquire, what could induce the late pious Doctor to give such a character of Whitby's writings? It must have been a desire to prevent them from being allowed a place in the "Christian Preacher's Library;" and this desire has originated in a conviction that Whitby is a formidable adversary to the Calvinistic cause.

Having thus briefly vindicated the author and this his work, little more is left than to state that the present edition is printed *verbatim* from that of 1735. So minutely has it been followed, that, in all places where seeming grammatical inaccuracies occur, they have been suffered to remain as the author left them. The literary execution of the work is in the usual style of that age; and to have attempted any alteration of it, would have been to despoil it of its distinguishing beauties, and to divest it of the character appropriate to the period in which it was written.

Doctor Whitby was particular in translating, in a very able and intelligent manner, all the quotations which he made, in the text and notes, from the learned languages. The small number of passages which were left by him without a translation, will be found rendered into English in the notes, and distinguished as the work of the Editor by inverted commas, and his signature subjoined to them.

THE EDITOR.

Leeds, 24th October, 1816.

THE

D. R. E. F. A. C. E.

TO THE READER.

THEY who have known my education may remember, that I was bred up seven years in the University under men of the Calvinistical persuasion, and so could hear no other doctrine, or receive no other instructions, from the men of those times, and therefore had once firmly entertained all their doctrines. Now that which first moved me to search into the foundation of these doctrines, viz. *The Imputation of Adam's sin to all his posterity*, was the strange consequences of it; this made me search the more exactly into that matter, and by reading Joshua Placæus, with the answer to him, and others on that subject, I soon found cause to judge that there was no truth in it.

I. After some years' study I met with one who seemed to be a Deist, and telling him that there were arguments sufficient to prove the truth of christian faith, and of the holy scriptures, he scornfully replied, *Yes; and you will prove your doctrine of the imputation of original sin from the same scripture*; intimating that he thought that doctrine, if contained in it, sufficient to invalidate the truth and the authority of the scripture. And by a little reflection I found the strength of his argument ran thus: "That the truth of holy scripture could no otherwise be proved to any man that doubted of it, but by reducing him to some absurdity, or the denial of some avowed principle of reason." Now this imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, so as to render them obnoxious to God's wrath, and to eternal damnation, only because they were born of the race of Adam, seemed to him as contradictory to the common reason of mankind, as any thing could be, and so contained as strong an argument against the truth of scripture, if that doctrine was contained in it, as any

could be offered for it. And upon this account I again searched into the places usually alleged to confirm that doctrine, and found them fairly capable of other interpretations. One doubt remained still, whether antiquity did not give suffrage for this doctrine; and here I found the words of Vossius very positive, that *Ecclesia Catholica sic semper judicavit*, 'the catholick church always so judged;' which he endeavours to prove by testimonies from Ignatius to St. Austin. This set me on the laborious task of perusing the writings of antiquity till that time; and, upon an impartial search, I found that all the passages he had collected were impertinent, or at least insufficient to prove the point; yea, I found evidence sufficient of the truth of that which Peter du Moulin plainly owns, "that, from the time of the apostles to St. Austin's time, all the ecclesiastical writers seem to write incautiously of this matter, and to incline to what he calls Pelagianism." And of this having made a collection, I finished "A Treatise of Original Sin," in Latin, which hath been composed about twenty years, though I have not thought it advisable to publish it.

Another time I discoursed with a physician, who said, There was some cause to doubt the truth of scripture; "For," saith he, "it seems plainly to hold forth the doctrine of absolute election and reprobation, in the ninth chapter to the Romans, which is attended with more evident absurdities than can be charged on them who question the truth of scripture; and also seemeth as repugnant to the common notion which mankind have received of divine justice, goodness, and sincerity, as even the saying that God, considering man, *in massâ perditâ*, 'as lost in Adam,' may delude him with false miracles, seemeth repugnant to his truth." And reading, in Mr. Dodwell, a that bold stroke, that "St. Paul, being bred a Pharisee, spake there, and is to be interpreted, *ex mente Phariseorum*, 'according to the doctrine of the Pharisees concerning fate, which they had borrowed from the Stoicks';" I set myself to make the best and the exactest search I could into the sense of the apostle in that chapter, and the best help I had to attain to the sense of that chapter which I have given in my paraphrase, I received from a manuscript of Dr. Patrick, the late worthy bishop of Ely, on that subject. Thence I went on to examine all that was urged in favour of these doctrines from the holy scripture, and this produced

one considerable part of these discourses. And it was no small confirmation of the sense both of the places here produced against, and rescued from, the false interpretations of the adversaries of this doctrine,

First. That I found I still sailed with the stream of antiquity, seeing only one, St. Austin, with his two boatswains, Prosper and Fulgentius, tugging hard against it, and often driven back into it by the strong current of scripture, reason, and of common sense.

II. *Secondly.* I also found that the heretics of old used many of the same texts of scripture, to the same purposes, as the patrons of these doctrines do at present; as hath been oft observed in these discourses.

Thirdly. That the Valentinians, Marcionites, Basilidians, Manichees, Priscillianists, and other heretics, were condemned, by the ancient champions of the church, upon the same accounts, and from the same scriptures and reasons, which we now use against these Decretalists; and the principles on which they founded all their consultations of them were these,

(1.) That it is not our nature, but our will and choice of that from which we might abstain, which was the root and fountain of all our wickedness; "For otherwise," say they, τῆ ποιησαντος ἦν ἔγκλημα, "that 'God who is the author of our nature, must be the 'author of our sin';" this doctrine they unanimously teach, from Justin Martyr and Irenæus, to St. Austin, who declares, *naturâ malas animas nullo modo esse posse*,^b 'that it is impossible, according to the definitions he had given of sin, that souls should be evil by nature.'

(2.) That we do not become sinners by our birth, and that they who say we are 'by nature children of wrath,' in the most dreadful sense, make God the author of our sin; it being God who hath established the order, in the generation of mankind, which neither he that begets, nor he that is begotten, can correct, and by whose benediction mankind increase and multiply. "An infant therefore cannot," say they, "be a sinner by his father's fault;" παῖς γὰρ ὑπὸ τῆ πατρὸς ἐ δίδωσι δικην,^c 'for a child doth not suffer punishment for his father's fault,' says Chrysostom and Theophylact: ^dΠως γὰρ τῶν γένεων ἁμαρταγόντων αὐτὸς ἀν ἐκολάσθη; 'For how should he be punished for the sin of his parents?' say Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, Isidore, Pelusiota, and Theophylact, 'this being,' saith Theophylact,

^b Lib. de duab. Anim. c. 12.

^c In Johan. 9. 2.

^d In Johan. 9. 2. Ibid. L. 2. Epist. 272.

ἢ δίκαιον, 'not just.' And this they prove from Deut. xxiv. 16. Ezek. xviii, and xxxiii. The Marcionites and Cerdonians endeavoured to prove that the God of the Old Testament, though he were just, could not be good, because he threatened to "punish the sins of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation."^e Origen answers, "That it was as little consistent with justice, as with goodness, that one man sinning, another should be punished." St. Jerom owns, *f* "That there is matter of scandal in the second commandment, it being unjust to punish one for the sin of another; but that which follows," saith he, "solves the difficulty, it being only the generation of those that hate God, as their fathers did, and who were co-partners with them in their iniquity, who are thus threatened." Theodoret saith *g* "It would be *δυσσεβές*, 'a wicked thing,' to adhere to the letter, God himself having pronounced that *'the son should not die for the iniquity of the father; but every one should die for his own sins.'*" And Cyril, of Alexandria, saith, *h* "This punishment would much exceed, *τὸν τῷ δίκαιῷ θεσμῶν*, 'the law of

^e Solent nos Hæretici sugillare, quod non sit boni Dei sermo, qui pro peccatis alterius alium plecti dicat, sed secundum ipsorum rationem qui dum legis mandatum, licet non bonum, justum tamen dicunt, ne ipsi quidem possunt offendere quomodo secundum sensum suum justitiæ suæ convenire videtur, si alius, alio peccante, puniatur. (Hom. 8. in Exod. f. 44. lit. f.) Ουδὲ γὰρ ἐνὶ ἁμαρτάνουτος ἑτέρου κολαζέσθαι ἕτερον. (Chrys. ibid.) Ουδὲ δίκαιόν ἐστι ἁμαρτίας τῶν πατέρων πασι μηδὲν ἀδικῶσι ἐπιτιθεσθαι. (Theophylact. ibid.) Similia habet Cyrillus in locum.

^f The Heretics are in the habit of calumniating us, by asserting that it cannot be the word of a good God which says, "one man must be punished for the offences of another;" but even according to the reasoning of those persons, who, while they allow the terms of the law to be just, will not call them good, they cannot discover how; in their notion, it is in accordance with God's justice that 'one man sinning, another should be punished for it' (Hom. 8. on Exodus.) 'Neither is it to be suffered that, on account of one man's sin, another be punished.' (Chrysostom on the same text.) 'Not is it just for the sins of the fathers to be imposed on their children who had not committed any offence.' (Theophylact on the same.) Cyril, on this passage, expresses himself in a similar manner.—ED.

^g Injustum videtur ut alius peccet, et alius puniatur, sed illud quod sequitur 'His qui me oderunt,' scandalum solvit, non enim ideo puniuntur quia deliquerunt patres eorum—sed quia patrum existerunt aemulatores, et oderunt Deum hereditario malo, et impietate ad ramos quoque de radice crescente. (Hieron. in Ezek. f. 194. lit. i.)

^h It appears unjust that when one man sins, another should be punished for it. But ('on them that hate me') the expression which immediately follows, solves the objection: for they are not punished for the delinquency of their fathers, but because they have stood forth as the rivals of their fathers' evil actions, and have hated God with a hereditary viciousness, and an impiety which has increased from the root to the branches.' (Jerome on Ezekiel.) ED.

^e Ὅτι γὰρ τῷ γυμῶ προσέχειν τῷ γραμματι δυσσεβές: ὁ Θεὸς δὲ δάσκει τανατία νομοδετῶν. (In Exod. qu. 40.)

^f Because it is an impious thing to adhere to the bare letter; God, who is himself the Lawgiver, teaches sentiments contrary to these.' (Theodoret on Exodus.) ED.

^h Com. in John ix. 1, 2, 3.

justice." And hence they both agree in this sense of the commandment, "That though God long deferred the parent's punishment, yet would he do it in the third and fourth generation."

And on these words, '*The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge*,' St. Jerom taking notice of the objection of the Marcionites and Cerdonians against God's goodness and justice, in that he, "winking at the sins of the fathers, punished them in the children," he answers* that "the sense of these words is this: That as it is ridiculous and inconsequent to say, '*The fathers have eaten sour grapes, therefore the children's teeth are set on edge*;' so is it unjust and perverse to say, '*The fathers sinning, the children should be punished*.'"

(3.) *Lastly*. Whereas the heretics objected, "That it was cruel for the eating of a little meat to inflict such punishment, not only upon Adam and Eve, ἰστοῖς ἡμαρτηκόσι μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς ἐξ ἐκείνων βεβλασηκόσι, 'but on those also who proceeded from their loins';" the fathers (who generally held, that the punishment of that sin was only mortality, and the want of that which Adam having lost, could not derive on his posterity,) declare that "God subjected them to this mortality, not out of anger, but out of wisdom and clemency, to beget in them a hatred of sin, and that sin might not be eternal in them." Against the doctrine of the Valentinian and Basilidian heretics, that "some men were φύσει φαῦλοι, 'evil by nature,'" or that "matrimony was evil, because it produceth seed polluted, ἐκ γενετῆς, 'from the birth,'" we have produced the testimonies of ^k Irenæus,

* Estque loci istius is sensus quomodo si quis velit dicere '*Patres uvam acerbam comederunt, et dentes filiorum obstupuerunt*, ridiculum esset, et nullam habens consequentiam, sic iniuquum est et perverse, "peccare patres, et filios nepotesque cruciari." (Hiéron. in Ezek. f. 194.)

ⁱ Οὐ τοίνυν ὀργῆς ἢ τιμωρίας ἀλλ' ὀκνονομίας σοφίας μεγίστης: ἵνα γὰρ μὴ τὴν ἡμαρτίαν τῶν ἀνθρώπων τὸ γένος ὡς αἰτίαν θανάτου γεγεννημένην μεία τὴν παράβασιν τῆς ἐντολῆς, ἐπιφέρει τῆ θανάτου τὴν ψῆφον ὁ πανσοφός. (Theodoret. in Gen. qu. 37.)

ⁱ It was not then a punishment dictated by anger, but an appointment of the most profound wisdom. He who is all-wise, subjected the race of men to the sentence of death, that they might hate sin, which, through breach of the commandment, was the cause of death. (Theodoret on Genesis.) ED.

^k Eject eum de Paradiso, et a ligno vite longe transtulit, non invidens ei lignum vite, quemadmodum quidam dicunt, sed miserans ejus, ut non perseveraret semper transgressor neque immortalis esset quod esset circa cum peccatum, et malum interminabile, et insanabile, prohibuit autem ejus transgressionem, interponens mortem, et cessare faciens peccatum. (Iren. l. 3. c. 37.) Ὁ θεὸς μεγάλην εὐεργεσίαν παρέσχε τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ τὸ μὴ διαμειναι αὐτὸν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα

Clemens of Alexandria, and others. To which add, that the doctrine which taught that *men were sinners from the birth*, is expressly condemned by 'Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, and Theophylact, in their commentaries on the 9th chapter of St. John's gospel; where they teach, (1st.) That "the question of the disciples, 'whether he that was born blind had sinned,' was, ἐρώτησις ἀνοτου καὶ ἐσφαλμένη, 'a foolish question grounded upon error,' it being therefore not to be said, that, ἤμαρτεν ἕως ἐκ γενετῆς γὰρ ἐστὶ τυφλός, 'he had sinned because he was born blind from his birth.'" (2ndly.) Because "as it was absurd to imagine that the child, who had done no evil, should be punished for the sin of his parents, so was it to imagine that he could be either a sinner before he was born, or from his birth." In fine, that the doctrine of these Manichees was anciently confuted upon the same principles by which the doctrine of these men is equally confuted, hath been abundantly made good in our fourth discourse, chap. 4th, and the 6th.

Nor seems it easy to discern any advantageous difference betwixt the doctrine of these decretalists, and those condemned heretics;

ἐν ἀμαρτία ὄντα. (Theophyl. ad Autol. l. 2. p. 103.) Τὸν θάνατον ὁ θεὸς πρὸς ἀναίρεσιν τῆς ἀμαρτίας ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἔυρατο, ἵνα μὴ ἐν ἀθανάτοις ἡμῶν ἀνατεῖλασα ἀθάνατος ᾗ. (Method. apud Epiph. Har. 64. sec. 69.) "Ἴνα μὴ ἀθάνατον ᾗ τὸ κακόν. (Naz. Orat. 38. p. 169.) Basil. Hom. Quod Deus non sit Author Mali. (To. 1. p. 368.)

'He cast him out of Paradise, and removed him to a great distance from the tree of life; not because He envied him the enjoyment of the tree of life, (as certain people have asserted,) but because He had pity on him: and that man might not always persevere in transgression, and that sin, with which he was encompassed, might not be an immortal, endless, and incurable evil, God prohibited its commission, proposing death as its punishment, and thus causing it to cease.' (Irenæus.)

'God manifested great beneficence to man, in not permitting him to remain for ever in sin.' (Theophylact.) 'God found out death in our behalf, for the abolishing of sin, that when sin sprung up in us who are endued with immortality, it also might not continue immortal.' (Methodius.)

'That this evil might not be immortal.' (Gregory Nazianzen.) 'That God might not be the author of sin.' (Basil.) ED.

Ἰ'Οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐν ἀμαρτανόλις ἐτέρε κολάζεσθαι ἕτερον, ἔπει εἰ τῷτῳ δώσομεν, κείκεινο δώσομεν, ὅτι προ γενέσεως ἤμαρτεν, ὡσπερ ἐν εἰπῶν ὅτι ἔτε ἕλος ἤμαρτεν ἔ τῷλο λέγει ὅτι ἐνὶ ἐκ γενετῆς ἀμαρτεν, ἔβως, εἰπῶν ἔτε οἱ γονεῖς αὐτῆ ἔ τῷτο εἰπεν ὅτι ἐνὶ διὰ γονεας κολασθῆναι. (Chrysost. ibid.)

'Neither is it proper, that on account of one man's sin another should be punished; since if we allow this, we must admit the following,—that he sinned before his birth. As therefore by saying "Neither hath this man sinned," he does not assert that it is lawful to sin after the birth; so by saying, "Nor have his parents sinned," he does not acknowledge that it is right for a man to be punished on account of (through) his parents.'" (Chrysostom.) ED.

or how it would be worse with those who lie under their absolute decree of reprobation, if it indeed were with them, according to the doctrine of those heretics. For,

(i.) Are they not as certainly wicked by the fall of Adam, and as certainly damned after God's decree, *de non dando auxilium necessarium ad vitandum peccatum*, 'of not affording to them the help necessary to avoid that sin to which he hath threatened damnation,' as they would be by being left under the power of the heathen Arimanius, or of the anti-god of Manes, which by the fathers are pronounced blasphemous doctrines?

(ii.) Are they not as certainly wicked, and *de massâ perditâ*, by being born of Adam, and being left remedilessly in that state of perdition, as they would be according to the doctrine of the Stoics and Origenists, the Marcionites and Valentinians, by being compounded of that flesh or matter which did necessitate them to sin? Or is there any great difference betwixt being φύσει φαῦλοι, 'naturally evil,' which was the doctrine condemned by the fathers in those heretics, and being φύσει τέκνα ὀργῆς, 'by nature children of eternal wrath,' as being *born of human nature lapsed*, which is their sense of the apostle's words?

III. It also may deserve to be considered, that the most stiff and eager patrons of these doctrines laid the foundation of them not in holy scripture, which is our only rule of faith, or in the doctrine of Christ, our only teacher and our guide in matters of faith; but rather in those impure streams of the scholastical divines, (who had but little knowledge of the *text*, and less of the *sense* of scripture,) or in the doctrine of St. Austin, who writ much and fast, and oft against his former and his better self.

Of this (not to mention Doctor Twiss and Rutherford,) the good Bishop Davenant^m is a remarkable instance; for when he comes to lay down the imputation of original sin, we hear of little or nothing from the holy scriptures, but his whole scheme is borrowed from the schools.

(1.) Thus when he tells us of God's imaginary compact with Adam, that "if he prevaricated, he should procure, not only to himself but to all his posterity, the death both to the body and soul," as he attempts not to prove this from scripture, so doth he in it mani-

^m Animadv. upon Hoard. from page 244 to 248, and from page 294 to 298.

festly contradict the express words of God, 'in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt die the death;' for that phrase, 'thou shalt die the death,' frequently occurs in the law of MOSES, and always signifies death temporal, as the places below cited" shew. Moreover God gives this reason of that threat, 'For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return,' which cannot in the least relate unto the soul. I conclude then with ° Origen, that, "that sentence, σώματος καταδίκην ἐμφαίνει καὶ ἔ ψυχῆς, 'imports the condemnation not of the soul, but of the body only'."

(2.) When he adds, that "Adam sinning, *gessit personam generis humani ex Dei decreto*, 'sustained the person of all mankind by the decree of God';" as he cites this from the school-men, so the plain import of it is, that all mankind were made sinners, not by any action of their own, but purely by God's decree.

(3.) When he adds from the same school-men, that "the posterity of Adam are guilty of his first sin, *Ex arbitrario Dei decreto*, 'by the arbitrary decree of God,' but not of his other sins, nor were they interested in his repentance, because God's decree extended not to those sins or that repentance;" he in effect affirms that his posterity, who had no more hand in his first, than in his following sins, were, by God's arbitrary decree, made guilty of that sin alone, from which they would otherwise have been as free as from his other sins; and who then was the Author of that sin, since Adam was only personally the author of his own sin, and it was God's decree only which made him the author of our sin, or rather us the author of his sin. And,

(4.) From the same school-men he adds, that, "an infant may be properly guilty of sin, and so obnoxious to damnation, because *voluntas Adami quodammodo est voluntas parvuli ex Dei decreto*, 'the will of Adam is in some sort the will of the infant by virtue of God's decree;' and so the poor innocent is sent to hell by the arbitrary decree of God alone which made Adam's will his will, when otherwise Adam might have sinned on to the day of his death, and the poor child might have died, as he was born, an innocent. That the school-men are his only warrant for all these fond and horrible imaginations, you may see in the places cited. The 5th of the Romans, v. 12, 19, being so far from proving any of these notions, that they

° Genesis xvi, 2. Exodus ii, 12, 15, 16, 17, 20. Lev. ii, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15. 1 Samuel xiv, 24.
 ° Dial. contra Marcion. page 51.

are evidently confuted by it, as you may see in the notes there; nor was any such inference from those words owned by any of the fathers till St. Austin's time, as you may learn from the commentaries of Origen, St. Chrysostom, and Theodoret upon the place.

As for their other patrons, St. Austin, Prosper, and Fulgentius, it must be granted they were good Latin scholars, but yet they wanted skill both in the Hebrew and the Greek tongues; and so it was not be expected that we should learn the true sense of the scripture from them.

Some there be who tell us that these decrees and dispensations of God in reference to men's eternal state are *mysteries*; and truly as they are managed and asserted by them, I fear they may be so in the worst sense. And if they understand the word as it seemeth to be still used by St. Paul, for a doctrine not yet revealed, (see the note on 1 Cor. ii. 7.) they grant that which I chiefly have endeavoured in these discourses to make good, viz. that their doctrine is not taught in holy scripture.

Others perhaps may say that some things here asserted are *Pelagianism*, and others, *Semipelagianism*, it being usual for men hard pressed to fall to railing; but the first chapter of the *third discourse* will be sufficient to convince them they cannot justly fasten either of these names upon me, though *Semipelagianism* never was condemned by the church of God, and they who in St. Austin's time maintained it, were by him owned as good catholics and christian brethren, as you may see in Vossius. (Hist. Pelag. 1. 6. Th. 18. p. 621.)

IV. *Lastly*. If any man say I contradict the doctrine of the *church of England* touching these points, he will condemn almost the whole body of that church, it being certain that, after the restoration, almost all the bishops, and the great body of the clergy, who were eminent for learning, were of my opinion concerning these FIVE POINTS, and still, I believe, are so. He therefore, out of reverence both to the living and the dead, ought rather to affirm only, that I expound some of her articles otherwise than he would do, or thinks they ought to be expounded. It has been usually said that the *church of England* contrived her articles in such a latitude as to leave place for men of contrary judgments to subscribe them; and if it be considered that in her catechism she declares, that she learns, from her creed, "to believe in God the Son, who hath redeemed me and all mankind;" that, in her prayer at the consecration of the sacra-

ment, she declares, that "Jesus Christ by his own oblation of himself upon the cross, hath made a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world:" And, in her third collect on Good-Friday, she prays, that "all Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics may be saved among the number of true Israelites;" and that the other doctrines here pleaded for, do follow from that of universal redemption, as hath been shewed in the close of that discourse; there will be sufficient reason to be of this opinion.—But of this, more in the bishop of Sarum's excellent discourse upon that article, p. 168, 169.

In fine, the *church of England* by ^p canon doth enjoin all preachers, "especially to take care that they never teach any thing to their people, as religiously to be believed and held, which is not agreeable to the doctrine of the Old and New Testament, and that which the catholic fathers and the ancient bishops gathered from that very doctrine." That this rule hath been carefully observed by us, and is as constantly transgressed by them who do maintain the contrary doctrines to be *articles of christian faith*, I hope hath fully been demonstrated in these papers, which are submitted to the judgment of the learned reader,

BY HIS FRIEND,

AND SERVANT IN THE GOSPEL,

D. W.

^p Imprimis vero videbunt nequid unquam doceant pro concione quod a populo religiose teneri et credi vclint, nisi quod consentaneum sit doctrinae Veteris aut Novi Testamenti, quodque ex illa ipsa doctrina Catholici Patres et veteres Episcopi collegerint. (Sparrow's Collection, page 238.)

CONTENTS.

PREFACE.

THIS Preface shews, I. How the Author, who had his education under men of the Calvinistical persuasion, came to doubt of, and afterwards to reject, those doctrines. II. The affinity they bear to many doctrines of the heretics condemned by the church of God from the same principles and arguments here used against them, viz. the heresies of the Valentinians, the Marcionites, Basilidians, the Cerdonians, the Manichees, and the Priscillians; and the little difference there is betwixt their sentiments. III. That these opinions were derived, not from the scriptures, or from the doctrine of antiquity, which is plainly contrary to them in every point, but from St. Austin and the schools. IV. That they may be rejected without any contradiction to the doctrine of the church of England.

DISCOURSE I.

CONCERNING ELECTION AND REPROBATION.

CHAP. I.

I. THAT the word ἀδόκιμος hath no relation to any decree of reprobation, but only to God's disapproving of the corruption of men's faith or manners. II. This pretended decree of reprobation is not proved (1.) from those words of Solomon, that "God made all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of wrath." Prov. xvi. 4. III. Nor (2.) from those words of St. John xii. 38. "Therefore they could not believe because Esaias said, He hath blinded their eyes, &c." IV. Nor (3.) From those words,

“They stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed.” 1 Pet. ii. 7. 8. *V. Nor* (4.) *from those words, “Men of old ordained to this condemnation.”* Jude 4. *VI. An answer to some other texts produced by Dr. Twiss in favour of this doctrine.*

CHAP. II.

This doctrine is contrary to the perfections of the divine nature, viz. I. to his natural desire, that all men should love, fear, and obey him. II. To the sincerity and wisdom of God.

CHAP. III.

*I. What absolute election doth import; and that the election mentioned in scripture (1.) is not of particular persons, but of whole churches and nations. (2.) That it imports rather an election to enjoy the means of grace tendered in the gospel, than to a certainty of salvation by those means. (3.) That it is a conditional election to be made sure by good works. II. This is proved (1.) from the import of the word throughout the whole Old Testament. III. (2.) From the places where the word is used in the New Testament. IV. The import of the words *πρόγινωσις*, *πρόθεσις*, *πρωερισμὸς*, and that they do not prove an absolute election. V. An answer to all the other places produced to prove it, as (v. g. 1.) “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me.” John vi. 37. 39. VI. (2.) “As many as were ordained to eternal life believed.” Acts xiii. 48. VII. (3.) “That all that love God are called according to his purpose, justified and glorified.” Rom. viii. 28, 29, 30. VIII. (4.) “That God knoweth who are his.” 2 Tim. ii. 19.*

CHAP. IV.

The doctrine of absolute election confuted, I. From God’s will, that all to whom the gospel is revealed should repent and believe to the salvation of the soul, and yield sincere obedience to the will of God. II. The answer to this argument is confuted, (2.) From the falsehood of the foundation of it, viz. the imputation of the sin of Adam by God’s arbitrary will to his posterity. III. This imputation is not proved from those words, “In whom all have

sinned," and "By the disobedience of one many were made sinners." (3.) From the falsehood of this decree, as to the parts of it, absolute election and reprobation; and as to the end of it,—the manifestation of God's glory in his acts of grace, mercy, and of justice. IV. The immanent acts of God's will may have respect unto the actions of men by way of motive or condition.

CHAP. V.

I. That the doctrine of absolute election and reprobation is contrary to the sentiments of the fathers, is proved, from their unanimous declarations, that "God hath left it in our power to be good or bad, vessels of honour or dishonour, wrath or mercy, &c." II. From the exposition they all gave, before St. Austin, of the 8th and 9th chapters of the Romans. III. From their declarations that God predestinates men to life or death from a prescience of what they would be. IV. From the confession of Prosper, that "all the ancient fathers were against the doctrine of St. Austin."

DISCOURSE II.

CONCERNING THE EXTENT OF CHRIST'S REDEMPTION.

CHAP I.

I. THE scripture frequently and expressly saith "Christ died for all," and never saith any thing to the contrary, not when it saith, "He gave himself a ransom for many, and he laid down his life for his sheep, &c." II. This is proved (1.) From those words, "As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men to justification of life." Rom. v. 18. III. (2.) From these words, "He died for all, that they who live might not henceforth live to themselves." 2 Cor. v. 15. IV. (3.) "God would have all men to be saved; Christ gave himself a ransom for all." 1 Tim. ii. 4. 6. V. (4.) From those words, "The saving grace of God hath ap-

peared to all men." Tit. ii. 11, 12. VI. (5.) From those words, "Christ was made a little lower than the angels, that by the grace of God he might taste death for every man." Heb. ii. 9. VII. (6.) From these words, "God is long-suffering to us-ward, not being willing that any should perish, &c." 2 Pet. iii. 9. Where the usual answers to all those places are considered and confuted.

CHAP. II.

The second general argument for this extent of Christ's salutary passion is taken from all the places where Christ is represented as the Saviour of the world. I. to V. The absurdity of the restrictions commonly put upon those texts.

CHAP. III.

I. This doctrine is farther proved, because he died for them that perish. II. For them who being sanctified by the blood of the New Covenant, did after count it as an unholy thing, and did despite to the spirit of grace. III. Because he bought them who denied him.

CHAP. IV.

I. This doctrine is confirmed, from the obligation of all to whom the gospel was preached, to believe in Christ. II. All the places produced by the Synod of Dort against this doctrine, are plain confirmations of it.

CHAP. V.

I. This chapter contains an answer to the arguments produced from scripture to prove Christ died not for all. (1.) Because they for whom Christ died may say, "Who shall condemn us?" Rom. viii. 34. which yet all men cannot do. II. Because to all for whom God "delivered up his Son, he will freely give all things;" Rom. viii. 32. which yet he will not give to all. III. Because they who by Christ's death are reconciled to God, "shall be saved by his life;" Rom. v. 10. which yet all men shall not be. IV. Because those for whom Christ died, "he loved with the greatest love;" John. xv. 13. but so he loved not all men.

CHAP. VI.

I. This section offers arguments from reason for the universality of Christ's redemption. (1.) Because otherwise he never intended salvation to any by the gospel dispensation but the elect, the absurdities of which assertion are discovered. II. Hence it follows that Christ never died with an intention to do any good to the souls of others, which contradicts

his own frequent words. III. That none but the elect are obliged to believe in Christ. IV. And that none can be at last condemned for unbelief and impenitency. V. That neither the elect nor non-elect can be exhorted to believe. VI. "That many who live under the preaching of the gospel, have not means sufficient to obtain salvation,"—the manifold absurdities of that assertion shewed. VII. The absurdity of that evasion, "That we had strength sufficient given us in Adam to believe and repent," largely shewed. VIII. And is farther evident from our Lord's words and actions. IX. The unworthy reflections which this doctrine makes upon our gracious God and merciful Redeemer, is demonstrated in five particulars. X. It also is obstructive of christian piety and virtue. XI. Objections answered. XII. Two corollaries hence, (1.) God cannot have made a peremptory decree of any absolute election of some few to salvation; and (2.) cannot be wanting to afford grace sufficient to salvation to any; for then Christ, as to them, must be dead in vain. XIII. The doctrine of universal redemption hath the suffrage of all antiquity.

CHAP. VII.

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DISCOURSE III.

OF SUFFICIENT AND EFFECTUAL, COMMON AND SPECIAL GRACE.

The state of the Question.

CHAP. I.

I. THE true import of the word "Grace" in scripture. II. That besides the vouchsafement of the gospel as a rule of life, it seems necessary

to assert that God vouchsafes some inward operations and assistances of his Holy Spirit to incline us to what is good, and to work conversion in us; this is proved by many arguments. III. The manner in which God's grace or Spirit works upon the heart and mind of man for producing the fruits of the good Spirit, or the preparatory dispositions towards them, is suitable to the reason and the faculties of man, his understanding and his will. IV. This is farther evident from the method all men use to persuade others, and to all God's dispensations towards them. V. The operation of the Holy Spirit on us in this case, seems to consist in these two things, viz. (1.) The representing divine truths more clearly to our understandings. (2.) In bringing the divine motives to our remembrance, that they may be present to our minds when this is necessary to engage us to the performance of our duty. VI. In what sense a physical operation of the Holy Spirit on us may be allowed; how they are exciting, restraining, preventing, assisting, and subsequent grace, and of the distinction of grace into sufficient and efficacious, common and special grace. VII. No necessity of supernatural infused habits.

CHAP. II.

I. This chapter contains arguments against the necessity of an irresistible and unfrustrable operation in order to the conversion of a sinner. (1.) From the concessions of our adversaries. II. From God's declaration, that he had done all that was sufficient and could be reasonably expected in order to that end, when that effect did not follow. III. From his earnest desires of the obedience and reformation of his people. IV. Because this renders vain (1.) all the commands and exhortations directed to the wicked to turn from the evil of their ways. (2.) All the threats denounced against them who go on in them. And (3.) all the promises of pardon and life to them who turn from them. V. Because then it could not be righteous to punish them with eternal misery for their disability to do what God requires, nor could that disability be their sin. VI. The answer, "that this disability is contracted by our own sin, because it came upon us by the sin of our first parents," is largely confuted. VII. Because such a divine, unfrustrable operation renders the word no instrument or means for the conversion of a sinner. VIII. Because then no sufficient motive can be offered to induce any person to enter upon a change of life till he feel this divine impulse come upon him. IX. Because then nothing can be required of us as a pre-requisite, or a preparatory condition of our conversion. X. Because then no man could be

converted sooner or later than he is. XI. Because God chargeth the wickedness of men not upon their impotency or disability, but upon their wilfulness. XII. Lastly, our opinion lendeth most to the glory of the divine attributes. XIII. And is most consonant to the judgment of antiquity.

CHAP. III.

I. This chapter contains an answer to the arguments produced to prove that man is purely passive in the whole work of his conversion; that being wrought by God alone without his co-operation. Some general observations are premised as a foundation of an answer to these arguments, II. Which arise, (1.) from the representation of this work, as a resurrection, a creation, a new birth. III. (2.) From those scriptures which represent the unregenerate as dead in sins, and unable to discern the things of God, to think any thing as of themselves, to do any thing till they be in Christ, to come to him till they be drawn, to bring forth good fruit, or to be subject to the law of God. IV. (3.) From those scriptures which say, "that God gives faith and repentance, and openeth the heart." V. (4.) From those which say "God circumcises, gives a new heart and spirit that we may fear him, and writes his law in our hearts." VI. (5.) That "he worketh in us to will and to do." VII. (6.) That according to this doctrine, (i.) one man makes himself to differ from another. VIII. (ii.) Man will have cause of boasting. (iii.) The glory of our conversion will not be of God alone. IX. (iv.) It will be uncertain whether any one will be converted or not.

DISCOURSE IV.

OF THE FREEDOM OF THE WILL OF MAN.

The State of the Question.

CHAP. I.

I. That the state of man in this world is a state of trial and probation, is proved by five arguments. II. And hence it follows, that the liberty belonging to this question is only that of a lapsed man in the state of trial, probation, and temptation; so that all the arguments taken from the freedom of God, of good or evil angels, or of Christ, to prove that liberty or freedom may consist with a necessity, or a determination to good or evil, must be impertinent, they being not in a state of trial. III. This freedom of the will, in a state of trial, cannot consist with

a determination to one, whether it be to good or evil. IV. The free-will of man being a faculty or power, which hath for its object in moral actions something morally, in spiritual actions something spiritually good or evil, to be chosen or avoided; that which disables a man from chusing what is morally or spiritually good, or refusing what is thus evil, must also take away his liberty to chuse the good or refuse the evil action. V. It is absurd to say, that "men thus disabled may deserve punishment for what they do, though they cannot do otherwise, because they disobey willingly, and chuse to do so." VI. Or to say, that "men under an unfrustrable operation are still free, because what they are moved thus to do they will to do, and do it with complacency." VII. That opinion which teacheth, that man by the fall hath contracted such disability that he not only can do nothing which is truly good, but also lies under that servitude to sin which makes it necessary for him to be still doing evil, hath no foundation in the holy scriptures; with an answer to all the scriptures alleged to that purpose. VIII. That these new notions of liberty are repugnant to the sense and common reason of mankind.

CHAP. II.

I. The holy scripture declares, that the liberty of the will, even in christian virtues of the highest nature, is opposite not only to co-action, but necessity. II. Hence appears the falsehood and hypocrisy of all the tenders of the gospel to their supposed reprobates, as they are expounded by men of the contrary persuasion. III. Five farther arguments from scripture, to prove the liberty contended for. IV. These arguments strongly confirmed from the concurrent suffrage, and the express and frequent declarations, of the ancient fathers.

CHAP. III.

I. The freedom of the will in a state of trial from necessity is argued, (1.) From God's method in dealing with men by persuasions and moral inducements. II. From the received notion of the words "liberty" and "freedom." III. Because otherwise man, in his lapsed state, could not be subject to a command or prohibition. IV. Because then the sins of wicked men, whether of omission or commission, would not deserve that name.

CHAP. IV.

I. Where it is manifested, (1.) That there is a clear agreement of those men who place the liberty of the will in a freedom not from necessity, but only from co-action, with the doctrine of Mr. Hobbs. II. With

the doctrine of fate. And that the difference betwixt them and the fatalists, is not material. III. That the same reasons, which induced the philosophers, from the light of reason, to condemn this fate in those heathens who maintained it, induced the christians to reject it when it was taught by the Colobarsians, Priscillianists, and other heretics.

CHAP. V.

I. The judgment of all antiquity, for that freedom of the will we contend for, is evinced from these considerations: (1.) That they place the freedom of the will from necessity among the doctrines delivered to the church by the preaching of the apostles, and by ecclesiastical tradition. II. From what St. Austin lays down in confutation of the Manichees, viz. (i.) That no man is blameworthy for doing that evil which he was not able to resist. (ii.) That no souls offend in not being such as they cannot be. (iii.) That no man is worthy of dispraise or punishment for not doing that which he cannot do. (iv.) That no man is guilty for not having that which he hath not received. (v.) That this is the true definition of sin, that "it is the will to do that from which we have the liberty to abstain." (vi.) That it is folly to command him who hath not the power to obey. (vii.) That it is not the duty of him to repent who cannot do good. (viii.) That the denial of this liberty is contrary to scripture, and destroys the equity of divine judgments:—In all which things he hath the general suffrage of the Greek and Latin fathers. III. The arguments by which the fathers do confute the doctrine of Origen, are as strong against this opinion. IV. The replies which Austin makes to some of his own arguments, are insufficient.

DISCOURSE V.

CONCERNING THE PERSEVERANCE OF SAINTS.

The State of the Question.

CHAP. I.

I. We own, (1.) That they who are preserved from falling, are so preserved by the power of God through faith; but know of no promise that all true believers shall be so preserved. (2.) That God hath engaged to preserve them who do not wickedly depart from him, from being forced from him by the malice, subtilty, and power of their adversaries; but

not from falling from their own steadfastness. (3.) That he hath promised perseverance to all that use the means; but not that all shall do so who were once true believers. II. What our adversaries grant, destroys most of their arguments.

CHAP. II.

I. The arguments against the doctrine of perseverance of all true believers to the end are taken, (1.) from God's express declaration to the contrary. Ez. xviii. 24, 26. xxxiii. 13. II. From these words, Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6. 'It is impossible,—and yet fall away, to renew them to repentance.' III. From these words, Heb. x. 26, 29. 'To him that accounteth the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin.' IV. From those, (ver. 38.) 'If the just man who lives by faith, draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.' V. From those, 'If after they have escaped the pollutions which are in the world through lust, they are again entangled and overcome.' 2 Pet. ii. 18. VI. From many instances of such men who have actually fallen away, especially in the Jewish nation. This argument is confirmed from many places of the epistle to the Hebrews. VII. From the commands and exhortations directed to true believers to continue to the end, and to fear lest they should fall away; and the cautions, to prevent their doing so; the promises made to them, if they continue steadfast; the threats against them who did not so;—of which in general. VIII. In particular, this is proved, (i.) From the commands. IX. (ii.) The exhortations to persevere. X. (iii.) And to fear lest they should fall away. XI. (iv.) Particularly from the fears of the apostles lest it should be so; and (v.) the cautions directed to christians. XII. (vi.) The promises made to them that do not. XIII. (vii.) The threats against them that do thus fall away. XIV. (Lastly,) This is proved from many places, which suppose that true believers may thus fall.

CHAP. III.

I. In this chapter is contained an answer to the arguments produced from scripture to prove the perseverance of saints to the end, as v. g. (1.) From Mat. xxiv. 24. 'They shall deceive, if it were

possible, the very elect.' II. From John vi. 39, 46. 'It is the will of the Father that every one who is given to Christ, and believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.' III. 'Because the Lord hath not cast off his people whom he foreknew.' Rom. xi. 2. IV. 'Because whom God justifies, them he also glorifies, and none can separate them from the love of God.' Rom. viii. 29, 35. V. 'Because true believers have that Spirit of God who seals them up to the day of redemption, and is the earnest of their future inheritance.' Eph. i. 13. iv. 30. VI. Because 'the Lord knoweth who are his.' 2 Tim. ii. 18, 19. VII. 'Because they are kept by the power of God through faith to salvation.' VIII. 'Because they who go out from true believers were not of them.' 1 John ii. 19. IX. 'Because he that is born of God cannot sin.' 1 John iii. 9.

CHAP. IV.

I. This chapter answers the texts produced to prove that God stands engaged by promises to preserve true believers steadfast to the end. (1.) 'I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever; I will put my fear into their hearts that they shall not depart from me.' Jer. xxxii. 38, 39, 40. II. Christ saith, 'He that comes to me shall never hunger, he that drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst.' John vi. 35: iv. 14. III. Christ promiseth that his 'sheep shall never perish; none shall pluck them out of his hands.' John x. 28. IV. God hath engaged to 'confirm them unblameable to the end.' 1 Cor. i. 9, 10. 'To perfect the good work begun in them to the day of the Lord.' Phil. i. 6. 'To sanctify them whom he hath called, in body, soul, and spirit.' 1 Thes. v. 23. 'To establish them, and keep them from evil.' 2 Thes. iii. 3.

CHAP. V.

I. A comparison betwixt the two doctrines (1.) as to the comfort of believers; where it is proved, (i.) from many instances, that a doctrine is not therefore true because it is comfortable to them that believe it. (ii.) That a possibility of falling into a great evil is no just cause of trouble or anxiety, when I am assured I cannot do so unless I will and chuse to do so, and cannot do so but by acting against the clearest rules of reason and discretion, and the highest motives to the contrary. (iii.) That the doctrine of the saint's per-

severance cannot be truly comfortable, or give any advantage above the other in the point of comfort. II. As to their tendency to promote holiness, where it is shewed that our doctrine hath the advantage on several accounts. III. That it hath the suffrage of all the ancients, and was the doctrine of the whole church of Christ for many ages.

DISCOURSE VI.

CONTAINING AN ANSWER TO THREE OBJECTIONS AGAINST THE DOCTRINES ASSERTED, AND THE ARGUMENTS BY WHICH THEY ARE CONFIRMED.

CHAP. I.

I. THIS chapter contains a reply to two grand objections, against what hath been discoursed on the foregoing heads, viz. OBJECTION FIRST. That most of the objections made against the decrees of God and the unfrustrable influx of God on man, and the determination of his will to good or evil, are as strong against the prescience of God. To this objection it is said, (i.) That this argument from prescience overthrows these decrees, or renders them superfluous. II. (ii.) That the Hobbists and the Fatalists did, and may, take sanctuary in the divine prescience, as well as the Decretalists. (iii.) That God's prescience hath no influence at all upon our actions, whereas God's decree of election is powerful and active, and comprehends the preparation and exhibition of such means as shall infallibly produce the end. (iv.) That God's prescience renders no actions necessary, whereas these decrees must do so. (v.) That God's prescience respects, not only things future, but things possible; what may be done by them who will not do it, and may be left undone by them who do not so. He foresees also after what manner they will be performed, that free actions will be done freely, that is, when we might abstain from doing them,—and omitted freely, that is, when we might perform them. (vi.) That this argument only proposeth a great difficulty arising from a mode of knowledge in God, of which we have no idea, against the plain declarations of his revealed will, and is answered by the distinction between God's incommunicable and his communicable attri-

butes; of the first we have no ideas, as to the $\pi\acute{\omega}\varsigma$ s, and so are only bound to believe they are in God, but not to imitate them. In his communicable attributes, we are bound to resemble him, or follow his example, and so must have a true, though not a perfect, knowledge of them. III. THE SECOND OBJECTION. That by our arguments we weaken the providence of God; for if he doth not effectually move the wills of men, he cannot compass the designs of his providence. (Answer i.) This argument is attended with this great absurdity,—that it makes God as much the author of all the evil, as of all the good, that is done in the world. (ii.) All that is necessary to accomplish the designs of providence, may be done without laying any necessity upon human actions. IV. (iii.) The justice, wisdom, holiness, the goodness, and sincerity of providence, are all entirely overthrown by the doctrines we write against.

CHAP. II.

I. THE THIRD OBJECTION.—That God seems to have dealt as severely with the Heathens, to whom the knowledge of his will and gospel never was revealed, as we can imagine him to have dealt with men according to the doctrine of absolute election and reprobation, and the denial of grace sufficient to the greatest part of mankind, is answered, (1.) By shewing, that it cannot be applied to the chief arguments produced against those doctrines. II. That what God hath plainly and frequently revealed in the scriptures concerning his goodness and kindness to the sons of men, ought firmly to be believed; though we are not able to discern how it comports with his providential dispensations in the world, there being greater depths in providence than we can fathom, because we know so little of the future state of Heathens, that we cannot pass any certain judgment concerning their future state. III. This objection supposeth it the same thing to be without a gospel revelation, and to be without any means of grace at all, and that without a revelation no man can do any thing which is well-pleasing to God or acceptable in his sight;—the falsehood of which supposition is proved by six arguments from scripture. IV. And by two arguments from reason. V. It seems not well consistent with divine equity and goodness, to make that a condition of any man's happiness which he cannot know to be his duty, or knowing is not able

to perform. VI. That God will only judge men, at the last, for sinning against the means he hath vouchsafed them to know and perform their duty; and so will only judge the Heathens for sins committed against that light of nature he had given them. VII. That God having laid down this method in the dispensation of his gifts, that he who is faithful ἐν ἐλαχίστῳ, 'in the improvement of the least talent' shall have a suitable reward, and that 'to him that so hath shall more be given;' it is reasonable to conceive, he will deal with the heathens according to this rule. VIII. That we may reasonably conclude, God will deal with them both in respect to the acceptation and reward of their good, and his displeasure against, and punishment of, their evil actions, according to the measures of their ignorance and knowledge, the abilities, motives, and inducements afforded to them to do or to avoid them. And therefore (i.) That their good actions done upon less motives and convictions, may be more acceptable to God than the like actions done by christians, upon much greater evidence and higher motives and more powerful assistances. (ii.) That they may expect a reward upon performance of less duty, because less will be required of them. (iii.) That God should be more ready to pardon and pass by their offences, as having in them more of ignorance and less of contempt. (iv.) That he should be more patient, and long-suffering toward them, before he punish, because the less the light is they enjoy, the less is their offence against it. IX. That God may be more gentle in punishing their iniquities, and lay the fewer stripes upon them, because they did not know their Master's will.

CHAP. III.

A brief addition of some testimonies, respecting God's general goodness, by the Primitive Fathers, from the first to the fifth century after Christ.

POSTSCRIPT.

An answer to some of Dr. Edwards's Remarks, in which are considered his weak attempts to free the doctrines he has espoused from the imputation of novelty; and it is demonstrated that not one of those doctrines was, in his sense, maintained before St. Austin's time.



Discourse II.

CONCERNING ELECTION AND REPROBATION.

The state of the question concerning God's absolute decrees of election and reprobation.

1. LET it be observed from Bishop Davenant, that "no medium can be assigned, either on God's part, betwixt the decrees of predestinating some men, and not predestinating some others; or on men's part, betwixt men absolutely predestinated to the attainment of life eternal, and absolutely pretermitted, and left infallibly to fail of the obtainment of eternal life; which we call *Absolute Reprobation*. As for example: Let us suppose the number of mankind to be two millions of men; if out of these, one million only, by the decree of election, be infallibly appointed to eternal life, and these certainly and absolutely distinguished from others, not only as to their number, but their persons also; who can deny but that one million also, and those certain as to their persons, are as absolutely comprised under the decree of non-election or reprobation, as the others were under the decree of election or predestination?"^a—So that there is no possibility of asserting one of these decrees without owning the other also; and so whatsoever argument holds good against an absolute decree of *Reprobation*, must certainly destroy the opposite decree of *Absolute Election*.

Now, is there any need of arguments to confute such a supposed decree as this?—'I behold, through the fall of Adam, (by my mere pleasure imputed to his whole posterity yet unborn, as

^a Annot. on Hord, p. 205.

' if it were their action, and they had personally consented to it)
 ' the whole race of mankind obnoxious to my eternal wrath, and
 ' utterly unable to recover from it. And though they be all '*the*
 ' *souls that I have made,*' all equally wanting, and equally capable
 ' of, my favour; nor have I any reason to extend it to any of them,
 ' rather than to all; yet do I absolutely decree to vouchsafe this
 ' favour only to some few of them, leaving the far greatest part of
 ' them under a sad necessity of perishing everlastingly, for the of-
 ' fence of their forefather Adam, committed long before they had
 ' a being: So that they shall be as sure to be damned eternally as
 ' they are to be born in time, and yet I will proclaim myself unto
 ' them, '*a God merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abun-*
 ' *dant in goodness,*' on purpose that they may not perish, but be
 ' '*led by it to repentance;*' and declare to them that my '*delight*
 ' *is in shewing mercy.*' I will intreat them with the greatest ear-
 ' nestness, and even '*beseech them to be reconciled*' to me, as be-
 ' ing so far reconciled to them in Christ Jesus as not to impute to
 ' them their transgressions and sins. I will send to them '*all*
 ' *my messengers and prophets,*' declaring that I do it, '*because I*
 ' *have compassion on them.*' I will allure them to repentance with
 ' the promise that '*all their sins shall then be blotted out,*' and
 ' not one of them remembered against them. I will tell them, that
 ' '*I would have purged them, but they would not be purged; I*
 ' *would have gathered them, but they would not be gathered.*' I
 ' will ask them, '*Why will you die?*' and inquire of them, what
 ' '*I could have done more*' to prevent it '*which I have not done?*'
 ' Yea, I will seriously and solemnly protest and swear unto them
 ' by the greatest oath, even that of my own life, that '*I would not*
 ' *the death of him that dies, but rather that he should return and*
 ' *live.*' But after all, I will be true and constant to that absolute
 ' decree of reprobation, which must render their damnation un-
 ' frustrable, and to the negative decree of withholding from them
 ' that grace which can alone enable them to escape it, or to re-
 ' ceive any advantage from all these declarations.'

And hence we learn the falsehood of that assertion of the same
 good Bishop, that ^b "Reprobation is not a denial of sufficient grace,
 but a denial of such special grace which God knows would infal-

libly bring them to glory; and that we cannot thence conclude, "that being not elected they are left without all remedy or sufficient means of salvation;" or that being reprobated they are "without sufficient" remedies "or means to escape damnation, were not their own wicked will the only hindrance." For can men be left "infallibly to fail of eternal life," and yet "not be left without all remedy or sufficient means of salvation?" If, as he says, "God leaving them under the want of that special grace and effectual guidance proceeding from divine predestination, they never fail of running themselves wittingly and willingly upon their own damnation;"^d have they, notwithstanding, sufficient remedies or means to escape damnation? Sure it is, there can be no salvation, and no escaping of damnation, without conversion of the will from sin to God, and a continuance in this estate unto the end. If then these reprobates have no sufficient means to turn their wicked and perverted wills from sin to God, they can have no sufficient means either to obtain salvation or escape damnation. If they have sufficient means to convert their wicked wills from the love of sin to a prevailing love to God, the pravity of those wills can never be the cause why they are left infallibly to fail of life eternal, or why they never fail of running on wilfully to their own damnation; seeing they have means sufficient to rectify the pravity of their wills. Again, either these means are sufficient to render them truly willing to believe and repent, or they are not; either they are sufficient to remove the defectiveness and disability of will they have contracted by the fall of Adam to these saving actions, or they are not. If they are not, how are they means sufficient for the attainment of the salvation which belongs only to the believer and the penitent, or the escaping that damnation which necessarily follows upon the disability and defect for which no sufficient remedy is by grace provided? And then, how have they grace sufficient for these ends? If they are thus sufficient, then may they truly be willing to believe and repent; and then this sufficient grace being vouchsafed to them, there can be no obstruction in their will which necessarily hinders their believing and repenting; and then they on whom God hath passed this act of reprobation, or of preterition, may believe and

repent, and therefore may be saved, as well, though not as certainly, as they who are elected to obtain salvation; and so all to whom the gospel is vouchsafed may be saved. Suppose a man hath broken his leg by a fall, hath he therefore sufficient means to walk, because he might have done so had not his leg been broken by that fall? If then the will of man by his fall be as much disabled to walk in the ways of God, as this man's body is to walk at all, can it be truly said he hath sufficient means to walk in those ways, because he would have had them, had not his will been thus disabled? "Adam indeed," as the Bishop saith, "though not predestinated to stand in the state of innocency, had yet sufficient means of standing,"^e—because he had no defectiveness or disability in his will to do so. But what is this to the case of those who are supposed to be so disabled, that, if they be left to their own wills as Adam was, are so disabled that they cannot stand?

When therefore this good Bishop proceeds to say, "that they who are passed by in the eternal decree of God, are not by any force of that decree left without the benefit which the scripture promises upon condition of repentance, but the evangelical decrees stand in full force; if Judas believe and repent, he shall be saved; if Peter do not believe and repent, he shall not be saved."^f And by this thin piece of sophistry the good man attempts to shew, that God is serious and in good earnest in all the offers he makes to reprobates of mercy and salvation upon their repentance; and all the threats he hath recorded in the holy scripture against all, (and therefore against the elect,) if they do not repent and persevere to the end; and all the other motives and inducements to engage both of them to do so. How unsuccessfully he hath performed this, will in the sequel be demonstrated. At present therefore I shall only put these two decrees one under the other, that they may blush at one another:

1. Absolute election contains "an eternal, absolute, infallible decree, that Peter shall believe, repent, persevere unto the end, and be saved."

The evangelical conditional decree is this, that "if Peter do not believe, repent, and persevere unto the end, he shall not be

saved, but shall infallibly be damned;" and therefore God in it speaks to Peter thus, *'Except thou repent, thou shalt perish; pass therefore the time of thy sojourning here in fear; work out thy salvation with fear and trembling; continue in the faith,—for if thou drawest back, my soul shall have no pleasure in thee; yea, give all diligence to make thy calling and election sure.'*

2. Absolute reprobation is "an absolute, infallible decree, that (for instance) Judas shall unavoidably fail of obtaining life eternal;" that this event shall be so certain, that "he shall never fail to run himself wilfully upon his damnation."

The evangelical conditional decree is this, that "if Judas will repent, believe, and persevere, he shall be saved;" and in pursuance of this decree, God lovingly invites and calls upon him to believe and repent, exhorts, and even intreats him by his ambassadors, *'to be reconciled to him, to turn from his evil ways, and live;'* alluring him to do so by the hopes of pardon and salvation, if he will hearken to God's calls; and persuading him by the miseries which he will then incur, *'not to neglect so great salvation;'* expostulating the case with him, why after all these methods to prevent his ruin, *'he will die and not live;'* why *'he will not be purged and made clean, and how long it will be ere he will hearken to his invitations;'* declaring that he doth all this, *'because he hath compassion on him,'* and is *'long-suffering to him,'* because he *'is not willing he should perish, but should come unto repentance;'* though his decree of reprobation hath rendered his damnation a "certain and infallible event."

II. Observe, that though the greatest part of them who assert an absolute election and reprobation, or preterition, make the object of them not man as man, but as fallen and therefore sinful man; yet is the difference betwixt them and those who are called *Supralapsarians*, very little; for the *Sublapsarians* say, 'God decreed that Adam should be the head of all mankind, and therefore to impute his first sin, and that only, to his posterity, and not to impute to them his repentance for it, though there was equal reason to do both, or neither; and foreseeing that he would fall, and render his posterity obnoxious to his eternal displeasure, he designed to glorify his free grace and mercy in saving some of them, and so in bestowing on them infallibly that grace which

‘ shall unfrustrably bring them to salvation: others he absolutely decrees to pass by, and not bestow that grace upon them without which they cannot obtain salvation, or avoid eternal misery.’

Now

First. Seeing it is certain from the event, that God absolutely decreed to bring all men out of the loins of Adam, and that they therefore become the posterity of fallen Adam, and so are born sinners and children of wrath, purely by being born, and so by absolute necessity proceeding from this decree of God, who could have made them otherwise, and brought them into the world from another head: Again,

Secondly. Seeing nothing makes the connexion betwixt the personal sin of Adam and the fall of all men in him, or their guilt by reason of his fall, but God’s arbitrary imputation of it to them; (their being then in his loins, or his posterity, making them no more guilty of his first, than of all the other sins committed by him before they had a being, and of which, it is confessed, they are not guilty;) nothing can make this connexion betwixt their being born men and sinners, children of Adam and ‘ children of wrath,’ but these arbitrary and inevitable decrees. And

Thirdly. Adam being as much in nature our common head and root, and we being as much in his loins when he repented to salvation, as when he sinned to condemnation, there is no other reason, besides God’s arbitrary will, can be assigned, why God should impute his sin to us to condemnation, and not impute unto us his repentance to salvation, or for the pardon of it. For if his person was our person, his will our will in sinning, why were they not so also in repenting? If then, according to this hypothesis, there is no possible difference betwixt being a man and a sinner, and God’s decrees alone have made this necessary connexion, why might he not as equitably have passed these decrees upon men as men, as upon men made sinners by his mere arbitrary decrees? Especially if we consider that the sins of all men, besides Adam, are as inevitable, and as much decreed, by this hypothesis, as by the other.

CHAP. I

Concerning the decree of reprobation.

I SHALL endeavour to make it appear,

FIRST. That it hath no foundation in the holy scriptures.

SECONDLY. That it is contrary to the plain declarations of the scripture.

I. And, *First*, I observe that the word ἀδόκιμος, which we render ‘*Reprobate*,’ but might have as well been rendered *disapproved*, hath no relation in scripture to any decree, either absolute concerning the damnation of men as the end, (and consequently denying or withholding from them the means by which alone they can escape that damnation,) or of doing this on the account of the sin of Adam; but only doth denote such actions of men corrupted, as to faith and manners, which, being done, will certainly be *disapproved* by God and man. Thus those Jews, who, through the prejudices and corruption of their minds, were indisposed to receive, and therefore did resist, the truth of the gospel, (as Jannes and Jambres did of old God’s message by his servant Moses,) are styled ἀδόκιμοι περὶ τὴν πίστιν, ^a ‘*reprobates concerning the faith*,’ that is, men indisposed to receive or approve it, and therefore disapproved by God. And those Gentiles, who, ‘*when they knew God, did not glorify him as God, neither were thankful, but changed the truth of God into a lie*,’ by worshipping the creature instead of the Creator, and ‘*liked not to retain God in their hearts*,’^b are said to be given up εἰς νῦν ἀδόκιμον, ‘*to a reprobate mind*,’ that is, a mind that could not be approved of, but abhorred by, God and men, as prompting them to do, τὰ μὴ καθήκοντα, ‘*things not agreeable*’ to nature or to reason. Thus those Jews whose ‘*minds and consciences were defiled*,’ are styled ‘*reprobates*,’ because ‘*though in words they professed to know God, yet in works they denied him, being abominable, disobedient, and to every good work*,’ ἀδόκιμοι, ‘*reprobate*,’^c that is, void not only of judgment to discern what was good, but also of affection to approve of it. And that earth is styled ἀδόκιμος ‘*reprobate*’ or rejected, which after all the showers which fall upon it, ‘*brings forth only thorns and briars*,’^d and that silver, ἀργύριον ἀδόκιμον,

^a 2 Tim. iii. 8.

^b Rom. i. 20, 23.

^c Tit. i. 16.

^d Heb. vi. 8.

'*reprobate silver*,'^e which being falsely stamped or coined, will not be received, but rejected. And in this sense, St Paul saith, ^fhe '*kept under his body, lest, whilst he preached to others, he himself should be,*' ἀδόκιμος, '*disowned*' and '*rejected*' by God. Now all these reprobates being either so styled, not because God was unwilling to have any favour for them or had any antecedent purpose to reject them, but because their prejudices and corruptions caused them to reject him by disapproving of his truth and ways, or because the actions they in time did, in opposition to his truth revealed to them and his holy word which he had given them to direct their actions, were rebellious; they cannot possibly relate to a decree of reprobation or preterition, in God, respecting them before all time.

II. As the word ἀδόκιμος, translated '*reprobate*,' cannot at all concern this pretended decree of reprobation, which the *school-divines* have invented, and others from them have embraced; so, *Secondly*, is there nothing relating to it, or from which it can reasonably be inferred, in the scriptures either of the Old or the New Testament.

From the Old Testament they urge these words, viz. that '*God made all things for himself; even the wicked for the day of evil.*' (Prov. xvi. 4.) Now what is it that they would infer from these words? Is it that God made men wicked? This doubtless is blasphemy; much more to say, "He made them wicked for his "glory," as if he had '*need of the sinful man*'^g for that end. Or is it, with ^hDr. Twiss, that "all, besides the elect, God hath ordained to bring forth into the world in their corrupt mass, and to permit them to themselves to go on in their own ways, and so finally to persevere in sin; and lastly to damn them for their sin, for the manifestation of his justice on them?" This, for my life, I am not able to distinguish from making them wicked; for *to bring them forth into the world*, and *to make them*, is the same thing; and by the same act by which they are made, they are made of the corrupt mass; that only signifying that they are made of the race of Adam: and therefore by the very same act by which God made them, he must make them sinners. Moreover, what God ordained to do before all time, he in time did; therefore in

^e Prov. xxv. 4. Isa. i. 22. ^f 1 Cor. ix. 27. ^g Ecclesiasticus xv. 12. ^h Against Hord, p. 50.

time he brought these men forth into the world, in the corrupt mass, that is, He brought them into the world sinners, that is, hateful to himself; '*for the Most High hateth sinners:*'ⁱ whereas that of the Book of Wisdom is as true as gospel, '*Thou (O Lord) lovest all things that are, and abhorrest nothing that thou hast made; for neither wouldest thou have made any thing, if thou hadst hated it.*'^k See what hath been further said against this hypothesis, in the state of the question, and in the notes on Rom. v. 13, 19. Eph. ii. 2. Or, *Lastly*, they only mean, that "God, for the glory of his justice, had appointed that wicked men perishing impenitently in sin should be obnoxious to his wrath;" and then they assert a great truth. But then it is a truth which gives not the least advantage to their doctrine, nor is founded on this text. For,

(2.) The text saith '*God made all things,*' לַמַּעַנְהוּ (*lamaanehu*) from עָנָה, (*anahu*) '*to answer to themselves,*' or '*aptly to refer one to another.*' '*He hath made the wicked for the evil day,*' that is, to be the executioner of evil to others; on which account they are in scripture called God's '*Rod,*'^l and said to be a '*sword of his.*'

III. A SECOND text cited to prove this decree of reprobation, or preterition, runneth thus; '*Therefore they could not believe because that Isaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, that they should not see with their eyes, or understand with their hearts, and be converted, and I should heal them.*'^m Like to which are those words of St. Mark and St. Luke, '*To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to others (who are without the kingdom,) I speak in parables; that seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.*'ⁿ From which words the inference they make, contains this strange and uncomfortable doctrine, viz. "That the infidelity even of God's own people is to be resolved, not into the perverseness of their wills or the evil dispositions of their hearts, but into the divine predictions, or into

ⁱ Ecclesiasticus xii. 6.^k xi. 24.^l Isa. x. 5. Psalm xvii. 13.^m John xii. 39, 40.ⁿ Mark iv. 11, 12. Luke viii. 9, 10.

a judicial blindness and obduration wrought by God upon them, which renders it, though not naturally, yet morally, impossible for them to believe:”—Therefore for explication of them, and to demonstrate the falsehood and absurdity of this inference, let it be noted,

First. That our blessed Lord, in the immediate precedent verses, doth passionately exhort these very persons to ‘believe and walk according to the light, that they might be children of the light;’^o which is a certain evidence that he well knew his Father had not, by any of his actions, predictions, or decrees, made it thus impossible for them to believe on him, or walk according to his doctrine. For if God had so blinded their eyes that they could not see the light, or so hardened their hearts that they could not embrace it, Christ would not, or rather could not, have exhorted them to believe, or seriously require them, thus disabled, to walk according to the light, much less to do it so effectually that ‘*they might become the children of the light.*’ For every exhortation to do a thing we know men cannot do, must be vain; and he who by it seems to be desirous we should do that which he knows we cannot, must delude us; and if he knows that God hath, by some antecedent purpose, will, or decree, resolved to withhold that aid by which alone we can be in a capacity to do it, it must also be an exhortation repugnant to the will of God; it being in event, and in effect, the same, to will that any person should not do the thing which he requires, and to will he should not have the means by which alone he can perform it. Now it is blasphemy to say ‘The exhortations of the *Son of God* were *vain, delusory, and contrary to his Father’s will.*’ Moreover (ii.) our Saviour knew these Jews were capable of mercy and salvation by him; for he expressly says, ‘*God sent him into the world that the world by him might be saved.*’^p He makes this declaration to them, ‘*These things I say unto you that you might be saved;*’^q and this enquiry, ‘*How often would I have gathered you as a hen doth her chickens under her wings, and you would not be gathered!*’ And pathetically saith to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, ‘*O that thou hadst known, in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace! But now they are*

^o Verse 35, 36.

^p John iii. 17.

^q John v. 34.

^r Luke xiii. 34.

hid from thine eyes:'^s Now, therefore, they were not ALWAYS so. Christ then here taketh it for granted, that the people of Jerusalem, in the day of their visitation by the Messiah, might savingly have known the things belonging to their peace. Now either this assertion, 'That they might savingly have known 'these things,' was according to the truth; or his wish, 'That 'they had thus known the things belonging to their peace,' was contrary to his Father's will and decree,—which is palpably absurd. And seeing the will of Christ was always the same with that of his Father, it follows also that God the Father had the same charitable affection to them, and so had laid no bar against their happiness by his decrees, nor withheld from them any thing on his part necessary to their everlasting welfare. (iii.) God himself would not have his words so understood as if he were unwilling that the Jews should believe, or had, by any of his purposes or actions, rendered it not possible for them to do so; for '*this was his commandment, that they should believe on him whom he had sent.*'^t And why sent He his Son '*to seek and save that which was lost, even the lost sheep of the house of Israel,*' had he not been truly desirous that they should believe? Or how could either Christ or Moses accuse them to the Father for their unbelief, had the Father himself resolved from all eternity to withhold from them that assistance without which they could not believe? And lastly, the Evangelist, and that Good Spirit by which he did indite these words, did not thus understand them; for he, in the immediate foregoing verse, objects this to the Jews as their great crime, that '*though Christ had done so many miracles among them, yet they believed not on him;*'^u whereas it can be no man's sin not to do what he cannot do purely by reason of the act of God. These words can therefore never bear that sense on which this inference is grounded.

Secondly. Observe, [that God's foreknowledge, sayings, and predictions, have no such influence on the will of man as to lay on him a necessity to do what He foreknows, and hath foretold, he will do: For, were it otherwise,

(i.) All human actions must be necessary; for to that God who is omniscient, all things past, present, and to come, are

^s Luke xix. 42.

^t John vi. 29.

^u Verse 37.

known. If then this knowledge of men's actions, which the scripture doth ascribe to God, did make them necessary, all human actions must be necessary; and so the freedom of them must be overthrown. (ii.) Then vice and virtue must be empty names, we being capable of doing nothing which is blameworthy, or deserveth praise; (which yet the scripture plainly and frequently asserts we may;) for who can blame a person for doing only what he could not help, or judge that he deserveth praise only for doing what he could not avoid? And (iii.) then must all future recompences be discarded, it being sensibly unjust to punish any man for doing that which it was never in his power to avoid, and as unreasonable to reward him for that action which cannot be praiseworthy.

When then it is here said, '*Therefore they could not believe because Isaias said, &c.*' these words must bear this sense, "Therefore they could not believe because (that was fulfilled upon them which) Isaias said," or "It had happened to them as he had foretold." Examples of such an Ellipsis we find frequently in this gospel: So chap. ix. 3, '*Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; ἀλλ' ἵνα, BUT (this blindness hath happened to him) THAT the works of God might be made manifest in him.*'—Chap. xiii. 18, '*I know whom I have chosen, ἀλλ' ἵνα, BUT (this hath happened to Judas) THAT the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.*'—Chap. xiv. 31, ἀλλ' ἵνα γινῶ, '*BUT (this I do) THAT the world may know that I love the Father.*'—Chap. xv. 25, ἀλλ' ἵνα πληρωθῆ, '*BUT (this hath happened) THAT the word written in their law might be fulfilled.*'—1 John ii. 19, ἀλλ' ἵνα φανερωθῆ, '*BUT (they went out from us) THAT it might appear they were not all of us.*' And this exposition is confirmed by the Holy Ghost, who (Mat. xiii. 13, 14.) saith from the mouth of Christ, '*Therefore I speak to them in parables, because they seeing see not, &c.*' And when it is said, (verse 40,) '*He hath blinded their eyes, &c.*' observe, that the word *He* is not in the original, which only saith thus, τετύφλωκεν αὐτῶν τῆς ὀφθαλμοῦς, and may be rendered, '*Malice or wickedness hath blinded their eyes,*' as we read, Wisdom xxii. 21. Or, (ii,) the personal verb is put for the impersonal, the active for the passive, that is, '*He hath blinded their eyes, and*

hardened their hearts, for, “Their eyes are blinded and their hearts hardened.” To give you a plain instance of this nature,—Isaiah xlv. 18, in our translation we read thus, ‘*He hath shut their eyes that they cannot see, and their hearts that they cannot understand;*’ and yet both the Greek and Chaldee Paraphrast read them thus ἀπημυρωθήσαν, ‘their eyes they have shut and darkened, lest they should see.’ And that this is the true import of the prophet’s words, not that God, but that satan and their own evil dispositions had done this, is evident from this consideration,—that this is spoken to the shame of them who made and worshiped senseless images, (verse 9—11,) and to convince them of their want of consideration, verse 19. And that this must also be the sense here, we learn, not only from the Septuagint, the Syriac, and the Arabic, which render these words of Isaiah thus, ‘The heart of the people is waxed gross, and their ears have they closed, lest they should see with their eyes;’ but also from our Blessed Saviour, and St. Paul assisted by the Holy Ghost, who both exactly follow this translation of the words, the one Matthew xiii. 13, 15, the other Acts xxviii. 27.

OBJECTION. “But in St. Luke this is plainly given as the reason why Christ spake to them without in parables,—‘*that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.*’”

ANSWER. To take off this pretension, it is sufficient to observe that the words in St. Mark and St. Luke are only an abbreviation of what St. Matthew saith was spoken by our Lord more fully. For Christ might say what St. Mark and St. Luke relate, and yet say more than they relate, as St. Matthew doth assure us he did. But then St. Matthew could not have given us his discourse more fully, unless our Lord had spoken it more fully than it is related by St. Mark and St. Luke: Whence it must follow, that the relation of St. Mark and St. Luke must be deficient; that is, that they do not contain all that our Saviour said on this occasion, and therefore must be filled up, or rendered entire, by the addition of the words recorded in St. Matthew. Since then St. Matthew doth expressly tell us from the mouth of Christ, ‘*He therefore spake to them in parables; because they seeing would not, or did not, see, and hearing did not understand;*’ and that they therefore did not see, hear, and understand, because ‘*their heart was waxed gross,*

and their ears heavy, and they had closed their eyes lest they should see.' It seemeth evident that the words of St. Mark and St. Luke must be filled up, or made entire thus; '*To others (of the Jews, who will not own my doctrine, or believe in me, as you my disciples do) speak I in parables; because they seeing see not, and hearing do not understand, for their hearts are waxed gross, and their ears heavy, and their eyes have they closed, that seeing they may see and not perceive, and hearing they may hear and not understand.*' These words are therefore nothing to the purpose for which they are produced; they say nothing of God's decree or purpose, antecedently to their being, to deny them grace sufficient to see or understand their duty taught them, by our Lord, in plain words as well as parables. For why then doth Christ ask, with such seeming indignation, '*Why is it that you do not understand my saying? (it only is) because ye cannot (endure to) hear my word;*'^a that is, because your prejudices and lusts will not permit you to receive it: This, doubtless, was the great sin of the Jews, and so they wanted not either natural power or aid sufficient on God's part so to do; but only a moral power or a mind well disposed to obey his word; it being only of the wickedness and perverseness of the Jews, who would not see, '*come unto the light, lest their deeds should be reprov'd, that they loved darkness more than light;*' that they were even unwilling to be healed, or converted from their evil ways. And this will still appear more evident, if it be further noted,

That these words,—'*They seeing see not, and hearing do not hear or understand,*'—are a proverbial expression concerning men so wicked and so slothful, that either they attend not to, or will not follow, the clearest intimations and convictions of their duty. Thus to a revolting and rebellious people which had cast off the fear of God, the prophet Jeremy saith, '*Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding, which have eyes and see not, which have ears and hear not;*'^b And God speaks to Ezekiel thus, '*Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house, which have eyes to see and see not, they have ears to hear and hear not, for they are a rebellious house.*'^c This is a frequent form of speech in

^a John viii. 43.

^b Jer. vi. 21.

^c Chap. xii. 2.

Philo, who saith of men addicted to wine and sensual pleasures, ὁρῶντες ἐκ ὁρῶσι, καὶ ἀκούοντες ἐκ ἀκούσει, ^a that ‘they seeing see not, and hearing do not hear,’ and Demosthenes ^b mentions this as a proverb. These words do manifestly therefore shew,—that it was the wickedness and perverseness of the Jews that indisposed them to receive profit by Christ’s plain discourses, which caused him thus to speak to them in parables.

Lastly. Observe that they thus shut their eyes, and made their hearts gross, saith God and Christ, ‘lest they should be converted, and I should heal them:’ So that the design of God in sending of his Son, was their conversion and the remission of their sins; and hence St. Peter saith to them, ‘Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out;’ ^c for God having ‘raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you in turning EVERY ONE OF YOU from your iniquities;’ expressly teaching, that God sent his Son to procure mercy and salvation to every one of them; and that they, by their wickedness and perverseness, obstructed these his gracious designs upon them, lest they should be converted from their evil ways, and God should heal them. For albeit this sad effect was not intended by them, yet since it was the natural result of their shutting their eyes against the light, it fitly is ascribed to them, as when the prophet Hosea saith, ‘Of their silver and gold have they made them idols, that they might be cut off;’ ^d and the prophet Micah, ‘The statutes of Omri are kept, and all the works of the house of Ahab, and ye walk in their counsels, that I should make thee a desolation.’ ^e These words are therefore so far from establishing, that they do evidently destroy, the doctrine they were produced to confirm. In fine, let it be noted, that these were the very texts produced by the heretics of old to destroy human liberty, and to prove that there were some natures that could not be saved, and others which could not perish; as you may see in Origen’s Philocal. C. 21. p. 60. and Περὶ Ἀρχ. L. 3. C. 1. F. 140.

IV. A THIRD text used to this purpose are the words of St. Peter, ‘To you that believe he is precious: but to them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders refused is made the head

^a Alleg. L. 2, p. 72. L. 3, p. 850. ^b ὁρῶντας μὴ ὁρᾶν καὶ ἀκούοντας μὴ ἀκούειν.
Orat. in Aristog. § 127. ^c Acts iii. 19, 26. ^d Chap. viii. 4. ^e Chap. vi. 16.

of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them who stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed;^f from which last words they argue, that some of the Jews, even all that believed not in Christ this cornerstone, were appointed by God to be disobedient.

ANSWER. "The meaning of these words," saith Dr. Hammond, "is this,—That they who disobey the gospel, standing out obstinately against it, were appointed by God to stumble and fall at that stone; that is, to be bruised by it, and by that means to be destroyed among the crucifiers of the Messiah, and condemned with them hereafter; it being just with God that they who will not reform and amend at the preaching of the gospel, and so receive benefit by it, should by their obstinacy be condemned, and so the worse for it, Christ being set 'for the falling,'^g as well as 'the rising of many in Israel;' and the gospel being 'a saviour of death to them that perish,'^h and they being those whom 'God hath appointed for wrath.'ⁱ And to be sure it cannot signify, that God absolutely ordained the unbelieving Jews, *εἰς ἀπειθεῖαν*, 'to disobedience,' when as yet they were not, and therefore were not disobedient: For then their future disobedience was purely a compliance with the divine ordinance or will, and so could not deserve the name of disobedience; because it could not be both a compliance with, and disobedience to, the will of God. Nor could this disobedience be objected to them as their crime, unless compliance with the will of God be so, and it be a fault to be such as God by his immutable counsel and decree hath ordained we should be, or it should render men criminal and obnoxious to punishment that they have not made void God's absolute decree, or have done what that made it necessary for them to do. Wherefore this passage cannot signify, that the unbelieving Jews were appointed to disobedience; but only, that being disobedient to the gospel so clearly revealed, and by so many miracles and distributions of the Holy Ghost confirmed to them, they were appointed, as the punishment of that disobedience, to fall and perish; for so the Hebrew word *כָּשַׁל* or *חָשַׁל*, (*Chasal*,) and the Greek *πρόσκομιμα* and *σκάνδαλον* import, viz,—the ruin and

^f 1 Pet. ii. 7, 8.

^g Luke ii. 34.

^h 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16.

ⁱ 1 Thess. v. 34

the fall of them who stumble at this stone. (See the note on Rom. xiv. 13.) Or,

Secondly. The words will fairly bear this sense, ‘To you that believe *belongs* ἡ τιμὴ ‘*the honour*’ (of being built upon this corner-stone into a spiritual house;) ‘*but to them that are disobedient* (belongs that of Psalm cxviii. 22.) *the stone which the builders refused, &c. and* (also to them he is) *a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them that stumble at the word, being disobedient,* εἰς ὃ καὶ ἐτέθησαν, ‘*for which also these stones were laid*’ or put,—the corner-stone for the building up of believers, the stone of stumbling for the disobedient to stumble at. For to both these stones belongs this preface, ‘*Behold I lay in Sion a stone,*’—to the corner-stone, elect and precious here, and to the ‘*stone of stumbling,*’ Rom. ix. 33. And so this agrees with the words of Simeon, ‘*Behold this child is placed for the fall and rising of many in Israel.*’ (Luke ii, 34.) In either of these senses the words afford no countenance to this doctrine of reprobation.—

Note,

Thirdly. That, as Œcumenius plainly shews, this was the old ecclesiastical interpretation of these words; so doth he as apparently reject the sense this argument puts upon them, in these words, Εἰς ὃ καὶ ἐτέθησαν. ἐκ ὧς ἀπὸ τῆ Θεῆ εἰς τὸτο ἀφωρισμένοις εἴρεται, ἐδεμία γὰρ αἰτία ἀπωλείας παρὰ τῆ πάντας ἀνθρώπων θέλοντος σωθῆναι βραβεύεται: ἀλλὰ τοῖς ἐαυτὸς σκεῦη ὀργῆς κατηρητικοίσι καὶ ἡ ἀπειθεια ἐπηκολύθησε, καὶ εἰς ἣν παρασκεύασαν ἑαυτὸς τάξιν ἐτέθησαν. *Vide reliqua.**

V. “A FOURTH scripture speaks of men ‘before ordained to this condemnation:’^a—Here therefore seems to be an appointment of men to damnation, of old plainly asserted, of which God only can be deemed the author.”

ANSWER. The verse in the Greek runs thus, ‘Some ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, have entered into (the church) οἱ πάλαι προγεγραμμένοι εἰς τοῦτο τὸ κρίμα, that is, of whom it was before written that this should be their sentence or

* ‘WHEREUNTO ALSO THEY WERE APPOINTED. Not that this is said to them as though they had been selected by God for this very thing; because He whose will it is that all men should be saved, has here assigned no cause for their destruction; but obstinate unbelief hath followed those who have fitted themselves as vessels of wrath, and they have appointed even the order by which they have deliberately prepared themselves. See the rest.’ ED.

^a Jude 4.

punishment; or, as it is in the parallel place of St. Peter, οἷς τὸ κρῖμα ἐκπάλαι ἐκ ἀργεῖ, 'to whom the sentence of old pronounced doth not linger.'^b Now that this cannot be meant of any divine ordination or appointment of them to eternal damnation before they had a being, is evident, (1.) because it cannot be thought without horror that He, who is the lover of souls, should appoint any, much less the greater part of them, to inevitable perdition before they had a being. (2.) The word κρῖμα relates not to sin but punishment, the fruit of sin; so Mark xii. 40, 'They shall receive περισσώτερον κρῖμα, sorer punishment. Rom. ii. 3, *Thinkest thou this, O man, who doest the same thing, that thou shalt escape τὸ κρῖμα, the judgment of God?*' Now God ordaineth none to punishment but sinners and ungodly men; and such, by the text, these persons are here styled. And (3.) these were men, of whom it was 'before written or prophesied,' that they should be condemned for their ungodliness; for 'Enoch prophesied before to (or of,) these ungodly men, saying, The Lord cometh with thousands of his saints ποιῆσαι κρίσιν, to do judgment upon all that are ungodly ἀσεβεῖς, (verse 14,) and to convince them of all the hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him;' (which answers to the 'deniers of the Lord that bought them,' verse 4.) And in the parallel place of St. Peter, their punishment is styled, 'the punishment long ago denounced against them, viz. that they should be reserved to the day of judgment to be punished,' (verse 9,) that they should 'perish in their corruption,' (verse 12,) they being men, 'for whom the blackness of darkness was reserved for ever.' (Jude verse 13th.) And this is the very thing that St. Peter, from verse the 4th to the 13th, and St. Jude, from this to the 16th verse, set themselves to prove; and this also is the import of the word προεγράφη, viz. 'forewritten of:' So Rom. xv. 4, ὅσα προεγράφη, 'Whatsoever things were before written were written for our instruction.' Gal. iii. 1, 'Before their eyes Jesus Christ crucified προεγράφη, was written of or set forth' in the Old Testament as crucified. See this sense given by Œcumenius on the place.

VI. "Answer to Hord," part 1. page 4, Dr. Twiss confesseth, that the scriptures speak fully of election, sparingly of reprobation in most places: "Yet some passages we have," saith he,

^b 2 Peter ii. 3.

^c 2 Peter ii. 3.

“ which give light and evidence to both alike; for like as it is said (Acts ii. the last) that ‘ God added to the church such as should be saved,’ so (2 Cor. iv. 3.) it is said, ‘ If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that be lost;’ and as it is signified (Matth. xxiv, 24.) that it is impossible seducers should prevail over the elect; so (2 Thess. ii) both as much is signified (verse 13,) and also expressed (verse 10, 11.) that they shall prevail among ‘ them that perish;’ and (1 Cor. i. 18.) we are given to understand jointly that ‘ the gospel is to them that perish foolishness; but to us who are saved it is the power of God;’ and (Rom. ix. 18.) that as God ‘ hath mercy on whom he will have mercy,’ so ‘ whom he will he hardeneth.’ And like as (Acts xiii. 48.) we read, that ‘ as many believed as were ordained to eternal life;’ which phrase of being ‘ ordained to eternal life,’ I conceive to be all one with ‘ writing our names in Heaven;’ (Luke x. 20.) and writing us in Heaven. (Heb. xii. 23.) And this phrase I take to be all one with ‘ writing of us in the Book of Life;’ so, on the other side, we read, that ‘ they whose names were not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, should wonder when they beheld the beast; and not so only, but worship him also.’^d

ANSWER. Now to all these citations, most of which are palpably impertinent, I answer in the general, that they signify no more than those words of Christ, ‘ He that believeth shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned;’^e ‘ except ye repent, ye shall perish;’^f (for that exceptive contains this proposition, *He that repenteth shall not perish;*) and these words of the Baptist *He that believeth in the Son hath everlasting life; he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*^g For those that are lost, (2 Cor. iv. 3.) are (verse 4.) those that believe not; and that, not because of any antecedent decree of God that they should be lost, but because the God of this world, that is, the Devil, had blinded their eyes, &c. And those who perish, (2 Thess. ii. 10,) are those who believe not the truth, (verse 12,) who received not the truth worthy to be beloved and embraced.’ (verse 10.) See the note there. ‘ They who perish,’ (1 Cor. i. 18,) are the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles: (verses 21, 22, 23.) ‘ They who are hardened,’ (Rom. ix, 18,) are the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction’

^d Rev. xiii. 8. xvii. 8.^e Mark xvi. 16.^f Luke xiii. 3, 5.^g John iii. 36.

by their own wickedness, completed by their infidelity or want of Faith, which made Christ preached to them ‘*a stone of stumbling.*’ (verses 32, 33.)—To proceed to those places which may seem to require a more particular notice:

First. The phrase of ‘*being written in the book of life,*’ is Jewish; and doth not signify the absolute election of any person to eternal life, but only the present right of the just person to life, and therefore it is called “the book of life written for the just;” (Targum on Ezek. xiii. 9.) “the book of the just;” (Targ. Jon. on Exod. xxxiii. 32,) “in which,” say the ^h Apostolical Institutions, “we come to be written τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ ἐυνοίᾳ, καὶ σπουδῇ, ‘by our good affection and industry;’” and from which, men, as they may be written in it when they are converted from vice to virtue, “so may they be blotted out when they backslide,” says St. Basil, “from virtue to iniquity;”ⁱ according to that saying of the Psalmist, ‘*let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not written with the righteous.*’^k that is, says Ainsworth, “Let them be cut off from being any longer counted thy people, or registered in the writing of the house of Israel:” and saith ^l St. Jerom, “They were written in the book of God, who in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes, *legem fortissimè defenderant,* ‘firmly continued in the law;’ and they were blotted out of it, *qui legis prævaricatores extiterant,* ‘who were deserters of it.’” Accordingly Christ threateneth to some, that He would ‘*blot their names out of the book of life;*’ (Rev. xxii. 19,) and promiseth ‘*to him that overcometh that He would not blot his name out of that book.*’ (Rev. iii. 5.) And God himself saith to Moses, ‘*Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of the book of life which I have written.*’ This book is said to be written ‘*from the foundation of the world,*’ God having, from the beginning, Adam and others who are styled the sons of God; and not to have a name written in it, is not to be owned as God’s sons and faithful servants. When therefore St. John saith, that ‘*they whose names were not in this book of life, written from the foundation of the world, worshipped the beast,*’ he means they, and they only, did so, who never were by God esteemed or registered in the number of good christians.

^h L. 8, c. 1.

ⁱ In Isa.

^k Psalm lxix. 28.

^l In Dan. xii. 2.

Secondly. The passage cited from the Thessalonians concerns only the Jews, who having rejected the gospel of our Lord, and their Messiah, confirmed by the strongest evidence of innumerable miracles done truly before their eyes, and so believed not the truth at all, or else revolted from it, after they had embraced it, by an almost general apostasy; and so received '*it not in the love of it, that they might be saved,*' declaring that they were by God's just judgment permitted by the false miracles of their impostors, assisted by the power of satan, to believe a lie, and so to perish for their infidelity or apostasy, as has been fully proved. And should this be enlarged to all who refuse to believe the truth preached and confirmed to them, or else bore no sincere affection to it when they had embraced it, what is this to an eternal decree of reprobation supposed to be made concerning the greater part of mankind before the world was made?

Lastly. As for the passages cited from Romans ix, they can be nothing to the purpose, that chapter being not at all designed to determine any thing concerning God's absolute decrees of dealing with mankind in general, or any particular person thus or thus, as to their final and eternal state; but only to justify his dealings, as in his providence he actually had done, with the unbelieving Jews and the believing Gentiles, in rejecting the Jews upon their stubborn infidelity and the hardness of their hearts, and admitting the believing Gentiles to be his church and the spiritual seed of Abraham, upon their faith and submission to the terms God had proposed for their justification and acceptance with him; as appears,

1. From his recapitulation of his whole discourse in these words, (verse 30,) τὶ ἐν ἐπέμμεν, '*What do we say then?*' that is, What is the substance of what I have intended in this whole discourse? It is even this,—'*That the Gentiles which (before the preaching of the gospel,) followed not after righteousness, have yet (through faith) attained unto righteousness; but the Jews following after the law of righteousness (or after righteousness by the law) have not attained unto righteousness, because they sought it not by faith (in Christ.)*'

2. This is apparent from the Apostle's prayer and '*vehement desire that all Israel might be saved.*' (Chap. x. 1.) For upon

supposition of such a decree of reprobation concerning them, this must not only have been a vain prayer, but even an opposing of his will, and εὐδοκία, 'the good pleasure of God' revealed to him; since it is evident he prays here 'for the salvation of all Israel,' of them whose zeal to God 'was not according to knowledge,' and who were 'ignorant of God's righteousness;' (verse 2, 3,) and not for those only who were predestinated to salvation.

CHAP. II.

Containing arguments against this absolute decree of reprobation or preterition of fallen man.

I COME now to shew that this doctrine is plainly contrary both to the NATURE and the WILL of GOD.

To the perfections of his NATURE; for

I. God doth immutably, unchangeably, and from the necessary perfection of his own nature, require that we should love, fear, and obey him. Were it not so, the Heathens who can only know this by the light of nature, or by consideration of the divine perfections, would lie under no obligations to love, fear, or serve him; whereas among the Heathen sages, ἐπεσθαι and πειθεσθαι τῷ Θεῷ, 'to obey God and follow his directions,' is represented as the perfection and the chief end of man. Again, his moral and imitable perfections, viz. his holiness; justice, truth, goodness, mercy, being essential perfections flowing from his nature, must also be the rule of the exercise of his will and power; and as God, whilst he is what he is, cannot but be the proper object of our love, fear, and our obedience, even so by the complacency he hath in those moral perfections, he cannot but be desirous that all men should imitate them, and resemble him in them as much as they are able, and therefore hath required his people to be 'holy, because the Lord their God is holy, to be merciful as their heavenly Father is merciful, to be kind to the unthankful and the wicked, that they may be his children, to be righteous as he is righteous, and to put on the new man which is created after God in righteousness, and true holiness.' Hence the philosophers have, by the light of nature, conspired in this truth, that man then walks most suitably to his nature and his dignity, when he walks after the exam-

ple of God; that the very end of all philosophy καὶ τέλος τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, 'and the perfection of human nature,' consists in being like to God; and that we then best glorify him, when we resemble him in these perfections; that it ought to be his chief care συζῆν, 'to live the life of God,' συμπολιτεύεσθαι, 'to converse still with him,' ὁμοιωθῆναι, 'to be like him,' and ὁμογνωμονῆσαι 'to be of the same mind, will, and affections to him,' and lastly, to be θεοφορημένοι 'possessed and acted by him.' He therefore cannot have decreed, that is, have willed, that the greatest part of men should be for ever left under an incapacity of loving, fearing, and obeying him. And seeing he must earnestly desire that all men should be holy, righteous, kind, and merciful, he cannot have ordained they should be otherwise for want of any thing on his part requisite to make them so; much less can he command them under the penalty of his severe displeasure so to be, and yet leave them under an incapacity of being so. And does he think worthily of God, who knowing that all the lapsed sons of Adam were equally the objects of his pity and commiseration, equally capable of his mercy, and equally his offspring, and so no more unworthy of it than the rest, believes that his decrees of governing and disposing of them are wholly founded on such an absolute will as no rational or wise man acts by; so that he determines of the everlasting fate of the souls he daily doth create after the fall of Adam, without respect to any good or evil done by them, and so without respect to any reason why he puts this difference, or any condition on their parts; and yet afterwards in all his revelations made in order to the regulating of their lives, suspends that everlasting state upon conditions; or that he hath placed the far greatest part of them under an absolute decree of reprobation, which leaves them incapable of salvation, and then not only bids them *save themselves*, invites, encourages, and sends messengers to intreat them to be reconciled, knowing he doth all this in vain, when he does no more; and then eternally torments them for neglecting that salvation, though he knows they never can do otherwise without that grace which he hath absolutely purposed for ever to deny to or withhold from them? Surely he thinks more worthily of the God of love and mercy, who looks upon him as an Universal Lover of the souls of men, who therefore 'would

have all men to be saved, and gives them all things necessary unto life and godliness,' draws them to him 'with the cords of a man, the cords of love,' and by the most alluring promises, and by the strivings of his Holy Spirit; swears to them that 'he would not they should perish; warns them of, and conjures them to avoid, the things which tend to their eternal ruin; directs them to the means by which they may most certainly escape it; rejoiceth more at the conversion of one sinner, than at the righteousness of ninety nine persons who need no repentance; and when all the methods of his grace are lost upon them, breaks forth into compassionate and melting wishes,—that they had 'known the things which do belong to their eternal peace.' Again, consider whether he conceives more truly and honourably of God,—who thinks he chuses his favourites without reason, and rewards them without any qualifications but those he irresistibly works in them,—or he who looks upon him as One who dealeth with all men not according to his but their own works, as they are willing and obedient, as they render themselves fit objects of his love, and rewards them as they use duly, or receive his grace in vain, as they improve the talents he hath given them, or hide them in a napkin. Whether, lastly, he represents God honourably, who believes that God by his revealed will hath declared he 'would have all men to be saved,' and yet by an antecedent secret will would have the greatest part of them to perish; that he hath imposed a law upon them which he requires them to obey on penalty of his eternal displeasure, though he knows they cannot do it without his irresistible grace, and yet is absolutely resolved to withhold this grace from them, and then to punish them eternally for what they could not do without it; and after all inquires, 'Why will you die? How long will it be ere this people obey me? When wilt thou be made clean? What could I have done more for their welfare which I have not done?' Or he who believes it more agreeable to the truth and the sincerity of the divine nature, to deal plainly with his creatures, and mean what he says; and therefore not to seem very desirous they should do or avoid, what he knows they never could do or avoid, and he will not enable them to do or avoid, and then complains that they have not done it, and inquires what was wanting on his part to enable them to do it.

II. This will be further evident from those scriptures which declare God is *'long-suffering to us ward, not being willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance;'* and that he sent his Prophets to prevent their ruin, *'because he had compassion on them;'* that he commands his prophets, on peril of contracting the guilt of their blood, to warn his people, that, without repentance and reformation, they must die, and to let them know, that as sure as he lives "he would not the death of him that dies, but rather would have him turn and live;" and that therefore they could have no reason to say his "ways were not equal," or that they suffered for their fathers' sins. For,

First. Doth it become the wisdom of God to use or to appoint those means for the effecting what he would have done, which he knows to be no means, because no ways sufficient to produce the assigned end; and to withhold, yea, to decree to withhold, that which alone could make them so? And yet if he used only his *'long-suffering to lead men to repentance;'* sent only prophets and messengers to warn them to turn from the evil of their ways; (and this *long-suffering* and these *warnings* must be ineffectual to these ends, where that *unfrustrable grace* which he did not vouchsafe is wanting;) he used only means which he knew never could produce these ends, and withheld that which could alone produce them.

Secondly. Doth it become the sincerity and wisdom of God to declare he did these things out of *'compassion to his people;'* till they so far despised his messengers, and rejected their warnings and admonitions, *'that there was no further remedy'* for them, *'no healing of them;'* saith the Hebrew, when he himself beheld them in their *Utopian massa perdit*,* without the least compassion, never designing them any remedy, or, which is in event the same, not any that could be effectual, but even then decreeing to withhold from them that grace without which there could be *no healing* by any messenger or prophet sent unto them? Does it become either his wisdom or sincerity to quarrel with his people for saying *'The fathers had eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth were set on edge;'* or that *'they died for the sins of their forefathers;'* or, for enquiring thus, *'If our transgressions and our sins lie upon us,*

* In their imaginary lost mass.

and we pine away in them, can we then live?' when his decree had made it the sad doom, not of them only, but even of the greatest part of mankind, to die eternally for the sin of their forefather Adam, and the apple he had eaten so long ago, set all his children's teeth on edge, and made so many precious souls to pine away in that iniquity, so that they could not live? Or could he hope to manifest the equity of his ways by saying, "All souls are mine," if he was not only like the Ostrich to the greatest part of them, "hardening himself against his own offspring," made after his own image, "as if they were not his," but even making the most of them, after the fall of Adam, under that previous act of preterition, which rendered their damnation unavoidable? Is he so concerned to justify the equity of his proceedings by declaring, that "the son shall not die a temporal death for the iniquity of his father," but "the soul that personally sinneth he shall die;" when this more obvious exception lay against the equity of his proceedings with the sons of men,—that most of the sons of Adam lay under death eternal, by his peremptory decree, for the sin of their *forefather*, committed long before they had a being, and so before they were in a capacity of any personal offence? Does it become his sincerity to seem so earnest in his calls to them to repent, and turn themselves from their transgressions, and to inquire with so much seeming concern, 'Why will you die?'^b And to strengthen his invitation with an oath and solemn declaration, "I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, therefore turn yourselves and live ye;"^c and an enquiry, הֲלוֹא (תִּפְצְטוּ) בְּשׁוּבוֹ (Halo Chaphatseti Beshubo,)* 'Am I not much delighted in that, that the sinner turneth from his evil way and liveth?' when he himself hath past that act of preterition on them, which renders it impossible for them to repent, or turn from the evil of their ways, and therefore impossible that they should live?

To say that God is serious, sincere, and in good earnest, in these declarations and enquiries, although *revera decrevit gratiam necessariam ad illa præstanda eis non indulgere, et eos ad perniciem præscripsit,*^d 'He hath decreed not to vouchsafe them grace

^a Job xxxix. 16.

^b Ezek. xviii. 30, 31, 32.

^c Ver. 23.

* The Edition of 1735 has Halo Kaphattii Beshab; although I am delighted does not occur in that form in the 25d verse; but it is הַחֲפִיץ הַחֲפִיץ (Hechaphitng echaphitng,) from the same root. ED.

^d Mares. contr. Socin. To. 1. p. 609.

necessary to perform these things, and hath appointed them for destruction, only because the thing commanded, though it be impossible to be done by them, would be grateful to him if it were done, and therefore may be said to be willed by him, *voluntate simplicis complacentiæ*, 'by a will of complacency,'—is most apparently to put a force upon the text, to delude men with vain words, and to make the great and good God speak so to his people in the concerns of their salvation, as a wise, honest, and sincere man would be ashamed to speak to his neighbour.

And (*First*,) it puts a manifest force upon the text. For in what propriety of speech can he be said to be more desirous that lapsed sinners should return from the evil of their ways and live, than that they should continue in their sins and die, who seeing them under an absolute necessity of dying without grace necessary to avoid it, leaves them under that sad necessity? And who seeing them under an equal incapacity of living without the same grace, decrees that they shall never have it, and therefore in effect saith, "They shall die and not live?" Surely when that which they say would be grateful to God, is by him left under a known impossibility of being done, he cannot properly be said to will it at all, because *voluntas non est impossibilium*, 'a true will only respects things possible;' much less can he be said to will it, rather than that death, which by his own decree, that is, his will and rule of acting, he hath made impossible to be avoided.

Again. Doth he not delude men with vain words, who teacheth that a God of truth and sincerity, and of great goodness, doth with much seeming ardency and compassion, enquire of persons absolutely doomed to death by his own prescription, "Why will you die?" and saith unto them with such symptoms of a passionate concern, "Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, Why will you die? Repent, and be converted from all your transgressions, so iniquity shall not be your ruin;" when he himself had from eternity appointed them to ruin, and purposed to withhold from them that grace without which it was impossible they should repent or be converted? And that he calls upon them to "cast away from them all their transgressions whereby they have transgressed, and make themselves a new heart, and a new spirit, for I have no pleasure in their death;" when he himself only propounds the way of life unto them upon impossible conditions?

Did ever any honest man sincerely thus attempt to engage another to that, which he beforehand knew was impossible for him to do without that help he had determined to deny him? Or enquire, why he would do what he well knew he never could avoid? Did ever any wise physician, oculist, or chirurgeon say to the blind, the deaf, and lame, 'I am not willing you should still continue 'under these distempers, put away therefore your blindness, deafness, and lameness, and it shall be well with you;' when they well knew it was impossible for them to do it without their art, and that they were resolved it should afford them no assistance in so doing? If then the case be perfectly the same, in reference to all to whom God hath decreed not to afford sufficient grace to enable them to repent, and to turn to him, or to obtain a "new heart and spirit," and more especially to them, *quos ad perditionem præscripsit*, 'whom he hath ordained to die eternally;' who can imagine a God of wisdom and sincerity, not to say goodness, should so deal with the generality of lapsed men, as no good, wise, honest, or true-hearted man, could have the face to deal with one like himself? Infinite are the demonstrations which might be produced against this tremendous decree, but I shall wave them all at present, intending in the section containing arguments against an absolute election, to confute both these decrees together.

CHAP. III.

Concerning predestination, or the absolute election of some particular persons to eternal life.

THIS, (1.) with respect to the end, is an absolute decree and purpose of bringing a certain number of persons to eternal life, without respect to their foreseen faith or perseverance.

(2.) As it respects the means, it is an eternal decree and purpose of giving to these men, and these alone, that effectual grace which shall infallibly and infrustrably produce in them faith, sanctification, and perseverance to the end.

And here note, that this *election* or *predestination* considereth all men in the same condition, alike miserable and damnable,

alike impotent and wanting effectual grace, and alike meet to be the objects of his eternal love and partakers of effectual grace. So that as in two apples of equal goodness, no reason can be given why I should chuse one, rather than the other; so neither can any reason be assigned why all or any of these persons are thus elected to salvation, rather than all or any that are not elected.— In opposition to this doctrine I assert,

First. That the election mentioned in the holy scriptures, is not that of particular persons, but only of churches and nations.

Secondly. That this election doth import rather their being chosen to the enjoyment of the means of grace, than to a certainty of being saved by those means; that it is only that which puts them in a capacity of having all the privileges and blessings which God hath promised to his church and people, rather than under any absolute assurance of their salvation, or of any such grace as shall infallibly, and without any possibility of frustration, procure their salvation.

Thirdly. That the election to salvation mentioned in the holy Scriptures is only through faith joined with holiness, according to those words of St. Paul *a* ‘*God hath elected you (Thessalonians) to salvation, ἐν ἀγιασμῶν, by the SANCTIFICATION of the Spirit and the belief of the truth.*’ That it is only a conditional election upon our perseverance in a life of holiness, and is to be made sure unto us ‘*by good works,*’ according to that exhortation of St. Peter, *b* ‘*give diligence to make your calling and election sure, διὰ τῶν καλῶν ἔργων, BY GOOD WORKS,*’ as both the Fathers, the Syriac, the Vulgar, the Æthiopic, and many ancient copies read, and as the *text* requires, the words immediately following being these, ‘*For if you do these things, you shall never fall;*’ plainly declaring, that both the making of their calling and election sure, depended on their doing of those works of ‘*virtue, godliness, temperance, patience, brotherly kindness and charity,*’ mentioned verses 5, 6, 7, of that chapter.

Now that the whole society, or all the members of the church of God and Christ, are, in the sense of scripture, the chosen and elect of God; or that the election mentioned in the holy scriptures is

a 2 Thess. ii. 13.

b 2 Pet. i. 10.

c Ver. 11.

not an absolute election of particular persons to salvation, but rather of whole nations and societies to be his church and his peculiar people, will be made fully evident from an impartial view of all those places of the Old and the New Testament; where this phrase frequently occurs. And,

II. FIRST. In the Old Testament, it is most evident, that not the righteous and obedient persons only are styled the elect, but the whole nation of the Jews, good and bad, were the elect of God. For in the books of Moses, this phrase is still applied to the whole nation of the Jews, as in these words, '*Because he loved thy fathers therefore* ἐξελεξατο τὸ σπέρμα αὐτῶν, HE CHOSE THEIR SEED *after them and brought them out of Egypt by his mighty power;*'^d where it is evident that the whole seed of Abraham; Isaac, and Jacob, even all that came out of Egypt, are the elect. Again, '*Jehovah thy God hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people to himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.*'^e *The Lord did not set his love upon you, and chuse you, because you were more in number than any people: But because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn to your fathers, hath he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you out of the house of bond-men, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt;* where also evident it is, (1.) That their being chosen before other nations, to be God's peculiar people, is their election. (2.) That all who were '*brought out of Egypt,*' were thus beloved and elected. (3.) That to his beloved and elected people, God only promiseth to keep covenant and mercy, provided they would love him, and obey his precepts; and that he threateneth to destroy them, and to repay them to their face, if they neglected so to do. In the tenth chapter, he speaks thus, '*The Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, καὶ ἐξελεξατο, AND HE ELECTED you their seed after them above all people; circumcise therefore the foreskin of your hearts, and be no more stiff-necked.*'^f Where again evident it is, that the whole seed of Abraham by Isaac, even the stiff-necked of them, were the elect of God. Chapter 14th, he saith to all to whom the following

^d Deut. iv. 37.

^e σε προεἰλατο καὶ προελεξατο, Deut. vii. 6, 7, 8.

^f Verse 15, 16.

precepts did belong, and therefore doubtless to all Israel, *Thou art an holy people to the Lord thy God, και σε ἐξελέξατο ὁ κύριος,* AND THE LORD HATH CHOSEN THEE OUT to be a peculiar people to himself above all nations.*

And with this notion of the words accords the constant use of the same phrase in all the prophets and sacred writers of the Old Testament. Thus Solomon saith, *Thy servant is in the midst of thy people, ὃν ἐξελέξοι,* WHICH THOU HAST ELECTED, a great people that cannot be numbered, nor counted for multitude.^h In the book of Psalms, the Jews in general are styled *the seed of Israel his servant, the children of Jacob, εκλεκτοὶ αὐτοῦ,* HIS ELECT.ⁱ There it is said, τὸν Ἰακώβ ἐαυτῷ ἐξελέξατο, *the Lord hath chosen Jacob for himself, and Israel for his own inheritance;*^k that the *Lord brought forth his people with joy, και τοὺς εκλεκτοὺς αὐτοῦ,* AND HIS ELECT with gladness.^l There he desires of God *to see the good, τῶν εκλεκτῶν,* OF HIS ELECT, and to rejoice in the gladness of his nation, and with his inheritance.^m So that throughout the book of Psalms, God's people, his servants, his nation, his inheritance, and his elect, are the same persons.

In the Evangelical Prophet, we find God speaking of *Jacob, ὃν ἐξελεξάμην,* WHOM, saith he, *I HAVE CHOSEN, and Israel whom I have loved;*ⁿ and to whom he speaks thus, *Thou art my child whom I have chosen:* there God declares he *will make waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, ποτίσαι τὸ γένος μου τὸ εκλεκτὸν,* TO GIVE DRINK TO MY CHOSEN GENERATION, my people whom I have chosen to set forth my praise.^o There we read of *Jacob my servant, and Israel mine elect;*^p and of a *mountain which his elect shall inherit, and in which his servants shall dwell.*^q

In the prophet Jeremy, we find God is displeased with them who said, *The two families אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר (Asher bachar) WHOM the Lord HATH CHOSEN he hath even cast them off.*^r The prophet Ezekiel speaks of the day *when the Lord chose Israel, and lifted up his hand to the seed of the house of Jacob,*^s or engaged

g Verse 2. h 1 Kings iii. 8. i Psalm cv. 6, 43. k Psalm cxxxv. 4. l Psalm cvi. 5.

m Isa. xlii. 8, 9. n iii. 11, 20, 21. o xiv. 4. p lxxv. 9. q Jer. xxxiii. 24.

r Ezek. xx. 5.

himself by covenant to be their God. The prophet Zechariah styles God, "The Lord who hath chosen Jerusalem," and speaketh of a time when he shall yet "comfort Zion, and shall yet chuse Jerusalem:"^s and Daniel, of a time when *οι εκλεκτοι αυτου*, "HIS ELECT shall not be able to stand before their enemies."^t

And to carry on this phrase through the times of the Old Testament, in the book of Esther we are told of a time in which *το γένος εκλεκτόν*, "'THE CHOSEN GENERATION' should have perished, that is, in which the wicked Haman designed to cut off the Jews. And in the book of Ecclesiasticus we are informed that "Joshua was made great, *επι σωτηριαν εκλεκτων αυτου*, FOR SAVING THE ELECT OF GOD, that he might set Israel in their inheritance."^u

Thus have I traced this phrase through the Old Testament, and shewed that it belongs not to particular persons but to the whole Jewish nation; to the bad, as well as to the good, among them; to them to whom he threateneth the worst of evils, as well as them to whom he promises the greatest blessings.

III. SECONDLY. When in the New Testament it is applied to Christians, it plainly doth include as many as were converted to the christian faith. For,

(1.) When it is applied to the Jewish converts it plainly signifies all that had been converted to the christian faith; thus when St. Peter writes to those of the dispersion (who had obtained like precious faith with them) living in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia (Minor), and Bithynia, he saith to them all, "Ye are *γένος εκλεκτόν*, AN ELECT GENERATION, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye might shew forth the praises of him that hath called you from darkness into his marvellous light;"^y all which are the very titles given to the whole Jewish nation in the Old Testament. Now since St. Peter could not affirm of all these christians, without a revelation, that they were *elect*, according to that sense of the word which makes it to import "men absolutely designed for eternal happiness," he only must affirm this of them all, because they all professed christianity and so were visible members of the church of Christ; as will be farther evident if we consider these particulars :

^s Chap. iii. 2.

^t Dan. xi. 15.

^u Esth. xvi. 21.

^x Chap. xlv. 1.

^y 1 Pet. ii. 9.



(i.) That he exhorteth these elect, “not to fashion themselves according to the lusts of their former ignorance;^a to lay aside all wickedness, deceit, envy, hypocrisy, and evil speaking; as strangers and pilgrims, to abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul;^b not to spend the rest of their time according to the lusts of men;^c to be careful that none of them did suffer as a murderer or thief;^d which are offences not incident to men elected to salvation, whilst they continue so to be.

(ii.) That the apostle affirmeth the same thing of the whole church of Babylon, saying “the church which is at Babylon, *συνεκλεκτῇ* ELECTED TOGETHER with you, saluteth you.”^e Now that all the members of that great church at Babylon, be it eastern or western, were chosen out of the world to the profession of christianity, and in that sense elected, he who was with them could not be ignorant; but that they all were absolutely elected to salvation, was more than he could know.

(iii.) That whereas this epistle is inscribed ‘to the elect,’ the second epistle, sent to the same persons, beginneth thus, ‘To them who have obtained like precious faith with us;’^f and it not only speaks of some who had “forsaken the right way,” and had “gone astray, turning with the dog to the vomit;” but also prophesies that “those false teachers who brought in damnable doctrines, even denying the Lord that bought them, should make merchandize of some of them.”

(*Lastly,*) These words are plainly taken from Isaiah xliii. 20, 21; where we read thus, “I gave waters in the wilderness to water τὸ γένος μου τὸ ἐκλεκτὸν MY CHOSEN GENERATION, my peculiar people,” purchased to shew forth τὰς ἀρετὰς, ‘MY PRAISE,’ which are the very words mentioned 1 Pet. ii. 9. Now though it be unquestionable that the whole Jewish nation are styled God’s ‘chosen generation, and his peculiar people,’ it is as sure they were not all elected to salvation. We then may reasonably conclude, that the same words applied by St. Peter to all these several christian churches, do not imply that all their particular members were elected to salvation, but only that they were all members of the church of Christ.

^a 1 Pet. i. 14.

^b Chap. ii. 1, 11.

^c Chap. iv. 2, 3.

^d Verse 15.

^e Chap. v. 13.

^f Chap. i. 1. ii. 1, 15, 22.

And thus we read of "the elect lady" in St. John, (ep. ii. verse 1,) and "the elect sister," verse 13, that is, the *christian lady and sister*; and when St. James saith ἐξελέξατο ὁ Θεὸς 'GOD HATH CHOSEN *the poor of the world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom,*' his meaning is, that they were called out of the world to the profession of the faith, which, if they lived according to it, would make them heirs of his heavenly kingdom. For the apostles, in these epistles, writing to those nations which had been still accustomed to this notion of the word, and were all styled "the elect," must be supposed, when they wrote to them, to use the words of the Old Testament in the sense in which they always understood them.

And in like manner when Christ saith, '*many are called, but few are chosen,*'^a these parables plainly relate to the Jews, as Theophylact well notes, and the import of those words is this, That though many of them were called by Christ and his apostles to faith in him, both in Judea and in the dispersions, yet few of them did or would accept of him as their Saviour, or embrace the faith of Christ, as hath been fully proved, note on Mat. xx. 16. xxii. 14. So that here "the elect," and "the believers of the christian faith," are the same persons. When he saith, (Mat. xxiv. 22.) that '*for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened,*' He styles τοὺς πιστοὺς τοὺς ἐν μέσσοις ἀπολελειμμένους αὐτοῖς, 'THE FAITHFUL LEFT IN THE MIDST OF THE UNBELIEVING JEWS,' "THE ELECT," saith Chrysostom; "*for the elect's sake these days shall be shortened,*" that is, saith Jerom, "*ne temporum morâ fides concutiatur credentium,* 'lest by the length of these tribulations the faith of believers should be shaken.'" See the note on the same words, Mark xiii. 20. When he adds, (Mat. xxiv. verse 2,) that '*the false Christs and false prophets should do as much as in them lay, by signs and wonders, to deceive the elect,*' there also are we to understand the persevering christians. See the note there.—And when he saith, verse 31, that then "God should send his angels to gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other," the meaning may be, either that He would send his angels, as Eusebius and Epiphanius say He

^a Mat. xx, 16. xxii. 14.

did, to warn the christians in all quarters of Judea to gather themselves together, departing from the unbelieving Jews, that they might be preserved from their ruin; or that he would send his messengers with the sound of the gospel to gather together as many as did or would believe the gospel from among the nations of the earth.

THE ELECT (Luke xviii. 7.) are also the whole body of true believers; for otherwise God's readiness to '*hear the prayers of his elect,*' could be no argument to christians in the general to pray always and not faint, verse 1. Moreover, that enquiry, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" verse 8, shews that even the faith of many of these *elect* would fail.

'*The election according to grace,*' mentioned Romans xi, 5, doth in like manner signify the whole body of the Jewish converts, even all that did embrace the christian faith, and were not hardened in or blinded by their prejudices and infidelity; as is apparent from the following words, verse 7, *ἡ δὲ ἐκλογή ἐπέτυχεν* 'THE ELECTION HATH OBTAINED, *but the rest were blinded.*' And as it is not easy to conceive how the Apostle should know how all the Jewish converts should be absolutely elected to salvation, so is it evident from the epistles that he and others of the apostles knew the contrary; for they contain plain intimations and frequent declarations that a great number of these Jewish converts turned afterwards apostates and renounced the christian faith. That St. Paul was afraid that some of these elect would afterwards '*draw back unto perdition,*' and never doubted but they might do so, is evident from all those exhortations he directeth to them in his epistle to the Hebrews, *not to do so,* and from the direful judgments he threateneth to as many of them as should apostatize. For thus he speaks, "See to it, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another day by day that none of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin; for we are made partakers of Christ," only on this condition, that "we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast to the end."^a Again, "Seeing there remains a rest for the people of God, let us labour to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief;"^b

^a Heb. iii, 12, 13, 14.^b Heb. iv. 9, 11.

for "it is impossible to renew them to repentance who have been once enlightened, and have tasted of the spiritual gift, and have been partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, and yet fall away;"^c "look therefore diligently, lest any man fall from the grace of God, lest there be any root of bitterness springing up among you whereby many be defiled;"^d "cast not therefore away your confidence which hath great recompence of reward; for the just shall live by faith, but if any man draw back, my soul," saith God, "shall have no pleasure in him."^e Moreover, that many of them would do so, our Saviour prophesied, saying, "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many will wax cold;"^f even that love which was once fervent, and in which, "enduring to the end, they would be saved:" and that many of them did thus apostatize, or fall away to perdition, hath been fully proved, note on 2 Thess. ii. 3. From all which things it is extremely evident that the apostle neither did nor could speak of this '*remnant according to the election of grace*;' as persons absolutely elected to salvation.

'*The purpose of God according to election*,' mentioned Romans ix. 11, respecteth not the persons of Jacob and Esau, but their whole nation and posterity, according to the note of Irenæus, *Partum Rebeccæ prophetium fuisse duorum populorum.*^g* This is plain,

(i.) From the words of God to Rebecca, '*Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy loins, and the one people shall be stronger than the other, and the elder shall serve the younger.*'

(ii.) From this observation, that, as to the persons of Esau and Jacob, this was never true, (that '*the elder did serve the younger*,') but only as to their posterity, when the Edomites became tributaries to David. (2 Sam. viii. 14.) And,

(iii.) Because what is here offered as a proof or confirmation of this, is cited from the prophet Malachi, who prophesied long after Jacob and Esau were dead personally, and speaks expressly of the nation of the Edomites.

^c Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6. ^d Heb. xii. 15. ^e Heb. x. 35, 38. ^f Mat. xxiv. 12, 13. ^g L. 4. c. 38.

* '*The offspring of Rebecca was a prophecy concerning two nations.*' ED.

Now hence it clearly follows that the apostle cannot here discourse of any personal election of them to eternal life, or any absolute love or hatred of them with respect to their eternal interests; for if so, seeing he manifestly speaks of the whole nation of Israel, they must, according to this opinion, be all elected to eternal life; whereas the apostle informs us, that God was "not well pleased with many of them;" and the whole Jewish history shews the contrary. Again, then must the whole posterity of Esau be the objects of God's hatred and his reprobation; which is so far from being true, that holy Job and all his friends appear to have been of the posterity of Esau. It is therefore certain, that the apostle here only speaks of the election of one seed and nation before another, to be accounted and treated by him as the seed of Abraham, or owned for his peculiar people.

And whereas the apostle also speaks of "vessels of mercy prepared for glory;" as they were thus prepared by their faith, so were they vessels of mercy, even both Jews and Gentiles, by being called, verse 24, and by their being made his people, his beloved, verse 25.

When then the same apostle saith, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" here again 'the elect' and "true believers" are the same: and God having justified them through faith in him that died for them, who can charge them with guilt in order to their condemnation?

And suitable to this notion of the word "election," where it respects the Jewish nation, or the Jewish converts, is the import of it in those epistles; where whole nations, communities, or churches are styled "the elect."

Thus, v. g. all the faithful brethren in Colosse, are styled "the elect of God;"^h and yet to these elect he promiseth the blessings of christianity, only if they continued '*rooted and grounded in the faith, and were not moved away from the hope of the gospel;*'ⁱ And he expresseth both his care and fear, lest they should be deceived and robbed of their reward;^k and calls upon them to mortify their fleshly lusts, as being things which would pull down the wrath of God upon them.^l

The same apostle saith to the whole church of Thessalonica, styled the "Church in God the Father, and in our Lord Jesus Christ, I know your election of God."^m Now he knew well that God designed them to be his church and people; and therefore gives this reason of his knowledge,—“for our gospel came not to you in word only, but in power.” But it is not easy to imagine how he should know, that all the members of that church should be absolutely elected to salvation, without a special revelation; and that he did not know this, he sufficiently declares by expressing afterwards his fears “lest satan should have tempted them, and his labour should have been in vain.”ⁿ In his second epistle he saith, “We ought to give thanks for you, that God hath elected you from the beginning to salvation, by sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth;”^o and yet he there calls upon them “to depart from every brother who walked disorderly, and not according to the tradition he had received;”^p and not to ^qmix themselves with them who would not obey the words of the apostle.

In his second epistle to Timothy he saith, “He suffers all things for the elect’s sake;”^r but then if you compare this with the parallel place of the same apostle, in his epistle to the Colossians, ^syou will find the elect to be no other than the whole church of Christ, of which he was a minister.

In his epistle to Titus he styles himself ‘*an apostle according to the faith of God’s elect.*’^t but having proved that all christians are styled “the elect,” we may well interpret this of the faith of christians in the general, he being an apostle in reference to them all, even to them to whom his gospel was ‘*a savour of death,*’^u as well as to them to whom it was ‘*a savour of life.*’

Lastly. Whereas the strength of their doctrine seems to be placed in those words of the apostle, “He hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen us in him from the foundation of the world;”^w these words are plainly spoken of and to all the saints in Ephesus, and ‘*to the faithful in Christ Jesus,*’ who were all chosen out of the world to be God’s church and people; but doubtless were not all infalli-

^m 1 Thess. i. 4.
^j Verse 11.

ⁿ 1 Thess. iii. 5.
^r 2 Tim. ii. 10.

^o 2 Thess. ii. 13.
^s Col. i. 24, 25.
^w Eph. i. 3, 4.

^t Tit. i. 1.

^p 2 Thess. iii. 6, 11.
^u 2 Cor. ii. 16.

bly predestinated to salvation, but only to the adoption of children, verse 5, which is the immediate fruit of faith, "we being all the children of God through faith in Christ Jesus." This is exceeding evident,

(1.) From this very epistle, in which he exhorts them *'that they henceforth walk not as other Gentiles in the vanity of their mind;'*^x and cautions them that no man deceive them into the commission of those things *'for which the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience;'*^y and bids them "take to themselves the whole armour of God, that they may be able to stand in the evil day; and, having done all, to stand."^z

(2.) From his prediction, that "after his departure grievous wolves should enter in, not sparing the flock; and that among themselves men should arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them." (Acts xx. 29, 30.) And

(3.) From his advertisement to Timothy, that "all in Asia had turned away from him; that Hymenæus and Philetus had overthrown the faith of some;"^a that the time would come when they would not endure sound doctrine, but would turn their ears from the truth; that some, having put away a good conscience, concerning faith had made shipwreck; that some were turned aside after satan, and had erred from the faith;"^b all which are inconsistent with the character of the elect, that is, of persons infallibly predestinated to salvation.

IV. The other words by which it is conceived such an election may be taught and signified in the New Testament are these three; *πρόγνωσις* 'the fore-knowledge,' *πρόθεσις* 'the purpose,' *προορισμὸς* 'the fore-appointment' of God; of all which let it be noted;

First. That none of them relate to particular or individual persons, (save only when they are used of our Blessed Lord and his sufferings for us,) but only to churches and nations in the general: To the whole church of believing Jews and Gentiles, whom God had chosen, *προορίσας*, 'fore-appointing them to adoption by Jesus Christ.' (Eph. i. 5.) In whom also, saith he, *ἐκκληρώθημεν* 'we were made his portion' or peculiar people, *προορισθέντες κατὰ πρόθεσιν*, 'being fore-appointed so to be according to his purpose.'

^x Chap. iv. 17.

^y Chap. v. 6.

^z Chap. vi. 13.

^a 2 Tim. i. 15. ii. 17, 18. iii. 5, 4.

^b 1 Tim. i. 19. v. 15. vi. 21.

(verse 11.) God having purposed and fore-appointed that this should be the portion of believers, and the consequence of faith in Christ, by which we become the sons of God:—To all the converted Jews throughout their dispersion, they being elected *κατὰ πρόθεσιν*, ‘according to the purpose of God the Father.’ (1 Pet. i. 2.) And, lastly, to the posterity of Jacob and Esau; of whom, that *ἡ κατὰ ἐκλογὴν τῆ θεοῦ πρόθεσις*, ‘the purpose of God according to election might stand,’ it was said when Rebecca bore them, ‘the elder shall serve the younger.’ (Rom. ix. 11.)

Secondly. That this fore-knowledge, purpose, and appointment, is only that of calling men to the knowledge of salvation by Christ Jesus; thus the apostle teacheth, that he was appointed to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, according to the ancient ‘purpose which God had made in Christ Jesus our Lord, (Eph. iii. 11.) and that according to his purpose before ages, he called us with an holy calling.’ (2 Tim. i. 9.)

Thirdly. This calling is by God designed *ἐπὶ τούτω*,* ‘that they who are thus called, might obtain salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, (2 Thess. ii. 13.) through sanctification of the Spirit, to obedience, and through the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus;’ all christians being chosen to this end, ‘that they might be holy and unblameable before God in love.’ (Eph. i. 4.) But hence it cannot reasonably be argued, that this election is no larger than the holiness designed to be produced by it; for *the riches of God’s goodness, patience and long-suffering*, was certainly designed to lead all those to whom it was vouchsafed, to *repentance*; but can it be hence argued, that this goodness, patience, and long-suffering, is exercised to none but those who truly do repent? Why then doth the apostle complain of those who despised these means, and, after the vouchsafement of them, still continued ‘to treasure up wrath against the day of wrath?’^c The mission of the Baptist was ‘to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and to make ready a people prepared for the Lord;’^d but it was far from having this effect on all to whom he preached. The end of the Messiah’s coming to the Jews, was ‘that he might save his people from their sins,’ and might engage them ‘to serve him in holiness and righteousness all the days

^c Rom. ii. 5.

^d Luke i. 17, 76, 77, 79.

* ‘For this purpose.’ ED.

of their life;^e but it was far from having that effect upon them. "The saving grace of God appeared to all men to teach them, denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, to live righteously, soberly and godly in this present world;" but it is too sadly evident it hath not this good effect on all to whom it doth appear.

Fourthly. As men were appointed to be called from the beginning, and the gospel is 'the wisdom of God through faith to salvation,' and was that, ἣν προώρτισεν, 'WHICH GOD HAD FORE-APPOINTED' to be preached to them for that end, (1 Cor. ii. 7.) the word of God giving the hope of that salvation which he had promised before all ages; so by virtue of this purpose and fore-appointment, men were in time called by the gospel to the faith in Christ; whence they, who were thus called, are said to 'be called according to the purpose of God,' (Rom. viii. 28.) and "according to his purpose and grace given us in Christ Jesus."^f The knowledge and purpose from the foundation of the world, of sending Christ to die for the remission of sins, being the ground of this calling; whence he is said to be given up to the death 'according to the fore-knowledge of God, and his fore-appointed counsel.' (Acts ii. 23.) And they who slew him are said to have done only 'what his counsel had fore-appointed to be done.' (Acts iv. 28.) And though these observations will direct us how to answer what is argued from these and such like places in favour of this absolute election, I shall proceed to a particular consideration of what is farther offered to that purpose. And,

V. ARGUMENT FIRST.—It is said, "If all that God giveth to Christ shall come to him, then those who do not come to him are not given to him by the Father, that is, are not elected to salvation by Christ; but Christ expressly saith, 'all that the Father giveth me shall come to (that is, believe in) me.' (John vi. 37, 39.) Ergo."

Now to this argument I ANSWER, (1.) That "to be given of the Father" cannot signify to be absolutely chosen by God to eternal life; for then the Jews could not be reasonably accused for not coming to Christ, or not believing on him, much less could it be imputed to them as their great crime, that 'they would not come unto him,' or believe on him: Seeing, upon this supposition

^e Luke i. 74.

^f 1 Pet. i. 20.

that only they whom God had chosen to eternal life could come unto him, they could not come unto him who were not thus elected, and so it could not be imputed to them as their crime, that they did not that which it was never in their power to do; whereas, it is certain that our Saviour represents it as their great sin, that *'in him whom the Father had sent they believed not; and that they would not come unto him that they might have life;'*^g telling them, that *'the Spirit would convince them of sin, because they believed not in him;'*^h and that *they had no excuse for that sin;*ⁱ whereas what better excuse could be made for them than this,—that they could not come to him, as being not by God elected unto that life he offered to induce them so to do?—(2.) Hence it must follow, that Christ could not reasonably have invited them to come to him, or called them to believe in him, who were not given him of the Father. For this was to invite them to come to him that they might live, whom, he well knew, could never come, as being never chosen to obtain that life; much less could he have told them *'this was the work which God required them to do; or that the Father had given them this bread from heaven;'*^k this being to require them, according to this supposition, to believe a lie, viz. that Christ was sent to be *'the bread of life and a Saviour'* to them, for whom the Father never did intend salvation by him: And yet Christ manifestly says to them, who seeing him did not believe, and therefore were not given to him by the Father, *'Labour for that meat which nourisheth to life eternal, which the Son of man shall give to you.'* (verse 27th.) And that *'this is the work (that is, command) 'of God, that ye believe in him that he hath sent; and my Father giveth you the true bread, that cometh down from heaven and giveth life to the world,'* (verses 32, 33.) and therefore not only to the elect. I therefore here enquire thus, Was our Lord truly willing that they to whom he spake should have life? If not, why doth he say *'These things I speak to you that ye might be saved?'*^l If so, why did he say that he would do nothing but what he saw his Father doing; that *'he did always those things which pleased him;'*^m seeing it was not the Father's will that they should be saved, or come unto him that they might

^g John v. 38, 40.

^h John xvi. 9.

ⁱ Chap. xv. 22, 24.

^k John vi. 27, 29, 32.

^l John v. 34.

^m John viii. 29.

have life, whom he had not given to him, that is, had not elected to salvation?—And, (3.) were this so, the Jews must have had just occasion to complain of Christ, and of his doctrine, as being that which revealed to them their eternal and inevitable reprobation, and made it be not only necessary, but even equitable, to reject him, because the blessings which he tendered belonged not to them in general, but only to some few who by the Father should be given to him.—(4.) Observe that Christ here gives a reason why they believed not, viz. ‘*Ye have seen and believe not, because ye are not given to me of my Father;*’ now it is reasonable to conceive this reason should agree with all the other reasons assigned of their infidelity, which yet are manifestly founded, not on any thing wanting on the part of God, but on something wanting in themselves, that they might do so, viz.

(i.) That they came not to the light, ‘*because their works were evil;*’^a and being so, ‘*they hated the light, and would not come to it;*’ that they believed not in him ‘*because he spake that truth*’ which was distasteful to them. (John viii. 45.)

(ii.) Because ‘*they had not the word of God abiding in them;*’^b nor believed God bearing witness to him, nor Moses speaking of him; and so, being taught of God, they would not learn.

(iii.) Because they were not of God. ‘*Ye therefore do not hear the word because ye are not of God;*’^c and because ‘*they had not the love of God in them.*’ (John v. 40, 42.)

(iv.) Because they preferred the praise of men before the praise of God, not ‘*seeking the glory which cometh of God only.*’ (John v. 44.)

(v.) Because they were not of his sheep, not docile, or disposed to hear his voice: ‘*ye therefore believe not, because ye are not of my sheep.*’ (John x. 26.)

(vi.) Because, through the perverseness of their hearts, they could not hear his word, ‘*Why do ye not know my speech? Even because ye cannot hear my word;*’^d and this they could not do because ‘*they were of their father the devil, and his works they would do.*’ To assign therefore the true import of this phrase,

Observe, that *to be given of the Father*, doth not signify their actual faith who were thus given, but only that they were prepared

^a John iii. 19, 20.

^b John v. 38, 46.

^c John viii. 47.

^d John viii. 45.

and qualified to believe; for of them it is said, *they shall come to him*, that is, they shall believe. First they are given, and afterwards they do believe; as being by that act prepared so to do. And therefore to be given of the Father, is,

First. To be convinced by the miracles which God had wrought by him to testify the truth of his mission, and thereby to set his seal to him, that he was the Messiah, and the Son of God, and to be willing upon these testimonies to own him as such; laying aside all those prejudices and carnal affections which obstructed their coming to him. This appears,

(1.) From the description which Christ gives of the persons the Father had given to him, viz. ‘*They were thine, and thou gavest them to me, and they know that I came from the Father, and they have believed that thou hast sent me:*’^e For this is spoken of Christ’s disciples, of whom it is so often said, ‘*they saw his miracles and believed on him.*’^f By them they therefore knew that he came forth from God, and so they are said to be given of God, because he wrought those miracles which convinced them of the truth, and made them to believe in him. (2.) This we may learn from a like expression in the book of Deuteronomy, ‘*Ye have seen all the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, the great temptations, signs, and miracles which there he wrought, וְלֹא (velo) AND the Lord hath NOT given (or “hath NOT the Lord given?”) you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear unto this day.*’ For here it is manifest, that the way of God’s giving them an heart to perceive, was by working those signs and miracles before their eyes, which might induce them so to do; and yet for want of improvement of them to this end, it is admired that the Lord hath not given them this heart, or is imputed as their great fault, that he had not given it; that is, that after all he had done to produce it in them, they had it not. So וְלֹא יֵלֶךְ, (valo jelek) ‘shall NOT Amnon go with us?’ (2 Sam. xiii. 26.) וְלֹא אֶחָד אָשָׁה (velo echad asah) ‘AND HATH HE NOT MADE ONE?’ (Mal. ii. 15.) לֹא לְבִי הָלַךְ, (lo libbi halak) ‘WENT NOT MY HEART with thee?’ (2 Kings v. 26.) לֹא נִקְבַּל (lo nekabbel) ‘Shall we not receive evil?’ (Job ii. 10.)

^e John xvii. 8.

^f John ii. 11.

Secondly. Christ being sent by God the Father, that “the world through him might be saved;” and to propound to them that ‘*eternal life which was with the Father, and by him was manifested to us,*’ and to shew them the terms on which this life might be attained, as he doth throughout this chapter; that is said to be God’s record, ‘*that he hath given us eternal life, and that life is in his Son.*’ (1 John v. 11.) And here it is said, that ‘*the Father had given them the true bread from heaven, that giveth life to the world.*’ And they who were so convinced of the truth of this promise by our Saviour’s miracles, as to expect to receive it by faith in him, and obedience to his doctrine, and were so affected with it as to esteem it above all other things, and so were willing to apply themselves to the performance of those duties by which this life might be acquired, and to reject and quit those things which might obstruct them in the prosecution of it, are said to be given to him of the Father, because he wrought those miracles which gave them this conviction, (thus is the Father said to have revealed to St. Peter that ‘*Jesus was the Christ,*’ because he revealed the doctrine which he taught, and confirmed it by the miracles he wrought, as hath been proved, note on Mat. xvi. 17;) and because he gave this promise of eternal life, and sent his Son to reveal it to the world; and therefore when he saith to his apostles whom the Father had given him, “Will ye also go away?” St Peter answers, “Lord, to whom should we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life; and we believe, and know that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Now it is evident that they who have this strong conviction that our Saviour came from God, and this concernment for that eternal life he promised as their encouragement to come to him, will believe on him, because such persons can neither want assurance that they ought to do so, nor the most prevalent motives so to do, as having that eternal life before their eyes, which they more value than all worldly things, and for which they are willing and prepared to quit all their lower interests. For a conclusion of this answer, let it be noted from Chrysostom^g on the place, *τέτοις ἐπιτηδῶσι Μανιχαῖοι λέγοντες ὅτι ἐδὲν ἐφ’ ἡμῶν κείται*, ‘the Manichees use these words to destroy man’s free-will;’ and therefore he, and St.

Cyril, Euthymius, and Theophylact here note, that “Christ speaks these words, “ἐκ αὐτεξέσιον ἀναιρῶν, ἀπάγε, ‘not taking away our free-will; far be it from us so to think!’ for Christ intends no more by the giving of the Father, but his revelation from above, καὶ ψυχὴν εὐγνωμόνως δεχομένην τὴν ἀποκάλυψιν, ‘to a soul well disposed to receive it;’ that this is the gift of God, τοῖς ἀξίοις, ‘to persons fitted for it;’ and that the Father draws τὰς κατὰ προαίρεσιν ἐπιτηδειότητα εχοντας, ‘them who by their inclinations have a fitness to come to Christ;’” with many things of a like nature. See also St. Austin there.

VI. ARGUMENT SECOND. “If all that believe are ordained to eternal life, then do none believe but they who are thus ordained. But the first seems to be asserted in these words, ‘as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.’ (Acts xiii. 48.) Ergo.”

ANSWER. I answer, that these words cannot signify that there is a fixed number of persons absolutely by God ordained to eternal life, so that they, and they only, shall obtain it, and all others be excluded from it, as upon this supposition they must be: as will be evident from these considerations :

First. That if the reason why these men believed were only this,—that they were men ordained to eternal life, the reason why the rest believed not, can be this only,—that they were not by God ordained to eternal life; and if so, what necessity could there be, ‘that the word of God should be first preached to them?’ as we read, verse 46. Was it only that their damnation might be the the greater? This seems to charge the Lover of souls, whose ‘tender mercies are over all his works,’ with the greatest cruelty; seeing it makes him determine, not only that so many souls, as capable of salvation as any other, shall perish everlastingly, but also to determine that the dispensations of his providence shall be such towards them as necessarily tends to the aggravation of their condemnation. And what could even their most malicious and enraged enemy do more? What is it that the very devil aims at, by all his temptations, but this very end? viz. the aggravation of our future punishment. And therefore to assert that God had determined that his word should be spoken to these Jews for that very end, is to make God as instrumental to their ruin as the very devil.

Secondly. The Apostle gives this reason why he turned from the Jews to the Gentiles,—because ‘*the Jews had thrust away the word of God from them, and judged themselves unworthy of eternal life;*’ (verse 46,) whereas, according to this supposition, that could be no sufficient reason of his going from them to the Gentiles. For it was only they among the Jews whom God had not ordained to eternal life, who thus refused to believe, and to obey the word of God: And as many among the Gentiles as were not thus ordained to eternal life, must necessarily do the same; and so there could be no sufficient cause why he should turn from the Jews to the Gentiles upon that account. And,

Thirdly. Were this the reason why the Jews believed not,—that they were not by God ordained to eternal life, why doth St. Paul, by God’s commission, speak here to them thus, ‘*Be it known to you, brethren, that by this Jesus is declared to you remission of sins?*’ Why doth he add, ‘*and by him every one that believeth is justified, &c.*?’ Why doth he vehemently exhort them to ‘*beware, lest that saying of the prophet Habakkuk should be verified of them, You will not believe though one declare it to you?*’^h For could God have determined that these very persons should not believe to life eternal, and yet commissionate his apostles to tell them, that ‘*remission of sins and justification to life,*’ was proposed to them? Could it be revealed to St. Paul, that they could not believe to life eternal, as being not by God ordained to it, and yet would he so passionately exhort them to that faith in Jesus, which, he well knew by virtue of this revelation, belouged not to them, nor could they possibly exert? These things seem clearly to evince, this cannot be the proper import of the words. But they will very well admit of these two senses:

(1.) As many as were *disposed for eternal life*, believed; for the word *τεταγμένος*, which we here render ‘*ordained,*’ is used in this very book to signify a man, not outwardly ordained, but *inwardly disposed*, or one determined, not by God, but by his own inclinations, to do such a thing; as when it is said, St. Paul ‘*went on foot from Assos ἔτιω γὰρ ἦν διατεταγμένος, for so he was disposed;*’ⁱ the son of ^k Sirach says, that the conduct or government of a wise man is *τεταγμένος*, not *ordained by God*, but ‘*well ordered or dispo-*

^h Verse 32—41.ⁱ Acts xx. 15.^k Ecclesiasticus x. 1.

sed by himself.' Thus ^l Philo saith to Cain, "Thou needest not fear being killed by them who are, ἐν σῇ τεταγμένοι συμμαχίᾳ, 'ranked on thy side,' or of the same dispositions and inclinations with thee; and he saith to those children who having had vicious parents, were themselves virtuously inclined, that they are ^m ἀμείνω τεταγμένοι τάξει, 'placed in a better rank;' and speaking of Esau and Jacob, he represents Esau as fierce, subject to anger and other passions, and governed by his brutish part, but Jacob as a lover of virtue and truth, and so ⁿ ἐν βελτίονί τεταγμένον τάξει, 'placed in a better rank,' or of a better temper and disposition; and adds, that ^o Samuel was τεταγμένος τῷ θεῷ, 'well disposed towards God.' So ^p Simplicius interprets this word; for when Epictetus had said, "If thou desirest to be a philosopher, so retain the things that seem best to thee, ὡς ὑπὸ Θεῷ τεταγμένους εἰς ταύτην τὴν τάξιν, 'as being by God placed in that rank,' that is," saith he, ^q ὡς ὑπὸ θεῷ προτρεπομένους ἐπὶ ταῦτα, "as being by God incited to these things." And to this sense the context leads, the persons opposite to those 'disposed for eternal life,' being those who, through their indisposition to embrace the offer of it, were 'unworthy of eternal life.'

(2.) The second sense of which these words are capable is this, That as many as were 'well disposed, believed to eternal life.' Accordingly we are said to believe in Christ 'to eternal life,' and 'to the saving of the soul;' because we, by believing, do obtain a full right to that life of which we cannot fail, but by departing from the faith, or suffering it to become unfruitful in those works of righteousness which make us meet to be partakers of eternal life.

VII. ARGUMENT THIRD. "If all that love God are called according to his purpose, then hath he no purpose of calling them that do not love him. If they who are 'foreknown are predestinated to be conformed to this image of his Son,' they who are not conformed to it are not foreknown. If they who are called (effectually) are 'justified and glorified,' then all that are not justified, and will not be glorified, are not called according to his purpose, or effectually."

^l L. quod deter. p. 144.

^m De Nobilit. p. 702. C.

ⁿ De pramiis et penis. p. 712. B.

^o De Temul. p. 205. C.

^p Enchir. C. 29.

^q Simp. p. 159.

^r 1 Tim. i. 16.

^s Heb. x. 39.

ANSWER FIRST. This text expressly speaks of those who actually love God, not of those whom God hath loved with this supposed discriminating love. And *to love God, and to be called according to his purpose*, are words put by way of apposition, to shew they are both of the same import; that which God *purposed* in calling us by Christ, being ‘*that we might be holy, and unblamable before him in love.*’ (Eph. i. 4, 9.) So that the whole of this argument may be granted;—they who by God are permanently justified, and who will be glorified, being such only who do love God, and are conformed to the image of his Son, and who are called according to his purpose of making them ‘*holy before him in love,*’ and called effectually, that is, so as that God’s calling hath its designed effect upon them. And let it farther be observed, that when the apostle saith, ὅτι ἄς προέγνω, ‘*for whom he foreknew,*’ the participle ὅτι is connective; and this verse giving the reason or confirmation of what was spoken in the former, it seems necessary to interpret these words thus, “Whom he foreknew to be persons called according to his purpose, and therefore qualified for this adoption, (Rom. viii. verse 23.) them he predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son.” And it deserves to be considered, that all antiquity, till the time of St. Austin, do with one consent concur in the interpretation of the Pseud. Ambrosius on the place, *quos præcivit sibi fore devotos, ipsos elegit ad promissa præmia*, ‘*those whom he foreknew would be devoted to his service, he chose to the reward promised to them;*’ “those whom he foreknew to be τὰς ἀξίους τῆς κλήσεως, ‘*worthy to be called,*” so Theodoret and Theophylact. Some of them in their descants on these words, τοῖς κατὰ πρόθεσιν κλητοῖς ‘*called according to purpose,*’ expound them of the purpose or free-will of man, declaring that a man is called by God, κατὰ γνώμην ἢτοι προαίρεσιν,[†] ‘*according to his counsel, or election;*’ ὅτι ἐκ ἧ κλήσεως μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡ πρόθεσις τῶν καλεσμένων σωτηρίαν ἐργάσατο,[‡] ‘*for it is not the calling only, but the purpose of those that are called, which works salvation.*’ “For who,” saith Origen,[§] “should be called to justification, but those God loves? And that τὴν τᾶ ἐφ’ ἡμῖν αἰτίαν παρῆρησὶ τῆς προθέσεως καὶ τῆς προγνώσεως,^{||} the apostle shews, ‘*that the free-will of man was the*

† Eucumenius.

‡ Chrysoström.

§ In Ep. ad Rom. Ed. Huet. Tom. 2. p. 424.

|| In Locum.

cause of God's purpose and foreknowledge,' by saying 'We know that all things work together for good to them that love God,' *ὅτι ἄξιοι συνεργήσεως*, 'because they that love God are worthy of his co-operation.' And in his Latin Commentary, he saith, he "uses the word "fore-knew," to shew they were fore-known by God, *in quibus sciens quales essent amorem suum Deus affectumque possisset*, 'on whom God placed his affection, as knowing what they would be.' But,

(2.) Saith he, "If you will refer this purpose to God, we are then called according to the purpose of him, *qui sciens in eis religiosam mentem et salutis inesse desiderium*, 'who knowing they had a religious mind, and a desire of salvation,' called them; and in this sense neither the cause of our perdition or salvation will be placed in God's foreknowledge, nor our justification only in our calling: *neque glorificari de nostrâ penitus potestate sublatum est*, 'nor will our glorification be exempted from our own power.' Moreover he adds, that "by embracing this ABSURD OPINION," as he calls it, "which saith, A man therefore is not justified, and so not glorified, because he is not predestinated, and that he is not predestinated because not foreknown; *Ingentem fenestram aperiemus iis qui negant in hominis potestate esse ut salvus fiat*, 'we shall give great ground to them who deny that it is in the power of a man to be saved;' whence they infer, that they are guilty of no fault who are not justified, because they are not called, are not predestinated, are not foreknown." And CECUMENIUS saith, "the apostle mentions being called ACCORDING TO PURPOSE, *ἵνα μη ἄτοπον ἀπαντᾶ εἰ ὁ θεός τινας εὐ ἐποίησε, τινὰς δὲ ἔ,* καὶ προσωποληψίας ἀπαλλάττει τὸν θεόν, 'that he might not fall into an absurdity, which would follow if God should do good to some persons and not to others, and that he might free him from being an acceptor of persons?;' wherefore, according to the received interpretation of the ancient Fathers, the import of these words is this,

First. Those whom God foresaw would be true lovers of him, *εὐθετοὶ εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν*, 'fit for the kingdom of God,' and *ἄξιοι*, 'WORTHY of the peace and blessings of the gospel,' he predetermined to render conformable to the image of his Son, that is, to be like him in glory. (Rom. viii. 17.) Them also in due time he called to the salvation promised and offered in the gospel. (2 Tim. i. 8. 9. Tit. i. 2, 3.) And they believing in Christ upon this

call, he justified them from and remitted all their past sins. (Acts. xiii. 38, 39. Eph. i. 7.) And them he also glorified, by giving them the Spirit, which is the earnest of that glory; (Eph. i. 13.) and by participation of which Spirit, christians are said not only “to behold the glory of the Lord, but also to be changed into the same image with him from glory to glory.” So *Origen upon the place. And this exposition agrees well with the context; for he had said before, that christians, having the first fruits of the Spirit, “groaned after this redemption of their bodies;” (verse 23;) and, verse 26, ‘*the Spirit helpeth our infirmities interceding for us, στεναγμοῖς ἀλαλητοῖς*, WITH SILENT GROANS’ after it; and that he intercedeth for the saints, ‘*according to* (the mind of) *God*’ to give them this redemption; and then it follows, ὁδοῦμεν δὲ, ‘*therefore we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, &c.* Or,

Secondly. Ἐδόξασε, ‘HE HATH GLORIFIED *them*,’ by giving them his Spirit to enable them to work the greatest miracles, and those extraordinary gifts which rendered them glorious, and also were to them a confirmation of the glory promised;” So the * Greek Fathers. And hence the ministration of justification is said to be ἐν δόξῃ, ‘*in glory*,’ as being the ministration of the Spirit. (2 Cor. iii. 8, 9, 10, 11.) And Christ saith of the apostles to whom he gave the Spirit, ‘*I have given them the glory which thou gavest me.*’ See the note on John xvii. 22. So when a miracle was wrought in Christ’s name, ἐδόξασε, ‘*God GLORIFIED him.*’ (Acts iii. 13.) And when God wrought signs by Moses, ἐδόξασεν αὐτὸν, ‘*He glorified him.*’ (Ecclesiasticus xlv. 3.) See Luke iv. 15. John viii. 54. xi. 4. xiii. 31, 32. xvi. 14. 1 Cor. xii. 26. And, in favour of these interpretations, let it be noted, that when the apostle speaks of our final glorification in this chapter, he still speaks of it as a thing future, saying ‘*We shall be glorified*

* De glorificatione possumus in presentī seculo illud intelligere quod dicit Apostolus, omnes nos aperta facie gloriam Domini speculantes, eadem imagine transformamur a gloria in gloriam, &c.

† It is possible for us in the present life to understand what is here said by the Apostle concerning glorification,—‘*We all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed in the same image from glory into glory, &c.*’ ED.

α Ἐδόξασε διὰ τῶν χαρισμάτων, διὰ τῆς υἰοθεσίας, διὰ τῶν χαρισμάτων τες υἰοθεσίας; so Chrysostom and Œcum. Ἐδόξασεν εἰς ὀνομαζόμενον, καὶ πνευμαλῶς ἀγίῃ δωρησάμενον χάριν; so Theodoret and Theophylact.

‡ He hath GLORIFIED them by his gifts, by the adoption, by the gifts of adoption;—so Chrysostom and Œcumenius. He GLORIFIED them by giving them the name of sons, and by endowing them with the Gift of the Holy Spirit;—so Theodoret and Theophylact.’ ED.

with him,' (verses 17, 18, 21,) whereas here he speaks of it as a thing past, saying, *'Whom he hath justified, them he hath also glorified.'*

ANSWER SECOND. Another very probable interpretation of these words is this, "Those whom God foreknew," that is, approved of as persons fit to be received into his favour, (which sense of προέγνω, hath been established by Origen, and in my note on the place,) "he fore-appointed to be conformed to the image of his Son," that is, to be like him in sufferings, (verse 17. 2 Tim. ii. 11.) who *'first suffered, and then entered into his glory,'* and so was the first-born among many brethren; he first suffering, and "leaving them an example that they should follow his steps," (1 Pet. ii. 21.) looking up to this Captain and Finisher of our faith, "who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, and is sat down at the right-hand of the throne of God." (Heb. xii. 2.) "And whom he thus predestinated, he in due time CALLED to suffer;" for *'hereunto,'* saith St. Peter, "are we Christians called;" (1 Pet. ii. 21.) and to this they are *'appointed,'* (1 Thess. iii. 3.) "And whom he thus called, upon their patience under these sufferings, ἐδικαίωσεν, *'he approved as sincere';*" this is as proper an import of this word, opposed to *'CONDEMNED,'* as any other. For as when it is opposed to CONDEMNATION BY LAW, the opposite is TO BE ABSOLVED; so when it respects the person; it also signifies to APPROVE OF PRONOUNCE INNOCENT AND RIGHTEOUS; God justifying and ABSOLVING us because he APPROVES of our faith and repentance, and PRONOUNCING US SINCERE, because he APPROVES of our heart and actions. In which sense Abraham, ἐδικαιώθη, *'was justified'* by works, when he offered up his son Isaac; and Rahab when she received the spies. (James ii. 21, 25.) So *'wisdom ἐδικαιώθη, IS APPROVED OF by her children.'* (Matt. xi. 19.) So, *'by thy words δικαιοθῆσθαι, thou shalt be justified,'* that is, approved of, or condemned. (Matt. xii. 37.) "And whom he thus justified, he afterwards glorified," that is, he gave them a glorious reward of all their sufferings, or made them glorious under sufferings: according to those words of St. Peter, *'If ye are reproached for the name of Christ, happy are you; for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.'* (1 Pet. iv. 14.)

Now to confirm this interpretation, let it be observed that the whole purpose of this chapter is to comfort christians against the sufferings they were exposed to in this world. This the apostle doth (1.) from this consideration, that *'the Spirit which they had*

received was not that of fear (of death, they being delivered from the bondage of that fear by the death of Christ, Heb. ii. 15.) *but the Spirit of adoption,* which declared them *'heirs of God,'* and such as were to be glorified with Christ after their sufferings, (Rom. viii. 15, 17.) who would raise their mortal bodies. (verse 11.) (2.) That this future glory was sufficient ground of patience under all their sufferings; it being that which would entirely deliver their bodies from corruption, and translate them *'into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.'* On which account, saith the apostle, *'I reckon that the sufferings of this present life are not worthy to be compared to the glory which is to be revealed.'* (verse 18.) (3.) That whilst they continued in this afflicted state, patiently waiting for this glory, they had the Spirit of God, to help their infirmities, and to enable them to intercede for it with silent groans, according to the will of God; and knew that all these sufferings should *'work together for good to them who love God, and were called according to his purpose'* of making them like to their head, Christ Jesus, who was made *'perfect by sufferings.'* And so it was with his own beloved people, styled *'the people ὃν προέγνω WHICH HE FOREKNEW.'* (Rom. xi. 2. Amos iii. 2.) He determined that they should first be afflicted four hundred years. (Gen. xv. 13.) He humbled these *'his sons and his first-born,'* before he called them out of Egypt, and after he had called them thence *'he humbled and chastised them as a man chasteneth his son.'* (Deut. viii. 5.) But all this he did for their profit, *'that he might do them good in their latter end.'* (verse 16.) After these sufferings he justified them, that is, he approved and owned them upon all occasions as his peculiar people, and defended them, and pleaded their cause against all their enemies, and at the last he rendered them a glorious people in the eyes of all nations, ἐδοξασε, *'HE GLORIFIED Israel before them,'* (Isa. iv. 5. xlv. 23.) especially by causing his glorious presence, or his Shechinah, the emblem of the Holy Spirit, to rest among them. (Hag. ii. 5.) And so we may rest assured he will now deal with all those who truly love him, and whom he hath chosen before others to be his church, and his peculiar people.

VIII. ARGUMENT FOURTH. "If God knoweth who are his, then hath he a select number whom he hath chosen to be his; but *'God knoweth who are his.'*" (2 Tim. ii. 19.)

ANSWER. The text, which is the foundation of this argument, runneth thus, '*Hymeneus and Philetus have erred from the truth, saying, that the resurrection is past already, and have overthrown the faith of some.*' (verse 18.) *But the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth who are his, and let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.* (verse 19.) Where observe,

First. That by "the foundation of God," we are to understand the doctrine of the resurrection, which is the foundation of the church, it being built upon this promise,—that '*the gates of hell shall not prevail against it,*' or that the living members of Christ's body shall after death obtain an happy resurrection. This also is the foundation of our faith and hope; (1 Cor. xv. 19. 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14.) and therefore it is styled "a foundation" in these words, '*Let us not lay again, τὸ θεμέλιον, THE FOUNDATION of the doctrine of the resurrection.*' (Heb. vi. 1, 2.) This is "the faithful saying" mentioned, verse 12. By denying of it, the christian faith, saith the apostle, is overturned, verse 18. Now to this fundamental doctrine, God, saith he, hath set his seal, for confirmation and assurance of it, viz. '*the Lord knoweth who are his,*' that is, (i.) He loveth and approveth of them, and kindly stands affected to them: So God knew his people Israel, (Deut. ii. 7. Amos iii. 1.) and so '*if any man love God, he is known of God.*' (1 Cor. viii. 3.) (ii.) To reward them: So '*God knoweth the way of the righteous,*' (Psalm i. 6.) and so '*Christ knows his sheep,*' (John x. 14, 27.) as to '*give unto them life eternal,*' (verse 28.) so that though they die, they shall not perish, but he will '*raise them up at the last day.*' (John vi. 39, 40, 54.) And in this sense these words are commonly taken, as promising a reward to all good christians at the resurrection.—But,

Secondly. It is observable that these words are taken from Numbers xvi. 5, where Corah, Dathan, and Abiram rise up against Moses and Aaron, declaring '*they took too much upon them,*'—the one to be their prophet and God's vicegerent over them, the other to be their high-priest, whom God had consecrated to his peculiar service, above all others of the house of Levi. Now to this imputation, saith the Septuagint, Moses replies, ἔγνω ὁ Θεὸς τοῖς ὄντας αὐτῶν '*GOD KNOWETH WHO ARE HIS,*' and by him separated to his service, and will maintain their cause and calling

against all opposers; as in that instance he did in a wonderful manner, causing the earth to open and swallow them up; so also will God own us his apostles and ministers, against Hymenæus and Philetus, against all that set up against us and our doctrine. As therefore Moses said then to the Israelites, ‘*Depart ye from the tents of these men, and be ye separated, καὶ ἐφῆσαν, and they departed;*’ so say I now to all ‘*christians, let them depart from iniquity,*’ and so from these pernicious doctrines, which ‘*increase to ungodliness,*’ and cause men to ‘*make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience.*’ So that this text, taken in either sense, hath no relation to the doctrine of absolute election. In fine, Theodoret thus descants on these words, *προεῖδε Θεὸς καὶ τῆς πιστεύοντας, καὶ τοὺς τῇ ἀληθείᾳ προφανῶς πολεμήσαντας,* ‘*God foreknoweth both them that believe, and those who openly fight against the truth.*’

CHAP. IV.

Containing arguments against this doctrine of an absolute election to salvation, and consequently to the means which shall inevitably and unfrustrably produce it.

I NEED not multiply many arguments in confutation of this opinion, seeing it will effectually be done in all the subsequent discourses; for,

FIRST. By proving that Christ was sent into the world to be the Saviour of the world, and that ‘*he tasted death for every man,*’ even for them that perish; it will be extremely evident, that God could not decree absolutely the saving of some few persons elected to it from all eternity; since then it is impossible he should design the salvation of any other by the death of Christ.

SECONDLY. By proving that all men to whom the knowledge of the gospel is vouchsafed are put into a capacity, and have sufficient means, of obtaining the blessings promised, and avoiding the evils threatened, in the gospel, and that none shall be able to plead at the last day,—‘*I never was in a capacity of obtaining that salvation, for the neglect of which I am condemned, or of avoiding the misery to which I am sentenced;*’ it clearly follows

that God cannot have absolutely decreed to afford the means necessary to salvation to some few only, and withhold them from all the rest, even of those to whom the gospel is vouchsafed. But to make this still farther evident, I argue thus,

I. ARGUMENT FIRST. He who would have all men, to whom the gospel is vouchsafed, sincerely to believe in Christ, to come to repentance, and yield sincere obedience to his will revealed to them, hath not prepared this saving grace only for some few christians, leaving the rest under a necessity of perishing for the want of it; for to all such persons he hath promised that they shall not perish, saying, "He that believeth in me shall never perish; repent and turn yourselves from all your iniquity, so iniquity shall not be your ruin; to him who by patient continuance in well-doing seeks for glory and immortality, shall be eternal life." These are the means by him appointed for the remission of their sins and their salvation, as in these words, "Repent, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out; believe to the salvation of your souls; blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life." And he who wills that they should use the means, can never be unwilling, at the same time, they should obtain the end,—salvation and exemption from eternal ruin. Now that God seriously wills that all to whom the gospel is vouchsafed, should repent, believe, and yield sincere obedience to his laws, is evident beyond all possibility of doubting. For,

First. The scripture very frequently and most expressly hath declared the doing of these things to be the doing of the will of God, and the neglecting of them to be the neglecting, and even resisting, of his will. It is his will they should believe, because "this is his commandment, That we believe in the name of the Son of God."^a It is his will they should repent, because he hath commanded "all men every where to repent."^b It is his will they should obey him, if that be necessary to be proved, because that is in scripture styled, "the doing of the will of our Father which is in heaven." And seeing the Apostles were sent to preach salvation to every creature that believed, to call all men to repent for the remission of sins, and to bring forth fruits meet for repentance,

^a John. vi. 29.

^b Acts. xvii. 30.

that they might escape the wrath of God; how can we reasonably think that the same words spoken to all that heard them as God's message to them, and *'as if God did beseech them,'* by their mouth, should not be looked upon as God's commandments to all to whom they spoke, that is to the whole world, to every rational creature? And why else do they say *'he that despiseth us,* thus speaking, *despiset not man, but God?'*^c Doth not the whole christian world agree in this, that it is the will of God that they should do what he commands? Do they not look upon his precepts as a sufficient indication of his will and pleasure? Are not all men obliged to believe God would have them to do what he requires of them? And can they be obliged to believe this if it be not true? Do not all nations conclude from the commands of their superiors, that what they require, they would have done,—and what they forbid, they would not have done? And shall it only be otherwise in the commands of the Great Ruler of the world? Deny this to be any certain declaration of God's will, and you can never shew that even the elect can know it is God's will they should repent, believe, and obey him; since they can never know they belong to the election of God, but from their faith, repentance, and obedience. If then, by doing of these things, the wicked would perform the will of God, must it not follow that he is willing they should believe, repent, and obey? Would not God approve their doing of these things, or can he be supposed to approve what he would not have done? Doth he not say expressly concerning the wicked and impenitent, that they *'do the things which he would not have done?'*^d And why are they so oft said to *'set at nought and reject God's counsel,'* will, and good intentions toward them, if it were not his will they should believe and come to repentance? Why doth the wisdom of God say of them of old, that "they had set at nought his counsels;"^e and of the Scribes and Pharisees, that "they rejected the counsel of God concerning them, being not baptized with the baptism of John; which was the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;"^f and of the unbelieving Jews, that they did *'put salvation from them and judge themselves unworthy of eternal life?'*^g Surely from all these places it is very evident that it was primarily the

c 1 Thess. iv. 8.

d Isa. lxv. 12. lxvi. 4.

e Prov. i. 25.

f Luke vii. 30.

g Acts xiii. 46.

counsel and the will of God, that even they who would not turn, would not repent and accept of salvation, should have repented and have been made partakers of it. And were it otherwise, it follows, that by their unbelief and their impenitence, they did not really resist his will and counsel, but comply rather with it.

Moreover, those whom God calls to faith, repentance, and obedience,—he is truly willing that they should repent, believe, and be saved: For what is it to call a man to such a thing, but to declare that you are truly willing and desirous that he should be partaker of it? Now it is certain that God calls and invites all those to whom his word is preached, to faith, repentance, and salvation; and therefore it is certain that he is truly willing they should believe, repent, and be saved. To this effect are these expressions, “Repent and believe the gospel; ^h whoso is simple, let him turn in hither; let him forsake the foolish and live. ⁱ Whosoever will, let him come and drink of the waters of life freely”^j—To omit many other places of like nature.

Again. The end for which God sends his messengers, is to invite all persons, to faith, repentance, and salvation. The business of his watchmen is ^k to warn the wicked to turn from his iniquity, that he may not die; “in meekness to instruct them that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance; to warn every man and to teach every man in all wisdom, that they may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.”^m Now are they not commanded to use these exhortations, calls, instructions, as means conducive to these ends? And to all those whom God doth require to use these means, must he not will the end designed by them? Do not ministers beseech men, in the name of God, to repent, and to be ‘reconciled to him?’ Must they not pray that God would bless their labours, and render them successful to these ends, in all that hear them? And can they, in the name of God, exhort unto, or pray in faith for, that effect of their labours which is not suitable to the decree or will of God? Was not the gospel of Christ writ, that they who read it ‘might believe, and believing might have life through his name?’ⁿ And must it not be preached for the same end for which it was written? Doth not

^h Mark i. 15.

ⁱ Prov. ix. 1—6.

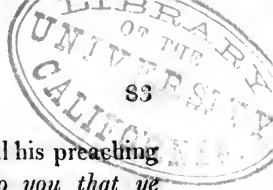
^j Rev. xxii. 17.

^k Ezek. xxxiii. 8.

^l 2 Tim. ii. 25.

^m Col. i. 28.

ⁿ John xx. 31.



Christ plainly tell the Jews, this was the end of all his preaching to them, in these words, *‘these things I say unto you that ye might be saved?’*^o And yet he, of those very persons, saith, *‘You will not come to me that you might have life.’*^p He therefore seriously intended their salvation, who would not come unto him for it.

To think to salve all this, as ^q Bishop Davenant in his “Answer to Hoard” doth, by saying “there is in God a true will revealed in the gospel, of saving all men that shall believe, and a true will liking, embracing, and rewarding faith, holiness, and perseverance, in all men whatsoever, without distinction of persons; and this is the will called *voluntas simplicis complacentiae*, ‘or a will of complacency.’ And that when the Apostle saith, *‘God will have all men to be saved,’* the meaning only is, *if all men shall believe in Christ;* and that ‘to believe in Christ’ is an act so agreeable, and so well pleasing to his will, that, wheresoever it is found, it will be rewarded.”—I say, it seemeth strange to me, that any man should think this a sufficient answer to this argument. For

(1.) How incongruous is it to ascribe such a will to God as this? viz. ‘Holiness is a thing so agreeable to my nature and my essential attributes of purity and righteousness, that it is absolutely necessary for me to like and be well pleased with the holiness and perseverance of all men in it; and therefore to reward them for it with the enjoyment of myself. But yet I absolutely purpose not to afford to the greatest part of mankind that aid which I see to be absolutely necessary to enable them to be holy, or to persevere in it: and my will is to leave them (though they equally want, and equally are capable of it, and equally fit to be the objects of my grace and favour,) under an absolute incapacity of being holy, and, by my decree of reprobation, make their want of holiness an event unfrustrable.’—No man can think that man hath a true love for holiness, who will do nothing which is in his power to make others so, as far as he is able and it is fit for him to do it. Can then that God, whose love to holiness doth infinitely transcend the love which the most holy man bears to it, and who commands us *‘to be holy, as he is holy,’* have passed a decree from all eternity, which renders the want of holiness in most men an unfrustrable event?

o John v. 34. p Verse 40. q Page 220, 221.

(2.) If this be all intended by those words, ‘*God would have all men to be saved,*’ why may it not be said, He would have all the fallen angels to be saved? “Because faith and holiness, were it found in them, would be an act so well pleasing, and so agreeable to God’s will, that wheresoever it is found, it will be rewarded by him;” but yet because they, since their fall, are in no capacity of believing or of being holy, no man hath ever dared to say, God would have all the fallen angels to be saved.^a If then the absolute decree of God, not to give faith, repentance, and eternal life to any that are not elected, is, as he saith, that which they understand by reprobation; and this act renders all those fallen men, who are the objects of that black decree, as incapable of having faith and holiness as the very devils, why is it said, ‘*He would have these fallen men,*’ rather than fallen angels, ‘*to be saved?*’

(3.) Be it, as he saith, that “the final obduration and impenitency of reprobates is not a foreseen antecedent condition, but a following event of negative reprobation;” yet if that event follows necessarily upon that eternal act of God, to what end doth he after it command all men every where to repent, or exercise the riches of his goodness, patience, and forbearance towards them, ‘*to lead them to repentance,*’^b or say ‘*he is long-suffering towards them, because he is not willing they should perish, but should come to repentance;*’^c when this decree of not giving that repentance, which can alone rescue them from perishing, hath left them in that utter incapacity of repenting which no long-suffering of God can or ever was intended to remove? Why doth he send his ambassadors to ‘*besech them to be reconciled to him,*’^d because he hath made his Son to be ‘*a sacrifice for sin, that they might be made righteous with the righteousness of God in him?*’ Why doth he call them to repent, that ‘*their sins may be blotted out,*’ and encourage them to do so by this gracious promise, that ‘*then all their iniquities shall not be remembered any more?*’^e Why doth God, as he says, “patiently expect their conversion,”^f when he hath decreed to deny them those means which can alone effect it, or use those means and methods to that end which, he before knows, not only that they *will* frustrate, but also that they *must*

^a Page 227.^b Rom. ii. 4.^c 2 Pet. iii. 9.^d 2 Cor. v. 20, 21.^e Ezek. xviii. 22.^f Page 224.

frustrate? To say, "God seriously requires them who are not elected, to make their calling and election sure," is what we call "a bull." To say "God seriously invites, exhorts, and requires all men to '*work out their salvation*,'" and yet by his decree of reprobation hath rendered that event to the most of them impossible; "that he requires all men to repent that they may not perish," and yet by his decree, or secret will, hath rendered that event to most of them, to whom he speaketh in his word, impossible;—is to make the gospel of Christ a mockery, by making it to require a contradiction, in order to an end, which his own secret will of denying to them that faith and that repentance which can alone produce that end, hath made impossible to be obtained. And if this be not to make the secret will of God to contradict his revealed will, it is to make his revealed will following that secret one, a mere falsehood, unless his revealed will can make contradictions true. For to make God to will this or that for such an end, which, by virtue of his secret will, can never come to pass, makes contradictions at the same time to be the object of his will. And to say he wills this or that, to exempt men from that event which his secret will hath made necessary to come to pass, is also to will at the same time a contradiction. So that if God's declared will is, that all men should believe unto salvation, and his secret will is, that most of them should not be saved, it being his will to withhold what is necessary to their salvation; if his revealed will be this, that the reprobate should repent that he may not perish, and his secret will be this, that he should die, and not live, as being a will to withhold that grace from him without which he cannot live, but must die;—the contradiction betwixt these two wills is as evident as words can make it.

And if these decrees be plainly contrary to the declarations of the will of God now mentioned, how impossible is it to reconcile them with his declarations that he deals thus with men, '*because he hath compassion on them;*^o *that he could not have done more to make them bring forth good grapes;*^p *that he* ('would have purged' [Hebrew]) *had purged Israel, and she was not purged;*^q *he would have gathered Jerusalem, and she would not be gathered;*^r when there not only was an incurable impotency in their will,

g Philip. ii. 12. o 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15. p Isa. v. 4. q Ezek. xxiv. 13. r Luke xiii. 34.

which rendered the event impossible to them, but also a decree which rendered God unwilling to do that towards their gathering and purgation without which, he well knew, he used all other means in vain! How can they possibly comport with his compassionate enquiries?—‘*Why will you die? O Jerusalem, wilt thou not be made clean? When shall it once be? How long shall vain thoughts lodge within thee?*’^s Or with his vehement desires that it might be otherwise? For to say, ‘*Oh that there were such an heart in them that they would fear me!*’^t ‘*Oh that my people had walked in my ways,*’^u is, if so, in effect, to wish that they had frustrated the event, which his decree, from all eternity, had made inevitable.

II. ARGUMENT SECOND. This decree is absolutely false in the foundation of it; that being laid in the sin of Adam imputed by God’s arbitrary will to his posterity. For,

First. It is confessed by these men that “it was not by any natural necessity that Adam falling, his posterity should be either universally tainted with original sin, or liable to death, but that both these depended *a libero Dei decreto*, ‘from the free decree or compact of God;’ that if Adam persevered in his righteousness, he should transmit it to his posterity; if he rebelled, he should make his posterity liable both to the corruption of sin and danger of punishment.”^v For if it be asked, How it comes to pass that the sin of Adam so unavoidably and generally layeth hold upon all the sons of Adam, they are driven to confess, that “this dependeth upon a free constitution or decree of the divine will, because natural propagation would not have stripped Adam’s posterity of any habitual righteousness which God had bestowed upon him;”^w or charged them with the guilt of any sin *personally* committed by him, had not God enacted and constituted a decree that so it should be, when it stood in his power and pleasure to have ordered it otherwise.”^x They add that “therefore are we not guilty of any other sin of Adam, because though natural propagation be the means of conveying Adam’s sin to us, yet it would not have done so had there not been a free decree established by God to that purpose; and therefore Adam’s sin can no far-

^s Jer. iv. 14. xiii. 27. ^t Deut. v. 29. ^u Psalm lxxxi. 13. ^v Bishop Davenant’s Animad. p. 244.
^w Page 245. ^x Page 246.

ther concern his posterity, than it is regulated by God himself.^y Now the divine decree, or constitution, did not so order it, that any sin of Adam should be imputable to all that were virtually in his loins, but that his first sin only in which he did, *sustinere personam generis humani*, 'sustain the person of all mankind' should be imputed." And again, "Adam's first sin committed in the state of innocency, wherein, by God's appointment, he bore the person of all mankind, was every man's personal sin, and was consented to by every man's personal will, because in Adam there was not only the will of one singular man, but the universal will of all mankind, and of every singular person."^z Now

(1.) The holy scripture is perfectly silent in every part and title of this School Divinity: It hath not one word of this free decree, or this dismal compact of God with Adam, or I know not who; not one *iota* of our propagation from the loins of Adam more than from the womb of our mother Eve, 'the mother of all living';^a or that he bore the person of all mankind, more than she bore the person of all womankind; or of any decree that Adam's posterity should be charged with the guilt of any sin personally committed by him, rather than the women with the sin of Eve; or that they should be charged only with the first, not with his following transgressions; or that his guilt should rather be imputed to them than his repentance: Nor, lastly, is there one shadow of a proof from scripture of that self-contradiction,—that Adam's personal sin was every man's personal sin, when he only was a person, and they were not; and was consented to by every man's will, before any man else had a will; or that the universal will of all mankind, (which is no better than an universal fig-tree,) and of every single person, was in Adam.

(2.) It cannot truly be affirmed that Adam's sin was "every man's personal sin, and was consented to by every man's personal will," and therefore all men were made sinners by it: For then (i.) it was not 'by the disobedience of ONE,'^b but of all that 'many were made sinners,' whereas the apostle plainly asserts the contrary, expressly saying, that 'by the sin of one, many died: that the sentence was from one, and by one man's sinning to condemnation; and that by the sin of one, death reigned by one;'

^y Pag. 249.^z Pag. 236.^a Gen. iii. 20.^b Rom. v. 15,—18.

therefore the apostle doth expressly teach, that this death, this condemnation to it, came not upon us for the sin of all, but for the sin of one, that is, of one Adam, '*in whom all men die.*' (1 Cor. xv. 22.)

(ii.) Then all men must have sinned '*after the similitude of Adam's transgression;*' for if he bore our person, and the consent of his will was the personal consent of ours, then the same person by an act of the same will sinned against the same law. And surely they that thus sin, must sin after the similitude of Adam's transgression: For what dissimilitude can there be in sin committed by the same act, of the same will, of the same person, against the same law? But of the posterity of Adam the apostle saith expressly, '*they sinned not after the similitude of Adam's transgression;*'^c therefore they were not sinners by the same act and will, of the same person, against the same law. Moreover, if all the posterity of Adam sinned in Adam, they sinned against a law given to them, for, '*sin is the transgression of law, and where there is no law there is no transgression;*' where there is no law given to me, there can be no transgression therefore by me. Now they could sin in Adam so as to deserve death for that sin, only by sinning against the law requiring Adam not to eat of the forbidden fruit; for Adam himself became guilty of death only by transgressing that law. But all the posterity of Adam cannot be said to have sinned against that law, because it was not given to them, but to Adam and Eve only; unless they will feign another decree, that the law given to Adam personally, should be the law given to all mankind. And (*lastly*) If we sinned formally in Adam, we sinned by the same numerical sin which he committed, or only by the same sin in kind, that is, by a sin like to his. We could not sin by the same numerical sin, for all mankind being not the same in number, but in specie, or kind only,—and having not the same numerical will, but the same in kind only,—he could no otherwise bear the person, or consent with the will, of all mankind, than by bearing a person, and having a will, common to him with all mankind, which he had not numerically, but specifically. Again:—we could only sin in him, in or by the nature we derived from him; which is not the same with his, numerically, but specifically only. And yet if we sinned

by the same act, of the same will, of the same numerical person, we must be guilty of the same numerical transgression.

(3.) It cannot truly be affirmed that “we all sinned in Adam, and by his disobedience were made sinners; because his sin and disobedience was, by God’s arbitrary will, imputed to us:” For (i.) the scripture no where maketh mention of any thing of another’s imputed to any man for reward or guilt, but only of some personal thing or action of his own, as hath been fully proved, note on Rom. v. 13.—(ii.) Either this imputation makes the sin of Adam truly ours, or it doth not. If it doth not, how can we be made sinners by it? If it doth, then death came upon us for OUR sin, and so not for the sin of ONE, but for the sin of ALL: which is the thing disproved already.—(iii.) I ask, whether this imputation made the posterity of Adam sinners; Or, whether it found them so before.—If it found them so before, it was plainly needless, for they might have been condemned to death without it. If it made them so, then since this imputation is the act of God, and not of man, it plainly follows that God must be the author of this sin; because this imputation flows immediately from him, without the intervention of any action of any of those men to whom it is imputed. Moreover, then the imputation must be false, as charging them with sin whom he did not find sinners, but only by his arbitrary decree and imputation made them so. Now far be it from any christian to assert, that God can falsely impute sin to any man! In a word, λογίζεσθαι, and *imputare*, is “to reckon, or to account a thing to any man, or to charge him with it, or lay the charge of it upon him.” This action therefore, on God’s part, must suppose, in the very nature of it, some action done by the posterity of Adam which is blameworthy, and may be justly charged upon them, before there can be any ground for imputation of it; and this shews that it is impossible that the imputation should be the very thing that renders them blameworthy, or persons worthy to be charged with guilt. And yet, if the sin of Adam becomes ours only by imputation, it must be ours only because it is by God imputed to us, and not imputed because it is ours; that is, God by this imputation must make us sinners, and not find us such: For this imputation is the action of the judge, and not of the supposed criminal; remove, or take away, this action, and no crime can be charged upon him. In fine, if

the sin of Adam becomes ours only by imputation, it deserves condemnation only by the same imputation, that is, by the action of God: That therefore we deserve condemnation for it, is to be ascribed directly to the action of God, and only by accident to the action of Adam. Whence then, according to this opinion, is our destruction, but of that God who makes us worthy of condemnation, by imputing to us that sin which by his imputation only we stand guilty of?

(4.) We are not guilty of any other sin of Adam; therefore we are not guilty of the first sin of Adam. "For answer to this, they are driven to confess," saith Bishop Davenant, "that this depends on the free constitution of the divine will; for (virtual inclusion in, or) natural propagation (from the loins of Adam) would not have charged us with the guilt of any sin personally committed by him, had not God enacted and constituted a decree that it should be so, when it stood in his power and pleasure to have ordered it otherwise." Therefore this sin of Adam is not ours because he committed it; but because God, of mere will, decreed and constituted it should be so, "when he might have ordered it otherwise;" and so there is nothing that makes this sin ours, but the mere will of God. And surely then God must be the author of it, because it is the will of God alone which makes the first sin of Adam ours, more than the second, of which it is confessed we are not guilty. Nor is there any other reason why we are more guilty of it, than of his other sins, but this will of God. As then we become sinners in our own persons, only by willing that action which is evil should be ours, so we become sinners in the person of Adam, only by the will of God that his evil action should be ours; and had it not been his pleasure so to will, it had not been ours. To make this still more evident, let it be noted that, in every sin of commission, there is required not only the will of the Creator forbidding that action, but also the will of the creature chusing to do what is forbidden. But in this supposed original sin, there is no will of ours chusing this forbidden action more than any other sin of Adam; it was not therefore, upon that account, our sin: it remains then, that it was only so by the will of the Creator. If it be replied, that "the action and will of Adam was ours also," I ask whether it was so by its own nature, or only by the free decree and will of God. If only by the latter, it clearly follows that his actions

are made and accounted ours by the mere will of God, and so that only renders it our sin. If from its own nature, then all his other sinful wills and actions must be ours also; for what agrees to the will and actions of Adam, from the nature of them, must agree to every will and action of Adam at all times. Now this being confessedly false, it remains that it is solely from the arbitrary will of God that we are guilty of this, and not of any other sin of Adam.

(5.) The compact they have forged betwixt God and Adam, to justify this imputation of his sin to his posterity, and the decrees ensuing upon that imputation, as it is forged out of their own brain, so it is a compact exceeding cruel, and plainly inconsistent with the justice, wisdom, and goodness of our gracious God. For surely, a good God, in all his compacts with the sons of men, designs their good or their advantage; for so it is with all the other compacts God ever made with man. But God could not design the good of man by that compact upon the foreseen event, of which he had before made his absolute decrees of election and reprobation.

Secondly. As for the other part of this compact, that "Adam continuing innocent, should have begot children in his own likeness, that is, partakers of *his own original righteousness*,"—that could produce no proportionable advantage to his posterity: For (i.) his righteousness being defectible, he could have only derived upon them a defectible righteousness, which must have left them still as liable to fall as he himself was; and then their posterity must have been in the same sad case in which Adam's fall had placed his posterity. And, (ii.) his sin, had he fallen after he had begotten ten children, must have involved all the rest in this sad doom. So that his whole righteous life could have only procured to his posterity a defectible righteousness, liable continually to interruption by the sin of any one of his posterity; and that throughout all times and ages of the world: Whereas, one single transgression of his, was, by this compact, to render his whole race obnoxious to eternal misery; and by this eternal decree of reprobation, upon this foreseen fall, to render the far greatest part of them inevitably subject to that misery.

Again, this compact plainly seems to have been invented to excuse God from cruelty, in subjecting myriads of men and infants to the most direful and lasting torments; which, without

this imaginary pact, he could not with the least pretence of justice do. Moreover, did not God know, before this compact, it would only tend by the fall of Adam to the unavoidable ruin of myriads of souls, which otherwise would have contracted no such guilt, and therefore would have been obnoxious to no such misery, had not this compact and decree been made? What therefore did he, by making this decree, but subject so many precious souls to an inevitable ruin? How therefore could he contrive and make such a decree and compact, without being willing that so many men and infants should be for ever miserable by it? Since he who wills the cause, wills also the effect, which, certainly and inevitably, without their action, follows from it.

If in favour of these imaginings it be said, that “the scripture expressly teacheth, that *‘in Adam all have sinned; and by the disobedience of one many were made sinners;’*” to this I have given a sufficient answer in the note upon those words, shewing (1.) that these words may and must have a metonymical sense, because of the absurdities which follow from the formal acceptation of them. And, (2.) because the comparison made betwixt the first Adam and the effects of his disobedience, and the second Adam, and the effects of his obedience to the death, require it; the Holy Ghost still speaking of his suffering for our sins in this metonymical sense; as it is (i.) when he is said to *‘bear our sins,’* only because he bore the punishment due to them. (ii.) When he is said *‘to be made sin for us;’* he being made sin for us, not by contracting the guilt of it, but only suffering punishment for it in our stead. (iii.) When he is said *‘to appear a second time χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας; without sin,’*^a that is, without another sacrifice, in which he was to suffer for it; and *‘that by sin (that is, by what he suffered when he made himself a sacrifice for it,) he condemned sin in the flesh.’*^b And (iv.) when he is said to be *‘made a curse for us;’*^c he being only so by suffering that death which the law styled “accursed,” and not as being so in the sight of God. And (3.) because the opposite phrase, *δικαιοὶ κατασάθουσιν,** required that the words *ἁμαρτωλοὶ κατεσάθουσιν,†* should be used in this sense: For when the apostle saith, *‘by the obedience of one shall*

^a 2 Cor. v. 20.—Heb. ix. 28.

^b Rom. viii. 3.

^c Gal. iii. 13.

* ‘Shall be made righteous.’ ED.

† ‘Were made Sinners.’ ED.

many be made righteous,' it is evident in itself, and proved by three arguments, that he speaks not of Christ's active, but of his passive obedience or suffering death for us. Now by this passive obedience we cannot be made formally righteous, but only metonymically, by being made partakers of that freedom from condemnation and the guilt of sin, and the reconciliation which Christ purchased by his meritorious death and passion.

III. ARGUMENT THIRD. This decree is false, both in the parts and the end of it. The parts of it are these two:—

(1.) That "God hath from eternity elected a certain number of persons to salvation, leaving the rest under an absolute decree of reprobation or preterition; and that of this election or reprobation there can be no other cause but God's own free-will. For predestination," say they, "being an immanent act of the divine understanding cannot be conceived as dependent upon any foreseen acts of man's will, and therefore his foreseen faith, repentance, and perseverance cannot, in any good sense, be imagined antecedent causes, conditions, or motives to the divine predestination;" and that is metaphysics, and the jargon of the schoolmen entirely ignorant of the true sense of scripture, made to countenance a decree reflecting so unworthily upon the honour of our gracious God, that it is not easy to conceive what could more visibly tend to the dishonour of his glorious name and attributes.

(2.) That "in order to the accomplishing the salvation of his elect, he hath decreed to afford them that grace which shall infallibly and infrustrably bring them to salvation; whereas they who are comprised under the decree of reprobation, are left," say they, "infallibly to fail of eternal life," and so are left to fail of means which may bring them to eternal life, or to escape everlasting death. For they can only infallibly fail of the end, by failing of the means which may produce it: For since he that hath means by which he may be saved, may be saved; and he that hath means by which he may escape damnation, may escape damnation; he who by God's decree of reprobation, is left infallibly to fail of salvation, and consequently to be damned, must as infallibly be left without the means by which he may obtain salvation or escape damnation.

(3.) "In the absolute election of those whom God hath thus appointed to salvation, he decreed," say they, "to glorify his mercy;

and in the reprobation and the præterition of the rest, he decreed to glorify his sovereignty and justice in their damnation;”^c the manifestation, therefore, of his grace and mercy in the salvation of the one, and of his justice and sovereignty in the damnation of the other, must be the two great ends of God in these decrees.

First. Now the falsehood of these two decrees, (i.) touching the absolute election of some persons to salvation, is sufficiently argued in the fifth Discourse, (1.) From God’s command to all christians to make their calling and election sure. (2.) From his frequent exhortations directed to them, ‘*to continue stedfast in the faith, and to keep themselves in the love of God; and to work out their salvation with fear and trembling.*’ (3.) From the cautions directed to good christians, ‘*not to fall from grace or from their own stedfastness.*’ (4.) From threats denounced against the righteous man who turneth away from his righteousness, and the just man who, living by faith, draweth back.

(ii.) As they respect those that are supposed to lie under an absolute decree of reprobation, the falsehood of them hath been fully proved in the second Discourse, (1.) From God’s serious and earnest invitations of them to repentance. (2.) From his vehement desires of their reformation and obedience. (3.) From his declarations, that he had done for them what was sufficient to produce it. (4.) From his promises to excite them to it; his long-suffering designed for that very end; and from his dreadful threats intended to deter them from persisting in their evil ways. And (*lastly,*) from the manifold demonstrations he hath afforded us in holy scripture, that he doth not look upon wicked men as under an utter disability of being reformed by his judgments or his mercies, or of hearkening to his calls and invitations to return and live.

And, (*Secondly,*) such a decree as this being a secret of God’s counsel, no man can know that God hath made it but from the express and the clear revelation of the holy scripture; and so no person can have any reason to assert it on any other account. Now as I have shewn already, that the scripture hath said nothing of these decrees; so will this be more evident by a reflection on every part of them.

(1.) "The decree of election," say they, "is absolute, and without respect to man's faith, repentance, or perseverance." Now the scripture saith expressly, '*he that believeth shall be saved; f he that endureth to the end shall be saved; g repent, and be converted, and your sins shall be blotted out; h to them who by patient continuance in well-doing, look for glory, God will give eternal life.*'ⁱ So that they who speak thus, speak the constant language of the holy scriptures; whereas they who affirm that "He hath absolutely decreed eternal life to any, without respect to any act of man's will, or any condition to be performed on his part," speak that which hath not the least foundation in the word of God. Christ saith indeed, that "it is his Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom to his little flock;"^k but then this flock consisteth only of believers, who have already '*heard Christ's voice and followed him,*' and of '*those whom the Father had given to him;*'^l but then he informs us, that '*Judas, a son of perdition, was one of them.*'^m He saith again, '*all that the Father giveth me shall come unto me,*'ⁿ but speaks not one word of their being given to him by an absolute eternal decree of election to salvation, without respect to any thing to be in time performed by them.

(2.) The scripture hath not one syllable to prove that "the object of this election is a certain number of singular persons." Those words, '*the Lord knoweth who are his,*' do no more prove this, than those words of Christ, '*I know my sheep,*' and those of the Psalmist, '*the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous,*' prove that there is a certain number of singular persons who are Christ's sheep, and who only can be righteous. The scripture often speaketh, as hath been fully shewed, of churches and nations elected to be his church and people, but nothing of any single person elected from eternity to salvation, much less of any certain number of them.

(3.) That "God hath absolutely ordained one single person to faith, repentance, and perseverance to the end," is no where written. And hence it clearly follows, that there can be no such absolute reprobation revealed in the scriptures, as these decrees

f Mark xvi. 16.

g Matt. xxiv. 15.

h Acts iii. 19.

i Rom. ii. 7.

k Luke xii. 52.

l John xvii. 6.

m Verse 12.

n John vi. 57.

hold forth; for as *electio non est sine reprobatione*, 'there is no election without a reprobation of the non-elected,' so can there be no reprobation where there is no previous election.

IV. *Again*, to say, that "election or predestination being an immanent, eternal act of God's understanding, (or rather of HIS WILL, for that alone decrees,) can have no dependance on, or respect to, any act of man's will by way of motive or condition," is to say things contrary to scripture and to common sense. For,

First. Did not God decree from all eternity, to pardon the penitent, to justify 'him that believeth in Jesus,' to save the obedient, and that they who suffer for and with Christ, shall be glorified together with him? And must not these immanent, eternal acts have respect to the temporal faith, repentance, obedience, and patient sufferings of men?

Secondly. Did not God, from all eternity, decree to judge all men according to their works, and that all men should receive rewards and punishments according as their works shall be? And is not this decree an immanent, eternal act of God, respecting the acts of men's will as the condition of or motive to it? Yea, did he not decree, from all eternity, to offer to man a new covenant of grace, promising pardon and salvation to him upon condition of his faith, repentance, and sincere obedience? And do not these decrees render the pretended decrees of absolute election and reprobation needless? Yea, are not these things inconsistent with each other, viz. *the absolute election of man to salvation*, and *the decree to offer and suspend the same salvation upon these conditions?* For in all conditional promises betwixt man and man, the thing promised is suspended on the performance of the condition, and the enjoyment of it is uncertain till the condition be performed: And if it be not so also in respect to the conditions of the covenant of grace, what mean the exhortations directed to men in general, to '*fear lest a promise being made of entering into rest, any of them should fall short of it;*'^a the cautions to them that stand by faith, to take heed lest they fall under the severity of God for not '*continuing in his goodness;*'^b and the threats of perdition to him that '*liveth by faith, provided he draw back?*'^c

^a Heb. iv. 1.

^b Rom. xi. 20, 22.

^c Heb. x. 38.

Thirdly. Did not God decree from eternity, that *'he that believeth in his Son should have eternal life, and he that believed not his Son should not see life?'* And had these decrees no respect to the temporal acts of man? It were easy to multiply instances of this nature, to shew the vanity of the foundation of these absolute decrees. And therefore,

Fourthly. When it is said, that "an immanent act of the divine mind (or *will*) cannot depend on any foreseen acts of man's will," I grant that it cannot depend on them as the cause producing such an act, but purely on his own attributes and perfections, v. g. he must decree to elect man as fallen, or a sinner, because he is gracious and merciful, and to reprobate him, because he is just. But then the motive or inducement to both these decrees, is the foreseen action of man, rendering him an object of his mercy, or worthy of his vindictive justice. Again, these immanent actions of the Deity either respect himself only, as the love and knowledge of himself, and then it is certain that they can have no cause, motive, condition, or respect to any thing but himself; or else they respect, or have for their object the future state or condition of man; and then it is as certain, that though they flow from the divine perfections, the inducement to them is always man, and his foreseen actions, v. g. he from the divine goodness, grace, and mercy, decrees to save man, or to offer to him terms on which he may obtain salvation; the inducement to it is the sin of man, which hath made this grace and mercy necessary to his salvation. He from his justice hath decreed from all eternity, to cast some men out of his favour; the inducement to it is that sin which hath rendered them unworthy of it, and rendered it inconsistent with his holiness and justice to admit them to it. He, from that goodness and love to holiness which is essential to him, hath decreed to reward some of them with eternal life, or the enjoyment of himself; the inducement to it is those actions wrought by the assistance of his grace in them, which have made them like unto him, and therefore *'meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.'* And all this is demonstrably certain from the perfection of the divine nature; for God being infinitely perfect, he must be infinitely happy within himself, and so can design no self-end without himself, and consequently the end for which he requires any thing from us, or de-

crees any thing concerning us, is not, and cannot be, any advantage or good he expects to reap from it, he being, from all eternity past, as completely happy as he can be to eternity to come; and therefore what other end can he be supposed to aim at in these things but our good? If it be said, that "God may act to manifest his glory, viz. the glory of his mercy, justice, holiness and truth;"—true; but then he manifests it either for no good, or for his own good, or for our good. To say "he doth it for no good," is to impeach his wisdom; to say "he doth it for his own good," reflects on the perfection of his nature; it remains then that he must do this also for our good, which is the thing contended for. It therefore is a vain imagination, that the great design of any of God's actions, his glorious works and dispensations, should be thus to be admired, or applauded by his worthless creatures, that he may gain esteem, or a good word from such vile creatures as we are. We take too much upon us, if we imagine that the all-wise God can be concerned whether such blind creatures as we are, approve or disapprove of his proceedings; or that he really can suffer any diminution of his glory by our dislike, or is advanced in honour by our approbation, of his dispensations. We think too meanly of, and detract from, his great majesty, if we conceive he can be tickled with applause, and aim at reputation from us in his glorious design. That therefore such as we should think well of him, or have due apprehensions of those attributes by the acknowledgment of which we are said to glorify him, can be no farther his concern than as it serves the noble ends of his great goodness, viz. that these conceptions may engage us to that affection, to that imitation of him, and that obedience to him, which tends to the promotion of our happiness.

God therefore acteth for his glory, when he discovers to the world those excellences and perfections of his nature which are just motives to the performance of that duty which we owe unto him, or when he doth display before us his imitable perfections, that we may be like him; designing still the benefit and happiness of man in these discoveries. For when he discovers all those attributes which represent him good and merciful, kind and obliging to the sons of men, he doth it with design, and in a manner very proper, to lay the highest obligations on us to returns of love and gratitude, and to engage us to that imitation of his goodness

and mercy to our fellow-creatures which renders us partakers of the divine nature, and helpful to others in all their exigencies. When he gives signal demonstrations of his Almighty power, and of his great wisdom, he designs by this to teach us that he is able to foresee and to divert those evils which may at any time befall us, to rescue us from all our miseries, and to confer the greatest blessings on his servants, that so he may encourage us to place our trust in him at all times, to repair by humble supplications to the throne of grace, and to serve him faithfully, in expectation of his favour and protection. When he manifests himself to be a God of truth and faithfulness, one who will punctually perform his promises to, and execute his threats upon, us, he doth this chiefly to affright us from those sins which make it necessary for his justice to be severe upon us, and to provoke us to the performance of those duties to which he hath annexed the greatest blessings. When he informs us that his holiness and justice cannot permit the wicked to escape his vengeance, or any upright soul to want the tokens of his love or the reward of his sincere obedience; his great design in all this is, that sin, which is the rise of all our miseries, may be avoided; and holiness which is the true advancement and best accomplishment of human nature, may be more earnestly pursued by us. So that God's acting for his glory, is indeed his acting for the good of his most noble creatures, and only recommending of himself to their good-liking and affection, that so he may the more effectually promote their happiness.

It is indeed in our translation said '*God hath made all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of wrath.*' (Prov. xvi. 4.) But in the Hebrew the word is לַמַּאנְהוּ (lamaanehu) from אָנָה (anah), and so the words may be thus rendered, '*the Lord hath made all things,*' 'to answer to themselves, or aptly to refer to one another,' '*even the wicked for the day of wrath,*' according to these words of Grotius, *singula Deus ordinat ad id quod singulis competit, ordinat impium ad diem calamitosum.** The Bishop of Ely renders them thus, '*The Lord disposeth all things according to his will, even the wicked for the day of wrath,*' that is, to be then the executioners of it.

And whereas these men tell us, that God elected a certain number to be saved for the manifestation of the glory of his grace,

* 'God appoints every thing to that which befits it,—he appoints the impious for the day of calamity. ED.

(1.) according to this hypothesis, the glory of his grace must consist in electing so many to salvation and no more; for if the decree to save more would more have tended to the manifestation of his glory, the same motive must have induced him to save more. Now to affirm that "it is for the glory of his mercy to save the elect only, and no more," seems contrary to common sense; for the more are benefited, the greater is the glory of the benefactor. If it then tendeth to the glory of his mercy absolutely to decree to save some no more fitted to be the objects of his mercy than the rest, it must be more for the glory of his mercy to decree thus to save more, and most of all to decree to save all.

Again, (2.) if it be for the glory of his grace to prepare saving grace for any, and to give them that assistance which will unfrustrably procure their salvation, would it not be more for the glory of the same grace to prepare it for, and afford it to, more, and to leave none under a necessity of perishing for want of grace sufficient to work out their salvation? Is grace the more magnified for being restrained to some few, when all do equally need and all are equally capable of it? Nor is there any reason in the objects of it, why it should not equally be vouchsafed to them.

The other black part of this decree, which saith "God left the greatest part of mankind in a state in which they must infallibly fail of obtaining salvation, or the means of salvation,—faith and perseverance, they being the consequents and fruits of that election out of which they are excluded," is still more horrible in its immediate consequences: For, (i.) it makes God to create innumerable souls after the fall of Adam, to be inevitably damned without the least compassion for them, or will to afford them means sufficient to exempt them from that dreadful doom. For if "faith and perseverance be the consequents and fruits of God's election," then they who are not elected cannot have them; if "they must fail of obtaining salvation," they must inevitably incur damnation. (ii.) It makes him, in prosecution of this end, having created them pure and innocent as they came out of his hands, to put them into bodies, that so they may be made or deemed the offspring of Adam, and, by being so, may be fit objects of his eternal wrath; which they could never be by his creation of them, did he not thus unite them to the bodies generated by the posterity of Adam.

CHAP. V.

I SHOULD now, for a close, demonstrate the contradiction which this doctrine of absolute election and reprobation bears to the sentiments of the ancient fathers; but this is so evident, that Calvin, Beza,^a and many other patrons of the contrary doctrine, do partly confess it. I therefore shall content myself with three or four plain demonstrations of this truth, viz.

I. (1.) That they unanimously declare, that “God hath left in the power of man, ἐπ’ ἀμφοτέρα τρέπεσθαι, ‘to turn to vice or virtue,’” saith Justin Martyr;^b “to chuse or to refuse faith and obedience, to believe or not,” say Irenæus,^c Clemens Alexandrinus,^d Tertullian,^e and St. Cyprian:^f “That every one is *himself* the cause why he is made *frumentum aut palea*,”* saith Irenæus:^g “Every one, εαυτὸν δικαιοῦντος, ἢ ἔμπαλιν εαυτὸν ἀπειθῆ κατασκευάζοντος, ‘rendering himself either righteous or disobedient,’” saith Clemens of Alexandria:^h “That God hath left it in our own power, πρὸς τὰ καλὰ νεύειν, καὶ τὰ καλὰ ἀποστρέφεισθαι, ‘to turn to or from good:’ that he hath put it into our power, τὸ ἀγαθὸς ἡμᾶς εἶναι ἢ κακὸς, πρᾶττειν μὲν τὰ δίκαια, ἢ τὰ ἄδικα, ‘to be good or bad, to do what is righteous or unrighteous;’” so Athanasius,ⁱ Epiphanius,^k Macarius,^l St. Chrysostom,^m Theodoret,ⁿ and Cyril^o of Alexandria. “That our happiness or punishment, ἐκ τῆ ἐφ’ ἡμῶν ἤρτηται, ‘depends on our own choice;’ that it is in our own choice, ἢ σπέρμα ἅγιον εἶναι ἢ τὸ ἐναντίον, ‘to be an holy seed, or the contrary,’ to fall into hell, or enjoy the kingdom; ἐφ’ ἡμῶν ἐσιν ἢ νύκτος ἢ ἡμέρας υἱὸς γίνεσθαι, ‘to be children of the night or of the day;’ ἢ θεῶ τέκνα δ’ ἀρετῆς, ἢ τῆ ἀντικειμένῃ διὰ κακίας, ‘by virtue to be God’s, or by wickedness the devil’s children;’” so Cyril of Jerusalem,^p St. Basil,^q Chrysostom,^r and Gregory Nissen. (L. 2. contra Eunon. p. 95.)—“That *unusquisque ex seipso causas et occasiones præstitit conditori*, ‘that every one gives occasion to his Maker to render

a Institut. l. 3. c. 23. Beza in Rom. ix. b Ap. 2. p. 46. c L. 4. c. 72.

d Stro. 1. p. 514. 7. p. 717.

e Ep. ad Cast. c. 2.

f Test. ad Quir. l. 3. c. 52.

* ‘Wheat or Straw.’ ED.

g L. 4. c. 9.

h Stro. 3. p. 453.

i Contra Gent. p. 5

k Har. 16. p. 4.

l Ho. 27. p. 166.

m To. 6. p. 868.

n Adv. Græc. Serm. 5. To. 4. p. 543.

o Contra Jul. l. 3. p. 79.

p Catech. 4. p. 31.

q In xiv. Es. To. 2. p. 259.

r To. 2. H. 14. in I Cor. p. 329.

him' a vessel of honour or dishonour: *et pro meritis suis unusquisque à Deo vel honoris vas efficitur vel contumeliæ*, 'God having given man power to make himself a vessel of election or of wrath; that we are vessels of wrath, or of mercy, ἀπὸ προαιρέσεως δικαίας, 'from our own choice,' every one κατασκευάζων ἑαυτον σκεύος ὀργῆς, 'preparing himself to be a vessel of wrath,' οἰκοθεν καὶ ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ, 'from his own wicked inclination,' καθάπερ καὶ σκεύος φιλανθρωπίας, 'or to be a vessel of divine love,' διὰ πίστεως, 'by faith,' δίοτι ἀξίως ἑαυτὸς ἔλεος ἐποίησαν, 'because they have rendered themselves fit for mercy.' So Origen,^s Macarius, Chrysostom,^t Œcumenius, and Theophylact.—"And this," saith Origen, "is, *justa sententia, et cum omni pietate concordans, ut ex præcedentibus causis unumquodque vas vel ad honorem vel ad contumeliam præparetur*, 'a just sentence, and in all things agreeable to piety, that every one should from preceding causes be made a vessel of honour or dishonour.'" (Περὶ Αρχ. L. 3. F. 141.) And sure these things must be sufficient to convince us, that these Fathers believed nothing of the doctrine of absolute election or reprobation; which will be further evident,

II. From the exposition they all, before St. Austin, give of the eighth and ninth chapters to the Romans. *First*. Thus I have shewed that all the Fathers* interpret these words of the apostle, 'those that are called according to his purpose, whom he foreknew,' of "those whom he foreknew to have good purposes, *et quos præscivit sibi fore devotos*, 'and whom he foreknew to be devoted to his service,' them he predestinated;" so Origen and all the ancient Fathers in their commentaries on this place; which exposition is as ancient as Clemens of Alexandria,^y who saith expressly that ἔς προώρισεν ὁ θεὸς δικαίως ἐσομένους πρὸ καταβολῆς τῆ κόσμου ἐγνωκώς, 'he fore-appointed them, knowing, before the foundation of the world, they would be righteous.'

Secondly. Upon those words, chap. ix. 13, 'Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated,' they descant thus, "I have hated Esau because he was evil, and loved Jacob because he was good." "He made him," saith Origen, "a vessel of mercy, *pro puritate et simplicitate animæ*, 'for the purity and sincerity of his soul;'

^s Περὶ Αρχῶν. l. 3. c. 6.

^t Ho. 15. p. 96. and in Rom. ix. 22, 23.

^x Ch. 3, Arg. 3.

^y Stro. 7. p. 765. B.

but seeing this wanting in the soul of Esau, him *ex eâdem massâ fecit vas contumeliæ*, ‘out of the same mass he made a vessel of dishonour.’ “For God,” saith Chrysostom, “doth not wait as a man doth, to the end, to see who will be good, or not; ἀλλὰ καὶ πρό τούτων οἶδε τις μὲν ὁ πονηρὸς, τις δὲ ὁ μὴ τοιοῦτος, ‘but sees before, who will be bad, and who will not;’ and seeing things future as God, προανεφώνησε καὶ τέτε τὴν ἀρετὴν, κακεῖνος τῆς γνώμης τὴν μοχθηρίαν, ‘He foretold before his virtue, and the evil mind of the other.’” And St. Jerom on the same words in Malachi, saith, *dilectio et odium Dei ex præscientiâ nascitur futurorum*, ‘this love and hatred of God ariseth from his prescience of things future.’ Hilary the deacon saith, “that, *sciendo quid unusquisque illorum futurus esset*, ‘knowing what each of them would be,’ that he would be worthy who was the less, and the elder would be unworthy; *unum elegit præscientiâ, et alterum sprevit*, ‘he chose one and rejected the other by his prescience.’” “He did this,” saith Theodoret, “foreseeing their purposes; ἔγχαρ ἄδικος ἡ ἐκλογὴ, ἀλλὰ τῇ προθέσει τῶν ἀνθρώπων συμβαινῶσα, ‘for God’s election is not unjust, but accords with the purpose of man;’” “election,” saith Photius, “being only τῶν διαφερόντων, ‘of things that differ or excel.’ And therefore to the question; why doth he say, He chose one before the other, when ‘they had done neither good nor evil?’” He answers, “that θεῖα προγνώσει τῶν μελλόντων πολλὰ διαφέρει, ‘in the divine fore-knowledge they differed very much.’”

Thirdly. On verse 15th, ‘I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy,’ they all truly note, that this was said of the Jews, after they had all committed the capital sin of Idolatry, in worshipping the golden calf, and that some of them were punished for it, and some not; “This was done,” saith Hilary, “*quia Deus scit cuius debeat misereri*, ‘because God knew who were fit objects of his mercy;’” “because he knew, τίνες ἄξιοι σωτηρίας καὶ ἐκ ἄξιοι, ‘who were worthy of preservation, and who were not;’” so Chrysostom and Cæcumenius.

Fourthly. On verse 6th they descant thus, “It is not of him that wills, or runs only, but of God that sheweth mercy, and crowns the work by his assistance; for otherwise,” say they,

“it cannot be our duty, either to will or run;” so Origen, Chrysostom, Œcumenius, and Theophylact. See this and their answer to the objection of St. Austin against this exposition, in the note upon that verse.

Fifthly. On these words, verse 18th, “He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth,” Origen descants thus, “that which he says is this,—that we are good, or evil, depends upon our will; but what stripes the wicked man shall suffer, and what glory the good man is designed for, depends upon the will of God; τὸν ἄξιον ἐλεεῖσθαι ἐλεεῖ, ‘he hath mercy on him who is fit for mercy,’ τὸν δὲ ἀπειθήν σκληρόν εἶναι συγχωρεῖ, ‘but he permits the disobedient to be hardened.’” Moreover they all note, that the apostle here speaks of Pharaoh; and that him God hardened, not by laying on him any necessity so to be, but only by his patience and lenity, in withdrawing his plagues which should have led him to repentance; as a kind master makes his servant worse by his lenity. And it is observed by Vossius, that before St. Austin wrote against Pelagius, he agreed with them in most of these expositions. (Vide *Histor. Pelag.* l. 5. *Thes.* 8. p. 545.)

Sixthly. On verse 21, ‘*Hath not the potter power over the clay, &c.*’ Theophylact notes, that “as it is not the mass itself that makes one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour, but the use of it, ἃ ἢ φύσις τῆς μὲν ποιεῖ κολλάσεως ἀξίως, τὰς δὲ σεφάνων, ἀλλ’ ἢ προαίρεσις, ‘so is it not the nature, but the choice of men that makes some worthy of punishment, and others of reward.’” “God makes some vessels of honour, others of dishonour,” saith Chrysostom, “because he knows, τὶς μὲν ἄξιος, τὶς δὲ μὴ τοιοῦτος, ‘who is worthy so to be, and who is not.’” “He justly punisheth sinners,” saith Theodoret, “ὡς γνώμη τοῦτο ποιεῖν τολμῶντας, ‘as daring wittingly to do thus;’ and his philanthropy confers mercy, receiving πρόφασιν παρ’ ἡμῶν, ‘an occasion from us to do so.’”

Lastly. I have shewed, that in their notes on verses 22, 23, they say, that “man is made a vessel of wrath or mercy, *from his own choice.*”

III. Vossius declares, that “all the Fathers before St. Austin’s time, think that God predestinated men to life from a prescience that they would live piously, or would believe and persevere to the end;”^a and this, from what hath been discoursed, appeareth

^a *Hist. L. 5. Th. 8.*

to have been the doctrine of all the commentators upon the eighth and ninth chapters to the Romans, till St. Austin's time, and of the Greek commentators after his time; to whom you may add from him the testimony of Irenæus, that "some coming to the light, and others refusing so to do, *Deus omnia præsciens utrisque aptas præparavit habitationes,*" 'God who foreseeth all things, prepared fit habitations for them both.'" Of Chrysostom introducing Christ saying, "*Inherit the kingdom prepared for you before you were born,*" ἐπειδὴ ᾔδειν τοιαύτως ὑμᾶς ἔσομένους, 'because I knew you would be such.'"^b Of Hilary saying, 'many are called but few are chosen, *quia in invitatis de judicii merito probitatis electio est,* 'because among those that are called, God of his just judgment chuseth those that are honest:'"^d Of St. Ambrose, saying, "God who is no respecter of persons, gives not to our petitions but our merits, according to that of the apostle, Whom he foreknew, he also did predestinate, *non enim ante prædestinaret quam præsciret, sed quorum merita præscivit eorum præmia prædestinavit,* 'for God did not predestinate first, and then foreknow, but predestinated them to rewards whom he foreknew to be worthy of them:'"^e Of St. Jerom, saying, "*non gentes eliguntur, sed hominum voluntates,* 'men are not chosen for their nations, but for their wills,'"^f he purposing to save by faith alone, *quos præscivit credituros,* 'those whom he foreknew would believe:'"^g And lastly of Theophylact, saying, "many are called, but few are saved, because few are ἄξιοι τῆ ἐκλογῆναι, 'worthy to be chosen by God;' ἔσι μὲν θεῷ τὸ καλεῖν, τὸ δὲ ἐκλεκτοὺς γίνεσθαι ἢ μὴ ἡμέτερόν ἐστι, 'for it is of God that we are called, but of ourselves that we are chosen, or not.'" ^h And

IV. Prosper confesses, that even they who condemned Pelagius, rejected St. Austin's doctrine of an absolute decree of salvation, as a mere novelty; "for," saith he, "many of the servants of Christ in the city of Marseilles, *contrarium putant patrum opiniononi, et ecclesiastico sensui quicquid de vocatione electorum secundum propositum disputasti,* 'judge that which you dispute of the calling of the elect according to purpose, to be contrary to the opinion of the fathers, and the sense of the church.' They defend

^b L. 4. C. 76.^c Hom. 80. in Matt. To. 2.^d In Matt. xxii.^e L. 5. De Fide. C. 2.^f In Hedib.^g In Rom. viii. 28.^h In Matt.ⁱ Ep. ad August. p. 879.

their obstinacy," saith he, "*vetustate*, 'by antiquity;' affirming, that the things you gather from St. Paul's epistle to the Romans, *a nullo unquam ecclesiasticorum ita esse intellecta*, 'were never so understood by any of the ecclesiastical men.'" And he prays him to instruct him, *how he may answer this objection.*^k He adds, that, "*retractatis priorum de hac opinionibus, pene omnium par invenitur et una sententia, quæ propositum et prædestinationem Dei secundum præscientiam receperunt, ut ob hoc Deus alios vasa honoris, alios contumeliæ fecerit, quia finem uniuscujusque præviderit;*"^l 'having revised the opinions of those that writ before of this matter, he found almost all of them to be of one and the same judgment; that the purpose and predestination of God was according to his prescience, and that he therefore made some vessels of honour, others of dishonour, because he foresaw the end of every one, and what would be their will and actions under the divine assistance.'" So truly did Melancthon say, "*Scriptores veteres omnes, præter unum Augustinum, ponunt aliquam causam electionis in nobis esse,*"^m 'all the ancients, except St. Austin, asserted, that there was some cause of our election in ourselves.'"

Discourse III.

CONCERNING THE EXTENT OF CHRIST'S REDEMPTION.

The state of the question.

TO state this matter aright, I shall endeavour to shew,

First. What limitations or restrictions of our Lord's general redemption I cannot admit of.

Secondly. In what sense they who maintain that doctrine do assert it. And,

First. I reject that distinction as absurd, which saith "Christ died SUFFICIENTLY for all, but INTENTIONALLY only for the elect;" this being to delude men with vain words, and in effect to say "he died no more for those who are not the elect, that is,

^k P. 881.

^l P. 886.

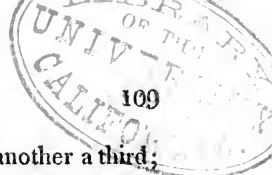
^m In Rom. ix.

who will not actually be saved by him, than for the very devils," seeing he died for them sufficiently, that is, his death, had it been designed for that end, would have been of sufficient virtue to procure the pardon of their sins. (2.) It leaves all men, the elect only excepted, under an impossibility of pardon and salvation; that pardon and salvation being to be obtained only by them to whom the benefit of Christ's death belongs. It therefore leaves all other men under an impossibility of believing, repenting, and obeying the gospel; for these being the conditions of the new covenant, established in his blood, they who are in a capacity of performing these conditions, must be in a capacity of enjoying the benefits of that covenant, and so of having an interest in his death; and therefore they who can have no interest in his death, can be in no capacity of performing the conditions of that covenant. (3.) It follows hence that it cannot be the duty of any, besides the elect, to believe in Christ, or in his blood shed for the remission of sins, or to bless God for sending his Son into the world; for this no man can reasonably do, because Christ's blood was sufficient to procure his pardon, had it been intended for that end; but because it actually was designed for that end. Remove this supposition, and to say "Christ's death was sufficient for their pardon and salvation," is only to say "Christ could have procured their salvation if he would; but he would not, or God was not willing that he should:" And who can bless him upon that account? (4.) Hence it is evident that all who are not elected cannot believe in a Saviour that died for them, but only in one whose death would have been sufficient to procure their pardon, had it been intended for that end, as it was not: And what comfort can this administer to any? Surely no more comfort than it would yield to a condemned malefactor to know his prince could have pardoned him, but he would not. Nor,

Secondly. Can I approve of their doctrine who say, "Christ died so far for all as to procure for them pardon and salvation if they will believe and repent; but that he died moreover to procure for the elect faith and repentance." For (1.) there is no ground at all in scripture for this distinction; for that saith often that Christ died *'for the world; for all; for every man;'* but never saith "he died for one part of mankind more than for an-

other." (2.) They who make this distinction positively assert, "that none can repent and believe for whom Christ died not to procure faith and repentance." Seeing then the effect of our Lord's salutary passion is already past, and what he died not to procure for any, can never be obtained; if Christ died only to procure faith and repentance for the elect, the rest can never have them; and so this is as much as to say "Christ never died for them at all." Wherefore to force these men to come over to us, or to lay aside these vain pretences, and mere disguises of their real sentiments, I demand, (3.) When they say "Christ died for all, so far as to procure pardon and salvation for them if they will believe and repent,"—whether he died to procure pardon and salvation on a condition, which it was possible, upon that assistance which he would vouchsafe them, to perform; or only upon a condition which to them was impossible, for want of grace sufficient for them, to perform. If the latter only, it is certain that he died not at all for them; for what is only done on an impossible supposition, is not done at all. It being the same thing not to die at all for their benefit, as to do it only on a condition they cannot possibly perform. If he died to procure pardon and salvation for them on a condition which, by that grace which he was ready to vouchsafe to them as well as to the elect, they might be able to perform, he died intentionally, and, on his part, effectually, to procure pardon and salvation to them as well as to the elect, and so all mankind may be saved; and then Christ must have died for the salvation of them all. These are the limitations and restrictions of the extent of our Lord's death, which I reject. I add positively,

First. When I say "Christ died for all," I mean that he died equally for all. This will be evident if we consider, (i.) that he offered the same sacrifice; suffered one and the same death; shed the same blood for all for whom he died. This sacrifice must therefore be offered equally for all, if indeed it were offered for all; because it is the same oblation, the same body crucified, and the same blood shed for all. And hence that scripture, which saith expressly, that Christ '*died for all*,' affords not the least intimation that he suffered more or shed more of his blood for one than for another. Moreover, (ii.) it is certain that the sufferings of Christ and his blood shed, cannot be distributed into parts, so that one



should have one share of it, another a second, and another a third; but whosoever hath an interest in them, hath a title to the whole benefit procured by them, and he who hath no title to the whole, hath no share at all in the benefit of his sufferings. (iii.) His blood was shed to establish the new covenant; now that is equally established to all who perform the conditions of it,—faith, repentance, and sincere obedience,—and belongs to none who never do perform them.

It hath been represented as a great absurdity to think that Christ died equally for Judas and for Peter; but without any shew of reason that I can discern. For did not the soul of Judas as much proceed from the '*Father of spirits*,' as the soul of Peter? Was it not equally made after God's image? Did it come out of his hands more unworthy of mercy than the soul of Peter? Were not both born in equal circumstances as to God's favour, in equal need of a Saviour, and equally capable of redemption? Why therefore, antecedently to any good or evil they had done, should this Saviour die more or rather for the one, than for the other?

Secondly. When we say "Christ died for all," we do not mean that he died for all, or any, absolutely, or without any conditions to be performed on their part to interest them in the blessings of his passion; but only that he died for all *conditionally*, or so as that they should be made partakers of the blessings of his salutary passion upon condition of their faith, repentance, and sincere obedience to the laws of the new covenant; to all such he hath promised '*they shall never perish.*' These are the means he hath appointed to prevent their ruin, and render them partakers of that pardon and salvation which he hath purchased by his precious blood: and he that wills that they should use the means by him appointed for these ends, can never be unwilling they should obtain these ends. And as he died for all conditionally, so is it certain that he died for none otherwise, that is, he died not with intention to confer the blessings of his salutary passion on any but true believers, true penitents, and such as would obey the laws of his new covenant: it being impossible in the nature of the thing, that he should die to save the unbeliever, (that is, the person who will not own him as his Saviour,) or to reconcile God to the impenitent and the unbeliever, (that is, to them who still continue in their sins and their rebellions against God;) to deny this is to say,

“ he died to confer the blessings of his salutary passion on the unbeliever, the impenitent, and disobedient,” when of the first he saith, ‘ *He shall not see life, but is condemned already;*’^a of the impenitent, that ‘ *he shall surely perish;*’^b and ‘ *he will come in flaming fire to take vengeance of all that obey not his gospel.*’^c And therefore,

Thirdly. When we say “ Christ died for all,” we do not mean that he hath purchased actual pardon, or reconciliation, or life for all; this being in effect to say, “ that he procured an actual remission of sins to unbelievers, and actually reconciled God to the impenitent and disobedient;” which is impossible. For what Christ hath actually purchased for all, all may justly claim, and God cannot equitably deny them; whereas he both can and will deny pardon to the unbeliever, and never will or can be reconciled to the impenitent and disobedient, whilst they continue so to be. He only by his death hath put all men in a capacity of being justified and pardoned, and so of being reconciled to, and having peace with, God, upon their turning to God, and having faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; the death of Christ having rendered it consistent with the justice and the wisdom of God, with the honour of his majesty, and with the ends of his government, to pardon the penitent believer. Hence the apostles were sent both to Jew and Gentile, ‘ *to preach repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ;*’^d that they might receive remission of sins, and an inheritance among those that are sanctified through faith in him.^e To illustrate this by a plain similitude:— Suppose a prince, whose subjects had rebelled against him and so lay under the sentence of condemnation, should, through the intercession of his beloved son, promise pardon to as many of them as would profess a sorrow for their guilt, ask pardon in his son’s name, and promise to be obedient subjects for the future. Would this procure an actual pardon to any of them, till they had performed these conditions? Or would it ever do it for them who wilfully refused, or even neglected, to perform them? So here Christ, by his death, obtained of his Father a new covenant, in which he promises to pardon and be reconciled to all, upon their faith and repentance; and salvation, upon their perse-

^a John iii. 18. 36.

^b Luke xiii. 5. 5.

^c 2 Thess. i. 8.

^d Acts xx. 21.

^e Acts xxvi. 18.

verance in well-doing. But he hath not, by his death, procured an actual pardon, reconciliation, or salvation to any who have not performed these conditions; nor can they lay any just claim unto them by virtue of Christ's dying for them. And yet upon this gross mistake are founded many of the arguments produced by the **SYNOD OF DORT**, against this general extent of our Lord's death, and so they need no farther answer.

And, *lastly*, they who say that "Christ, by offering up himself to the death, procured, to the elect at least, not only remission, but also faith and repentance," seem to me to talk as men ignorant of the nature of Christ, of the nature of a covenant, of the proper effect of sacrifices, and also of the nature of faith and repentance.

(1.) *As men ignorant of the nature of Christ.* For what need had Christ to purchase the faith and repentance of his elect of his Father, seeing he could not want power sufficient over the hearts of men to work faith and repentance in them? Nor could he, who had the greatest love to them, want will to do it.

(2.) *Of the nature of a covenant*, which is a mutual stipulation, requiring something to be done by one party that he may receive something from another. And therefore to make Christ procure both the promise and the condition, by the same act and passion, is to turn the conditional covenant into one that is absolute. For what is procured already for me, God is in equity bound to give me without my doing any thing to procure it: since otherwise it can be only procured upon condition that I do something to obtain it; and so is not procured for me, if I neglect to perform that condition.

(3.) *As persons ignorant of the nature of a particular victim, or a sacrifice of expiation and atonement*, whose proper effect is to make atonement for, and so remove, the punishment, by procuring forgiveness of the sin committed; it being not intended to procure any other benefit otherwise than by removal of that guilt which might obstruct the collation of it. It therefore ought to be observed, that no sacrifice for sin, as such, no not that of our Lord Jesus Christ, can sanctify a soul, or endow it with that divine nature, that inward purity and likeness to God, and all those other christian virtues which alone make us capable of the enjoyment of an holy God, and 'meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints of light.' A pardon will make a man *rectus in curiâ*, 'free from the condemnation of the law,' but it cannot make him

'of a clean heart, or renew in him a right spirit.' It will justify him from past sins, but cannot sanctify him, or make him holy, and therefore cannot make him happy; that cleanseth only from the guilt, not from the habits and dominion, of sin: And hence sanctification is only to be ascribed to the blood of Christ by way of motive and engagement, but to the Spirit of Christ as the efficient cause; and all those christian virtues which are comprised in it are styled, '*the fruits of the good Spirit.*' Christ therefore, by his death alone, cannot be said to have procured that faith which '*purifies the heart,*' or that repentance which renews the mind, the will, and the affections, but only to remove that guilt which doth obstruct God's favour to us in giving of his Holy Spirit to sanctify us, and give us strong encouragements and powerful motives to faith and repentance. What Christ doth further for us is not performed purely by his death for us on the cross, but by his intercession in the heavens for true penitent believers.

Lastly. This notion seems repugnant to the nature of faith, which is an assent to a divine testimony, and of repentance, which is a conversion of the will from sin to God. Now if Christ hath absolutely procured this faith and repentance for the elect, they cannot be conditions to be performed on their part, but to be given on God's part; for what Christ hath absolutely purchased for them by his death, God is obliged in equity to confer on them absolutely: and so again, the new covenant, in respect of them, is not conditional but absolute. Moreover, either God gives this supposed purchase of *faith and repentance* to the elect by a peculiar, divine, and irresistible assistance, or only by such aid and grace as is common to them with others who are not elected. If by the latter only, then is there nothing purchased more for them than for others with them, because nothing more is given to them than what is common to them with others. If by an assistance which is peculiar to them and cannot be resisted by them, then are not any others to be charged with guilt for not repenting and believing, because it is impossible that they should do so without that special and irresistible assistance which God will not vouchsafe unto them: and so they do not believe and repent, not because they will not do what they could do, but because they cannot do it were they never so willing. Since then, upon this supposition, it is impossible they should believe and repent for

whom Christ never purchased faith and repentance, it cannot be their crime that they did not what it was impossible for them to do. In a word, faith being an assent to a divine testimony upon sufficient evidence, without which evidence we cannot assent to it; and when we have it, we cannot but assent; to say "this faith requires on God's part a special, divine, and irresistible assistance proper to the elect," is to excuse all others from believing, as having no sufficient evidence to do so, although the gospel is as well revealed to them as it is to the elect.

CHAP. I.

I. NOW this assertion, thus explained, hath this great advantage above the contrary doctrine which restrains the intended benefit of our Saviour's passion to the elect,—that whereas there is not one word in the scripture declaring that our Lord died only for a few, or intimating that he died for the elect only; the scriptures are very many, clear, and express, which teach, that '*God would have all men to be saved;*'^f and that he is *the Saviour of all men;*^g being *long-suffering towards them;*^h because he is *not willing any should perish, but that all should come unto repentance,* and by repentance to salvation; that *the saving grace of God hath appeared to all men; teaching them, denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, to live righteously, soberly, and godly in this present world; expecting the blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us;*ⁱ that *as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men to justification of life;*^k that *if he died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they who lived might not live to themselves, but to him that died for them;*^l that *he gave himself a ransom for all;*^m and *by the grace of God tasted death for every man;*ⁿ in all which words this doctrine is contained in express terms. Now it is the doctrine of all Protestants, that the

f 1 Tim. ii. 4.

g 1 Tim. iv. 10.

h 2 Pet. iii. 9.

i Tit. ii. 12—14.

k Rom. v. 16, 17.

l 2 Cor. v. 15.

m 1 Tim. ii. 6.

n Heb. ii. 9.

scriptures are clear and easy to be understood in all things necessary to be believed: And yet if all these places do not confirm this doctrine, there is no reason so to say or think; there being not many articles of christian faith that are more clearly or expressly taught in scripture.

Moreover, according to that limitation which some men put upon these words, viz. "God will have all men to be saved; Christ died for all, because Christ died for some of all ranks and nations; and God is willing some of all kindred and people should be saved;" it may more truly and properly be said, (1.) that "God would have all men to be damned;" because, according to their doctrine, he hath already passed an act of preterition on the greatest part of men, which rendereth their damnation unavoidable. And, (2.) that "Christ died for none," since they for whom he died, according to their doctrine, are none, comparatively to that greater number for whom they say he died not. At least it might be reasonably expected that it should have been somewhere said by way of caution, or once affirmed to prevent mistakes in matters of this moment, that "Christ died not for all; whereas the Holy Ghost neither in terms nor substance hath ever used any expression of this import in the holy scripture; and therefore we may rationally presume, that he approved not the doctrine which makes them proper and almost necessary to be used.

OBJECTION FIRST. "It is said indeed that Christ *'gave his life a ransom for many; that he shed his blood for many, for the remission of sin;'*^a *that as by the disobedience of one man, many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous;'*^b *and that Christ was once offered to take away the sins of many.'*^c

ANSWER FIRST. But that there is no inconsistency betwixt dying for many and for all, is evident from this consideration, that, even in the same chapter, the apostle saith, that by one sin of Adam *'many died,* (Rom. v. 15.) and *all died,* (verse 12.) *many were made sinners,* (verse 19.) and *all sinned,* (verse 12.) and that, *by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous,* δικαιωθήσονται, *'shall be justified,'* (verse 19.) and that *by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men to justification of life.'* (verse 18.) That in the same epistle in which it is said, *'Christ bore the sins*

^a Matt. xx. 28. xxvi. 28.

^b Rom. v. 19.

^c Heb. ix. 28.

of many;^d it is expressly said, '*he tasted death for every man.*' That the same scripture which saith, '*Christ gave his life a ransom for many*'^e says also, that '*He gave himself a ransom for all.*'^f And lastly, that he who said, '*This is my blood shed for many, for the remission of sins,*'^g said also, for that very reason, '*Drink ye all of it;*'^h for it was shed for you for the remission of sins.ⁱ Since therefore all men certainly are many, though many are not necessarily all, since what is in some few places said of many, is not only in more but in the same places said of all; it is certain that Christ cannot be said to die for many exclusively of all, which only is to say he died for many in opposition to our assertion, but only that he died for many in a sense consistent with his dying for all men, and therefore in a sense agreeable to our assertion. And as the words of the prophet Daniel, that '*MANY shall arise from the dead,*' do not contradict the truth of those manifold assertions of the New Testament, that *all men shall arise*; and the words of the apostle, that '*in Adam MANY died, and MANY were made sinners,*' do not thwart the words of the same apostle, saying, in the same place, that '*in Adam ALL men died and were made sinners;*' so neither can those words, '*Christ died for MANY,*' contradict the truth of those more numerous expressions, that '*he died for ALL.*'

I ANSWER (2.) that, as when the kindness designed, by Christ's death, to all, upon the conditions of the gospel, is expressed, it is said, '*Christ died for ALL;*' so when the effect and benefit of it is expressed, the word MANY is most proper: For his blood shed procures remission of sins only to penitent believers, and in this sense Christ gave '*his life a ransom only for MANY,*' even for as many as would believe and obey his gospel.

OBJECTION SECOND. "Christ is said to lay down his life '*for his sheep, (John x. 15.)* for his friends, who do his commandments, (John xv. 13. 14.) for his church.' (Eph. v. 25. 26.) But all are not his sheep, all are not of his church, all do not shew themselves his friends by their obedience; therefore he died not for all."

ANSWER FIRST. In none of these places is it said that "Christ died ONLY for his sheep, for his friends, or for his church;" and

^d Heb. ix. 28. ii. 2.

^e Matt. xx. 28.

^f 1 Tim. ii. 6.

^g Matt. xxvi. 27. 28.

^h Mark xiv. 23, 24.

ⁱ Luke xxii. 20. 1 Cor. xi. 25.

therefore none of them say any thing in contradiction to our assertion. I therefore thus retort the argument,—He that died for his friends and for his enemies, died for all; but Christ died for his friends, and for his enemies, *‘for when we were enemies, Christ died for us:’*^l Ergo, he died for all. Again, he that died for the church of God, and for the unrighteous that he might bring them to the church of God, died for all; but Christ died for the church of God, and *for the unrighteous that he might bring them to the church; ‘for the just died for the unjust that he might bring us to God:’*^m Ergo, he died for all. Lastly, He that died for his sheep that heard his voice, and for the lost sheep that did not hearken to his voice, died for all; but Christ died for his sheep that heard his voice, and for his lost sheep; for he came *‘to seek and to save that which was lost,’*ⁿ even the sheep straying from him: Ergo, he died for all.

ANSWER SECOND. Though it be certain that Christ died intentionally for all, that is, designing the benefits of his salutary passion for them, upon their performance of the conditions of the new covenant, established in his blood; yet is it also true that he eventually is the Saviour of his *body*, and died only for his sheep and friends, because they only do perform the conditions of the new covenant; and therefore to them only can this righteous Judge at last assign the blessings promised in that covenant.

II. But to omit the farther prosecution of this general consideration, by viewing all these texts apart it will be easy to discern in them many circumstances which plainly shew, that they cannot truly be interpreted in that restrained sense which others put upon them. For,

FIRST. When St. Paul declares, *‘that as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, so by the righteousness of one, the free-gift came upon all men to justification,’*^o it seems apparent that the apostle is comparing the condemnation which was procured by the sin of Adam, with the free-gift of justification procured by the second Adam, as to the extent of persons concerned in both. For as *‘by the one saith he, MANY died, and MANY were made sinners; so, by the other, MANY*

^l Rom. v. 8.^m 1 Pet. iii. 18.ⁿ Matt. xviii. 11, 12.^o Rom. v. 18.

were made righteous, and grace abounded unto MANY. As by the one, condemnation came upon all; so by the other justification of life' was procured for, and offered, πάντας τῆς ἀνθρώπων, 'to all men,' and so God was in and through 'Christ reconciling the whole world to himself.' Now to assert that "MANY in the first clause, respecting the fruit of Adam's sin, signifies truly MANY; and in the second, respecting the fruit of Christ's righteousness, but A FEW; that ALL MEN in the first clause is to be taken in the utmost latitude, as of necessity it must be, ALL MEN WHATSOEVER lying under condemnation by reason of the sin of Adam; but the same word in the latter clause of the same verse, doth only signify ALL THE ELECT, which are comparatively but a few,"—seems neither agreeable to reason, nor to the scope of the apostle; who before had said, 'That ALL MEN had sinned, and fallen short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.'^p—and hence ariseth a second observation, for confirmation of the sense we plead for, viz. that the apostle is here comparing the effects of sin as to condemnation, with the effect of the grace of God as to our justification, or to our freedom from condemnation, saying, *That as by sin the judgment came upon all men to condemnation; so by the righteousness of one, the grace of God came upon all men to justification of life; that as sin reigned unto death, so grace might reign by justification to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*^q Now the grace of this comparison is wholly lost, if sin reigned over all men without exception to death and condemnation, but grace reigned only over a few to procure for them the means of justification to life through Jesus Christ. But if the comparison be of things equal as to extent, Christ must have died for the justification of all men.

III. SECONDLY. When the apostle farther adds "*The love of Christ constrains us* (thus to persuade men to believe in Christ, and live to him) *because we thus judge, that if* * (or since) *one died for all, then were ALL dead;*' the words, 'ALL were dead,' must certainly be taken in their greatest latitude; wherefore the words

^p Rom. ii. 23. 24.

^q Rom. v. 18. 21.

^r 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.

^s This Hebrew **DN**

is translated "since, Jer. xxiii. 58. Ezek. xxxv. 6. And the Greek, εἰ, probably so signifies, Acts iv. 9. Rom. viii. 31. and here: for from a supposition of that which is not, no such inference can be made.

preceding,—‘*if or since Christ died for all,*’ from which they are an inference,—ought also to be taken in the same extent. When he goes on to say, ‘*He died for all, that they who live might not henceforth live to themselves, but to him that died for them;*’ this sure must be the duty of all christians in particular, (unless there be any christians not obliged to live to Christ, but rather at liberty to live to themselves,) and so that death which is the motive to it, must be intended for them all. To say here, that “Christ died for some only of all nations, Jews and Gentles,” is to exempt all others of those nations from living to Christ upon this account; and to say “He died for all the elect, that they of them who live might not live to themselves,” is to suppose that some of the elect might live not to Christ but to themselves; which cannot truly be imagined of the elect of God. Moreover, he declares that the sense of this love of Christ prevailed upon them to persuade men to believe in him; now this persuasion they used to every man to whom they preached, and therefore they persuaded all men to believe that Christ died for them; for ‘*we,*’ saith he, ‘*preach this Christ who is to you Gentiles the hope of glory; admonishing, πάντα ἀνθρώπων, every man, and teaching every man in all Wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.*’[†] See another false interpretation of these words confuted, note on 2 Cor. v. 15.

IV. THIRDLY. When the apostle saith, ‘*I exhort therefore (in pursuance of the design of Christ’s coming to save sinners, Chap. i. 15.) First, that supplications, and prayers, and intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men (particularly) for kings, and all that are in authority, &c.*” he must exhort them, not only to pray for some men, some kings, and some in authority in all nations; for then we could not know how to observe this precept, because we could not know what men or rulers we were to pray for, and what not: When then he adds, by way of reason, ‘*for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God, who will have all men to be saved;*’ this reason why we are to pray for all men in general, and for all rulers in particular, must either be a false and unconcluding reason, or must import thus much—He would have all men and rulers to be saved, whom he would have us

† Col. i. 27. 28.

‡ 1 Tim. ii. 1.

pray for. Now the doctrine and practice of the whole christian world attests, that they were ALL men, and rulers in particular, as we learn from the express testimonies of Prosper,^w and of the author *De Vocatione Gentium*.^x Moreover, that God would have all men to be saved, the apostle proves,

(1.) Because he is the 'God of all,' the common Father and Creator of all men, verse 4. Eph. iv. 6.—Now thus he is the God of all men in particular, and so this argument must shew he would have all men in particular to be saved. And as the apostle argues for God's readiness to justify the Gentiles by faith as freely as the Jews, by asking, "Is He the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles?"^y And by answering that "there is, as to this, no difference betwixt them; the same God being rich unto all that call upon him: for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved;" so may we argue in this case by a like enquiry, "Is he the God of a small remnant of the Jews and Gentiles only? Is he not 'the Saviour of them all?'" 1 Tim. iv. 10.

(2.) 'He would have all men to be saved,' saith the apostle, "for there is one Mediator betwixt God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all."—Now if the argument from one God was designed to prove he was the God of all men in particular, as hath been shewed already, the argument from one Mediator must also prove Christ the Mediator of all men in par-

w Sincerissime credendum, atque profitendum est, Deum velle, ut omnes homines salvi fiant, siquidem apostolus, cujus ista sententia est, sollicitissime præcipit, quod in omnibus Ecclesiis piissime custoditur, ut Deo pro omnibus hominibus supplicetur. Prosp. Resp. ad Object. 2. Vincent. Præcepit apostolus, immo per apostolum.

'It is deserving of the most sincere belief and profession,—that God is wishful for the salvation of all men; because the apostle whose declaration it is, with the utmost solicitude commands, that it be a pious observance, in all the churches, to supplicate God in behalf of all men.—"Prosper's Answer."—The apostle enforced this, even by an apostle.' ED. 20. 1746

x Dominus vult fieri obsecrationes, et postulationes, et gratiarum actiones pro omnibus hominibus, pro Regibus, et pro his qui in sublimitate sunt: Quam legem supplicationis, ita omnium sacerdotum, et omnium fidelium devotio concorditer tenet ut nulla pars mundi sit in qua hujusmodi orationes non celebrentur a populis christianis. Supplicat ergo ubique Ecclesia Deo non solum pro sanctis, et Christo jam regeneratis, sed etiam pro omnibus infidelibus, et inimicis crucis Christi, &c. De Vocat. Gent. l. 1. c. 4.

The Lord's will is, that there be intreaties, requests, and giving of thanks for all men,—for kings and for those who are in exalted stations: Which law of supplication so cordially obtains in the devotions of every minister and of all the faithful, that there is no part of the world in which prayers according to this direction are not offered up by christian people. The church universal therefore makes supplication to God, not only for the saints and those who in Christ are regenerate, but also for all unbelievers and enemies of the cross of Christ &c.—"On the calling of the Gentiles." ED. y Rom. iii. 29.

ticular, and consequently that he gave himself a ransom for all men in particular. Hence is he so emphatically styled, '*the man Christ Jesus,*' to intimate to us, that, having taking upon himself the nature common to us all to fit him for this office, he must design it for the good of all who are partakers of that nature. For as he was a man, he surely was endued with the best of human affections,—UNIVERSAL CHARITY, which would excite him to promote the welfare of all; as he was a man, he was subject to the common law of humanity, which obliges us to endeavour the common benefit of men; and that good-will which he requires us to bear to all men indifferently, good and bad, friends and enemies, he questionless did bear himself in the highest degree, and to the utmost extent; and therefore doubtless, in his sufferings for men, which are acknowledged to be sufficient for all, he had regard to the good of all.

V. FOURTHLY. When the same apostle saith, '*the saving grace of God hath appeared to all men, teaching them, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, to live righteously, and soberly, and godly in this present world, &c.*'^a he plainly seemeth to strengthen this assertion: For here it is observable, (i.) that the grace here mentioned, is '*the grace of God,*' even of that God who '*spared not his Son, but freely gave him up for us.*'^b (ii.) That it is styled, *ἡ χάρις ἡ σωτηρίας*, '*saving grace;*' as being apt in its nature, and by the God of all grace designed, for the salvation of them for whom it was vouchsafed. (iii.) "This grace," saith the apostle, "hath appeared to all men;" and if the apostles did in their preaching tender it to all without exception, they either tendered it to them to whom by God's intention it did not belong, and so exceeded their commission; or else it did belong to all men: And since it only could belong to them by virtue of Christ's passion, it follows that the benefit of his passion must belong to all. (iv.) This grace appeared to all men to '*teach them, denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, to live righteously, soberly, and godly in this present world;*' and therefore to teach them that which will most certainly conduce to their salvation, since all who learn this lesson will undoubtedly be saved, and that by virtue of our

^a Tit. ii. 11. 12.

^b Rom. viii. 32.

Lord's salutary passion; since, as it follows, they may '*expect the blessed hope and glorious appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for them.*' In a word, either all men are obliged, on the account of this grace of God, and these sufferings of Christ for them, to deny ungodliness, &c. and to live righteously, soberly and godly in this present world; and then this grace, and these sufferings must be intended for their salvation; or it must be said, "that there are some, yea, the greatest part of christians, who are not on the account of this grace appearing to them, or of these sufferings, obliged to the performance of these duties."

VI. FIFTHLY. When the same apostle informs us, that Christ was '*made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, that he, by the grace of God might taste death for every man;*'^c he clearly doth express the same assertion; for here is no restraint at all, nor any seeming limitation of that comprehensive phrase, '*he tasted death* περι πάντος, '*for every man,*' distributively taken; (for "*dictum de omni,*"* say the logicians, "distributes the subject;") but there is something which doth seem to strengthen the general intendment of the phrase; for this is said to magnify the grace of God in sending his Son to die for man. Now, sure, the grace of God will be more magnified by this general extent of our Saviour's death, than by contracting the intendment of it to a few.' For if the grace of God be great, in sending his Son to die for A FEW chosen persons, it must be greater in sending him to die for MANY, and greater still in giving him up to die for us ALL. And this would be more sensibly perceived by all men, were it their own case; for were they in the number of condemned rebels by their prince, who only should afford an act of grace and indemnity to others, but leave them under condemnation, they would assuredly conceive his grace and favour would be greater were it extended to them also, and would not think his grace was magnified the more for being so discriminating as to exclude them from any share or portion in it.

VII. SIXTHLY. The apostle St. Peter saith, '*God is long-suffering to us-ward, μη βεηόμενος τινος ἀπολέσθαι, ἀλλὰ πᾶντας εἰς μετάνοιαν χωρήσαι,* '*not being willing that ANY should perish, but that ALL should come to repentance;*'^d Now τινες thus opposed

^c Heb. ii. 9. * 'What is said concerning every one, &c.' ED. ^d 2 Pet. iii. 9.

to πάντες is a distributive of ALL, and therefore signifies God is not willing that ANY ONE of the whole rank of men should perish. Moreover, when it is said, '*God would have all men come to repentance,*' it is certain that this will refers to all to whom the preaching of the gospel is vouchsafed, yea to all whom '*in the times of ignorance God winked at;*' for so the scripture speaketh, saying, '*the times of ignorance God winked at, but now he commandeth all men every where to repent.*' When therefore it is said, "He is not willing any one should perish, but come to repentance," he must be supposed at least to mean, he would have no man perish to whom the gospel is vouchsafed. To say, with Estius, by way of answer to this argument,

ARGUMENT FIRST. "God would have none to perish, because he gives to all some general means of conversion to God, though they be not sufficient to that end without those special aids he will not give them;" is to delude us with vain words.

REPLY. For it is self-evident, that he who wills not the means necessary to bring them to repentance, wills not that they should come to repentance; and that he who determines to withhold the means, which being withheld they must perish, wills they should perish.

ARGUMENT SECOND. When he saith "These general words are to be restrained to the elect, and only signify God would not that any of them should perish, because the apostle in his first epistle writes '*to the elect,*'"

REPLY FIRST. I answer, that the apostle by "THE ELECT" doth not here mean men absolutely designed for eternal happiness, but only men professing christianity, or such as were visible members of the church of Christ, as will be evident from these considerations; (1.) that he calls upon them to '*make their calling and election sure, that they may not fall from it; for,*' saith he, '*if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:*'^f plainly declaring that the making their election sure, depended on their '*adding to their faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, brotherly kindness, charity;*'^g and so was only a conditional election upon their perseverance in a life of holiness. (2.) He exhorts them to '*be sober and vigilant, because their adversary the devil goes about seek-*

^e Acts xvii. 30.

^f 2 Pet. i. 10.

^g Verses 5, 6, 7.

ing whom he may devour;^h and to beware lest being led away by the error of the wicked, they should fall from their own steadfastness;ⁱ whereas it cannot be supposed of persons thus absolutely elected to salvation, that they should be devoured by satan, or fall from their steadfastness. Yea, (3.) he not only speaks of some of them who had '*forsaken the right way, and turned with the dog to his vomit,*'^k but also prophecies, that '*those false teachers who brought in damnable doctrines, even denying the Lord that bought them, should make merchandise of some of them,*' which they could never do of persons absolutely elected to salvation. (4.) The apostle affirmeth the same thing of the whole church of Babylon, saying, '*the church which is at Babylon, συνεκλεκτὴ* 'ELECTED TOGETHER with you, saluteth you.'^l Now that all the members, either of the eastern or the western Babylon, were chosen out of the world to the profession of christianity, he who was with them could not be ignorant; but that they all were absolutely elected to salvation, was more than he could know, and therefore more than he would say.

REPLY SECOND. Though both this and the former epistle were written to them who were '*elected through sanctification to obedience, and to them who had obtained precious faith,*' and so to them who were already come unto repentance, these words cannot respect the same persons, because they speak of persons to whom God '*exercised long-suffering, that they might come to repentance,*' and might not *perish* under their present want of it: and so they are directed to the unconverted Jews, to whom St. Paul speaks thus, '*Despisest thou the riches of the goodness, patience, and long-suffering of God, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?*'^m And to whom this apostle speaketh, verse 15; saying, '*count the long-suffering of our Lord salvation.*' Now, sure, it is not reasonable to conceive those Jews, who lay then under a spirit of slumber, were absolutely chosen to salvation.

^h 1 Pet. v. 2.

ⁱ 2 Pet. iii. 17.

^k 2 Pet. ii. 3, 15, 22.

^l 1 Pet. v. 13.

^m Rom. ii. 4.

CHAP. II.

I. A SECOND general argument for this extent of our Lord's salutary passion, arises from those scriptures which represent him as the Saviour of the whole world; as when the Baptist styles him '*the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world;*'^a when the Samaritans say, '*we have heard, and know this is the Christ, the Saviour of the world;*'^b when he himself saith, '*he is the bread of God which came down from heaven, and giveth life to the world; and that this bread is his flesh which he will give for the life of the world;*'^c when St. John saith, '*We have seen and do testify, that God hath sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world.*'^d If all these general expressions seem not so fully to confirm this truth, it is done beyond exception by those texts which say, '*So God loved the world, that he sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life; for God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world by him might be saved;*'^e and introduce Christ making this declaration, '*I came not to condemn the world, but that I might save the world;*'^f and by the apostle Paul, saying, '*God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing to them their sins;*'^g and, lastly, by St. John, saying to believers, of this '*Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, that he is the Propitiation not only for our sins, but for the sins of the whole world.*'^h Now, in the general, observe,

FIRST. That all these places, save one, are cited from the writings of St. John, and so the sense which "the world" beareth in St. John's gospel and epistles, must be esteemed in reason the proper import of the word. Now this term occurs almost a hundred times in St. John's writings, twice signifying "the multitude," and frequently "the habitable world," in which last sense, it is certain that Christ died not for it; but mostly "the men of the world," and then it signifies,

1. That world which '*knew not Christ,*' (John i. 10.) and would not know his servants. (1 John iii. 1.)

^a John i. 29.

^b John iv. 42.

^c John vi. 33, 51.

^d 1 John iv. 14.

^e John iii. 16, 17.

^f John xii. 47.

^g 2 Cor. v. 19.

^h 1 John ii. 2.

2. That world which hated the apostles, (John xv. 18, 19.) and would afflict them, (John xvi. 33. xvii. 14.) and good men. (1 John iii. 13.)

3. That world of which the wicked Jews were a part, (John viii. 23. 1 John iv. 5.) of which Satan was the prince, (John xii. 31. xiv. 30. xvi. 11.) which was to be judged and convinced by the Holy Ghost, (John xii. 31. xvi. 8.) and of which Christ and his apostles were no part, (viii. 23. xv. 19. xvii. 16.) that world which '*lies in wickedness,*' (1 John v. 19.) and which cannot receive the Spirit. (John xiv. 17.) And yet,

4. That world of which Christ was the Light, (iii. 19. ix. 5. xii. 46.) and which he prayed might believe those apostles he was sending to them, and might know him to be the Prophet and Messiah sent by God. (xvii. 21, 23.) Now when "the world" is so constantly used in the ill sense, in all those other places where it signifies the men of the world, can it be reasonably thought that in all these places it should signify "the elect," that is, men that are not of the world, but called out of it: that when elsewhere it signifies so oft "the servants of satan, the enemies of Christ and christians, the wicked of the world, and men incapable of receiving the Spirit," it should in all the places mentioned in this argument signify "the servants of Christ, the true lovers of Christ and christians, and those in whom the Spirit dwells?" Seeing then the whole world is divided into good and bad men, and it is on all hands granted that Christ died for good men, and here so often said that he died also for that world which stands in opposition to them; is it not reasonable to conclude hence, that he died both for the evil and the good?

OBJECTION. "But doth not Christ say, '*I pray not for the world, but for them that thou hast given me out of the world;*'⁴ and would he die for them for whom he would not pray?"

ANSWER. This objection is contrary both to reason and the holy scripture:—to reason; for can it rationally be imagined, that he who was perfect in charity, should be wanting in this highest act of charity? That the beloved Son of God should charge this on us, as our duty, to pray for our enemies, that we may be the '*sons of our Heavenly Father,*' and he himself neglect to do

⁴ John xvii. 9.

it? Moreover, how often doth he say of the Jews, '*Ye are of the world,*' and of his apostles chosen out of them, that they were chosen '*out of the world?*' And yet he saith to them, *εἰ ἔγνωσ,* '*How do I wish that thou hadst KNOWN, in this thy day, the things which do belong to thy peace.*'^k And, hanging on the cross, he said, '*Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.*'^l Thus '*did he make intercession for the transgressors.*' (Isa. liii. 12.) Now this prayer and intercession for them implies the possibility of their receiving forgiveness; and such a possibility doth presuppose in God a disposition to grant it, and consequently a satisfaction provided, such as God will accept, and such as will avail to their benefit, provided they do their parts towards the obtainment of it.

(2.) Our Lord says not this absolutely, but only in respect to that very prayer he was then offering up for his apostles, verse 12, in which he was asking those things which could agree to them alone, or to those who were given him out of the world, viz. that they might be consecrated to their apostolical function by that Spirit which the world could not receive, that their joy from his presence with them might be full; nor is there any thing in this whole prayer which is not proper to believers only, that is, to persons called out of the world. And,

(3.) This very prayer for them and other apostolical preachers of the word, was made for the sake of the world, and with respect to their saving faith, that is, that '*the world might believe and know that the Father had sent him.*' (verse 23.) So that Christ prayed for his apostles for this very end, that the world by their means might believe, and believing might have life through his name. It is therefore plain he made this very prayer, in which he saith, '*I pray not for the world,*' out of that affection to the world, and with design that the preaching of the apostles to them might be more effectual for their conversion and salvation.

II. A SECOND general consideration, shewing the absurdity of restraining this word to the elect, is this,—that if THE WORLD in all these places, were to be restrained to some few people, some little remnant of the world alone, it might with greater truth and reason have been said, "that God so hated or cast off

^k Luke xix. 42.

^l Luke xxiii. 34.

the world, that he sent not his Son to save the world, but to condemn it." For if those he intended to save by sending his Son, be but a little remnant, in comparison of those to whom he intended no such benefit by his Son's advent, the reason for asserting that he was sent into the world to save it, is very little, when compared to the reason to assert he was not sent into the world for such an end. If his coming into the world with light, and with a tender of salvation to them, is the condemnation of the unbelieving and the wicked world, and God intended absolutely to withhold that grace which could alone enable the greatest part of the world to embrace that tender, or walk according to that light, it seems more reasonable to say, "God sent not his Son into the world to save it, but that the world through him might be condemned." To proceed to the particular consideration of the places cited:

III. FIRST. When our Saviour saith, that *'as Moses' lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up, (upon the cross) that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life;*^m doth not the similitude seem plainly to require, that as the brazen serpent in the wilderness was lifted up to preserve all the Jews stung with serpents from perishing, so was Christ lifted up to preserve all men, by looking up to him lifted up upon the cross, from perishing by the sting of the old serpent? Especially when he goes on to say, by way of reason, *'For God so loved the world, that he gave (up) his only-begotten Son, (to the death,) that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life: For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.'*ⁿ For let it be observed,

(1.) That of this world so beloved of God, some would not believe, and therefore would perish, is here supposed in our Saviour's words, which yet cannot be supposed of "the world of the elect;" he therefore could not mean, that he was sent into the world that "whosoever of his elect would believe in him should not perish." Moreover, the world which Christ was sent to save is, in the following words, divided into believers and unbelievers: for thus they run, *'He (of this world) who believeth in him is not*

^m John iii. 14, 15.

ⁿ Verses 16, 17.

condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already; which must be false if you restrain this "world" to such elect as cannot perish, but will assuredly believe to life eternal.

(2.) That the condemnation which will be pronounced upon the unbeliever will be on this account, '*because he believed not in the name of the Son of God,*' that is, did not embrace him as a Saviour who died for him: Whereas if God the Father sent not his Son to die for him, if Christ was not designed as a Saviour to any that eventually believe not, they cannot be obliged to believe he was their Saviour, or died for them, unless they be obliged to believe a lie; nor can they be condemned, for not applying that death to them which never was intended for them.

(3.) These words beginning thus, '*God so loved the world, &c.*' were certainly intended as a declaration of God's great love to the world. Now this interpretation of "the world," which we here plead for, magnifies the love of God incomparably more than that which doth restrain its meaning only to "the elect of God." For they allow only a very narrow sphere for this so noble, active, and diffusive principle of the love of God, in comparison of them who do extend his kind intentions to all to whom the gospel is vouchsafed.

SECONDLY. This also clearly follows from these words of Christ, "If any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge (that is, condemn) him not; for I came not to condemn the world, but to save the world." Whence I argue thus, the world which Christ came 'to save,' he came not 'to condemn,' as the antithesis plainly shews; but the world which he came not to condemn is the unbelieving world: Ergo, the world he came to save is the same world.

IV. THIRDLY. When the beloved disciple saith, for the comfort of new converts, and therefore weak in grace, "If we sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the Propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world;"^p these words will not admit of the restrained senses which others put upon them. For when he saith, '*He is the Propitiation for our sins,*' sure he intends this comfort to them all to whom he speaks, and not only that Christ was the Advocate and the Propitiation for the sins of some of them only;

for this would have left them all under perplexities and doubts whether this Advocate and this propitiation did belong to them, but would have comforted none of them. When therefore he adds, "He is the propitiation not for the sins of all us only, but for the sins of the whole world," he, in like manner, must extend the phrase to "all men in the world." Again, when he saith, '*He is the propitiation for our sins,*' he doth not mean that he is so sufficiently only, but not intentionally: For what comfort would it afford them, that Christ's death was sufficient to procure the pardon of their sins, had God designed it for that end, unless they also knew that he intended it for the procuring their propitiation? When therefore he proceeds to say, "and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world," he must mean also that he was the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, not only sufficiently, but in his gracious intention also. Moreover, were this all that was intended by this phrase, it is as true, and might as properly have been said of fallen angels, and the whole host of devils, that Christ is the propitiation for their sins, as for the sins of those who are not elected, seeing had God designed it for that end, Christ's death, by reason of its intrinsick value, might have been sufficient to procure atonement for the sins of fallen angels.

Nor is it less absurd to say the import of these words is this,— "He died for, or he is the propitiation for, the sins of the elect of the whole world." For,

(i.) I have already shewed that in the scripture, and more especially in the writings of St. John, "the world," or "the whole world," doth never signify "the elect only" in opposition to "the wicked of the world," but still "the wicked of the world," in opposition to "the faithful christian."

(ii.) Would it not be strange, and alien from the mind of scripture, to say, "THE WHOLE WORLD is elected to salvation; the whole world shall be justified by faith in Christ, and truly sanctified by his Spirit; the Spirit of God dwells in the whole world, and the whole world shall be raised by Christ to eternal happiness?" And yet all this is certainly true of the whole world of the elect: Why therefore is it not equally affirmed of the whole world, if they be words of equal latitude and truth?

V. And having so fully evidenced that "the world" in these three places signifies not only "the elect," but "the whole world,"

we are sufficiently assured that the same word in the same evangelist bears the same sense in all the other places mentioned, v. g.

When the Baptist saith “Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world,”^a doth he not speak this in allusion to the lambs daily offered up for the sins of the whole Jewish nation, and therefore intimate that as they were offered up to expiate the sins of the whole nation, so was this Lamb of God offered to expiate the sins of the whole world in general?

When Christ saith, “He is that bread which came down from heaven to give life unto the world,”^b and then tells the unbelieving Jews, who were of the world, and so continued, “My Father giveth you this bread from heaven; and that this was the work God required of them,—to believe in him;” is it not evident that these unbelievers, these men of the world, in opposition to the elect out of the world, must also be the men whom he came down from heaven to give life unto? Or could he reasonably say to them for whose salvation he was never sent, “These things I say unto you that ye might be saved;”^c or complain thus of them to whom he never was designed to give life,—“Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life?” When he adds, verse 51, “this bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world;” and then saith, to the same Jews, “If ye eat not my flesh,” that is, believe not in me crucified, “you have no life in you;” must it not be their duty to believe in him that they might live? And could they do this if he died not for them?

In a word,—“to be the Christ, and “to be the Saviour of the world,” are, in two of these places, set by way of apposition, to signify they are words of the same latitude, as when the Samaritans say “We know this is truly, ὁ σωτὴρ τοῦ κόσμου ὁ Χριστός, THAT CHRIST who is THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD:” and the apostle, “We have seen and do testify that God hath sent, τὸν υἱὸν σωτῆρα τοῦ κόσμου HIS SON, that is, THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD.”^d Now would the apostle have given this description of the Christ, the Son of God, had he believed that he was not designed to be the Saviour of the world, but only of those elect whom, saith he, “the world hateth; because they are not of the world?”^e Did he not “come to seek and save that which was lost,” as all men were? “and to save sinners,” which is the

^a John i. 29.

^b John vi. 33.

^c John v. 34, 40.

^d 1 John iv. 14.

^e 1 John iii. 13.

condition of all men? These places, therefore, though they be indefinite in words, are yet equivalent to universals; for wherefore came he to save that which was lost, but because it was lost? Or to save sinners, but because they were sinners? And if that be the reason, he must come to save all sinners, all that were lost; the reason being equal, as to all that are so.

VI. Moreover, when the apostle saith, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing to them their sins,"^f the import of these words is plainly this, He was offering through Christ a reconciliation to the world, and promising to them who would believe in him an absolution from their past offences. This is evident, (i.) because he was doing this not by himself immediately, but only by the ministry of his apostles; for so the words run, "He hath given us the ministry of reconciliation, viz. that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing to them their trespasses, καὶ θέμενος ἐν ἡμῖν AND PLACING IN (or committing to) us the word of reconciliation." Now did they make a declaration to the impenitent, unbelieving world, that God was actually reconciled to them, and had forgiven their iniquities? No, they exhorted them "to repent and be baptized, in the name of the Lord Jesus, for the remission of sins;^g to repent and be converted that their sins might be blotted out;^h to believe in Christ that they might be justified, that is, absolved from the guilt of sin; to repent and turn to the Lord that they might receive remission of sins."^k—(ii.) Because they, in pursuance of this commission, intreated all to whom they preached to be reconciled to God; which being only to be done through faith in Christ, they must intreat them to believe in him that they might be justified, that is, obtain reconciliation through his blood shed for the remission of sins; and this the apostle's reason shews viz. "We pray you be you reconciled to God, ὑπερ Χριστοῦ BY CHRIST; for he hath made him (a sacrifice for) sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God (that is, might by God be accounted righteous through faith) in him."^l This being so, they who were sent to "preach the gospel to every human creature,"^m and in pursuance of this commission "warned every man,

^f 2 Cor. v. 19. ^g Acts ii. 58. ^h Acts iii. 19. ⁱ Acts xiii. 58, 59. ^k Acts xxvi. 18, 20.

^l See the note there.

^m Mark xvi. 15.

and taught every man, in all wisdom, that they might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus,"ⁿ praying all men to be reconciled to God through Christ, because he had made Christ a sacrifice for their sins, &c. they, I say, who preached thus, and yet did not exceed their commission, must believe that God was ready to be reconciled to every man through Christ; and therefore that his sacrifice was offered to procure reconciliation for all mankind. As therefore Christ is styled '*the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world,*' and said to be '*the Propitiation for the sins of the whole world,*' not by actually removing the guilt of all men, or rendering God actually reconciled to them, but by dying to procure these blessings for all that would believe in him; so God is said to be '*in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, &c.*' not because he actually did so, but because by these ambassadors he offered reconciliation and remission of sins through faith in Christ to all that would believe in him.

CHAP. III.

A THIRD head of arguments, to confirm the generality of Christ's redemption, ariseth from those places which either expressly say, or by plain consequence assert, Christ died for them that perish; for hence the argument runs thus:

I. If Christ died for them that perish, and for them that do not perish, he died for all; but Christ died for them that perish, and for them that do not perish: Ergo; he died for all men.— That he died for them that do not perish, is confessed by all, and if he died for any that may or shall perish, there is the same reason to affirm he died for all that do so. Now that he died for such, the scripture saith expressly in these words, '*And through thy knowledge shall thy weak brother perish for whom Christ died?*'^o and it doth intimate as much in this injunction, '*Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.*'^p In both which places the apostle exhorts those to whom he writes, not to scandalize their weak brethren, by an argument taken from the irropa

ⁿ Col. i. 28.

^o 1 Cor. viii. 11.

^p Rom. xiv. 15.

rable mischief they might do to them, viz. the eternal ruin they might bring upon them by so doing. Now if the apostle knew and taught that none could be destroyed or perish for whom Christ died, they to whom these exhortations are directed, must be supposed to know and to believe it; and then St. Paul must, in these places, exhort them to avoid the scandalizing of their brother, by saying that effect might follow from their scandal which he before had told them was impossible. Now is it reasonable to believe, that one assisted by the Holy Ghost should seriously and solemnly admonish them not to destroy those souls for whom Christ died; who by his doctrine were obliged to believe that they for whom Christ died could never be destroyed?

ANSWER FIRST. Some answer, that "the offence consists in this, that though the person who thus perisheth cannot be one for whom Christ died, he may be one for whom they were in charity to believe he might die."

REPLY. But this answer cuts off the whole strength of the apostle's argument or motive to abstain from scandalizing a weak brother, since, if I know this never can be done, I know I am secure from ever running such an hazard. For if I really destroy or give occasion to his ruin, I must be sure on that account Christ died not for him, and that he suffers nothing by my action; but that, without it, his ruin was inevitable. But if my judgment of charity concerning him was true, I know I cannot do what the apostle here enjoins me to be careful to avoid. It is therefore certain from this doctrine, that they must either be assured this judgment of charity must be false, and then they could not be obliged to act by it; or that their brother could not perish, and then they could not rationally be moved by this impossible supposition to abstain from scandalizing him.

ANSWER SECOND. Others answer, that "they may be said to destroy or cause him to perish for whom Christ died, though his destruction doth not follow; because they do that which in its own nature tends to his destruction, and might have that effect, had not God determined to preserve all for whom Christ died from perishing."

REPLY. Should this be granted, the force of the apostle's argument will still be taken off; for if I am infallibly assured, God will prevent this issue in all for whom Christ died, the fear, that

they should actually die, can be no proper motive to abstain from the commission of that action which may scandalize them. Thus, though an arrow shot out of a bow might kill my father, yet if I am assured he standeth where my arrow cannot hit him, it would be folly to exhort me not to shoot, lest I should kill my father. If then I am as certainly assured that none for whom Christ died can perish, it must be as unreasonable to exhort me not to scandalize them lest by that action they should perish. Moreover, the apostle adds, that by thus offending our weak brother, *'we sin against Christ,'* that is, by causing them to perish whom he had purchased with his blood, and died to save. Deny this intent of Christ's death, and you can never shew how by offending them who never did or could belong to Christ as members of his body mystical, we are injurious to Christ.

II. A like argument arises from the design of the apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrews, who, to deter the Jews from neglecting the great salvation offered to them by Christ, and from apostatizing from the faith they had received, saith *'that if they should sin wilfully after they had received the knowledge of the truth, there would remain no more sacrifice for their sin,'*² seeing they would be guilty of *'trampling under foot the Son of God, and counting the blood of the covenant by which they were sanctified an unholy thing.'* Now in what tolerable sense can it be said, that *'no farther sacrifice for sin'* remains to them for whom no sacrifice was ever offered or intended, and who were by God's own decree excluded from any interest in Christ's death before they came into the world? How were they *'sanctified by the blood of that covenant'* from which they were inevitably excluded from the beginning of the world? Or how do they *'neglect this great salvation'* for whom it never was intended? To strengthen this argument, let it be considered,

First. That it is evidently the same person who *'tramples under foot the Son of God, and doth despite to the Holy Ghost,'* who is here said to have been *'sanctified by the blood of the covenant,'* for this paragraph lies betwixt the other two, and is connected to both by the copulative *καὶ* *'and,'* which shews that these three things belong to the same person: And this destroys the subter-

² Heb. x. 26. 29.

fuge of them who refer this passage to Christ sanctifying himself, or offering himself as a piacular victim for us. Moreover, though Christ is said to sanctify himself, (John xvii. 19.) yet is he never said to be sanctified, and much less to be '*sanctified by his own blood;*' but only *ἐγμάζειν τὸν λαόν* 'TO SANCTIFY THE PEOPLE by his own blood.' (Heb. xiii. 12.)

Secondly. Observe, (i.) that "to sanctify," and "to be sanctified," in this epistle, doth never signify "to be purified from the power and dominion of sin by inward holiness," but always "to be purged from the guilt of sin by the oblation of a sacrifice," as appears from chap. ii. 11: (See the note there;) and from this very chapter where it is said, verse 10, that '*we are, ἡγιασμένοι* SANCTIFIED by the oblation of the body (or, as it is in other copies, by the blood) of Christ.' See the note on verse 14, and on chap. ix. 13. (ii.) Because he is here said to have been '*sanctified by the blood of the new covenant*' which was shed for the remission of sins, and in which God promises to be '*merciful to our iniquities, and remember our sins no more.*' (chap viii. 12. x. 17.) In fine, this argument begins thus, '*Having then boldness (or liberty) to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, (verse 19.) let us hold fast our profession without wavering; for if we apostatize from it, there remains no more sacrifice*' to expiate our sin. It is therefore evident, that even those persons who by their apostasy from the faith became obnoxious to the sorest punishment, had once, by virtue of their faith, obtained a remission of their sins, and lost it by making shipwreck of faith, and drawing back, from that faith by which they once lived, to perdition. verses 38, 39.

III. Moreover, St. Peter informs us of some false teachers who should '*bring in damnable heresies, (that is, such as would render those who abetted and embraced them, obnoxious to damnation) even denying the Lord that bought them.*' Now to these words the answers are so many, and so extravagant, that it is as easy to confute as to recite them. One saith, "Christ indeed bought these persons, but that he only bought them to be slaves;" and then, for any thing I can see to the contrary, they might have reason to deny him.—Another, "that he died to rescue them from temporal, but not from eternal punish-

ments:” Now where doth holy scripture intimate that Christ died to rescue any one from temporal judgment whom he reserved to eternal, especially if they were such as by denying of him *“did bring upon themselves swift destruction?”*—A third tells us, “that he died for them, because he gave a price sufficient for them;” as if the giving a price sufficient to redeem six captives, without the least intention of redeeming any more than two, were the redemption of the six.—A fourth saith, “that they denied that Lord whom they professed to have bought them.—And a fifth, “that they denied him who in the judgment of other men had bought them:” But where is the offence of this, if that profession was in their own mistake, and so was that which they should rather have denied than professed, and if that judgment of others was not according to the truth? In fine, the plain intent of the apostle is to aggravate the sin of these false teachers, that he whom they denied had bought or died for them. Now if he did this really out of good-will to them, and with intent to free them from the misery to which they were obnoxious by sin, upon the terms on which this favour is propounded in the Gospel to any others, the words are of great force to shew the horrible ingratitude and impiety of these false teachers: But if it be supposed that he intended not to buy them, or to do any thing to free them from their misery, but, in the covenant with his Father established in his blood, excluded them from any interest in his death, and did that only which might occasion others through mistake to think he died for them; this manifestly tends to lessen, if not justify, their denial of him who had before denied them any benefit from his redemption, and therefore plainly is repugnant to the scope of the apostle.

CHAP. IV.

I. A FARTHER enforcement of this extent of the death of Christ ariseth from the obligation which is, and always was, upon all persons to whom the gospel is or was revealed, to believe in Christ: For if it be the duty, not only of some few of every sort, but even of all and singular to whom the gospel is revealed, to believe in Christ, that is, to own him as their Saviour, or as that

Jesus who came to save them from their sins; it must be true that he came into the world to be the Saviour of all men, and to be the Propitiation for the sins of the whole world, as holy scripture doth expressly teach. Now that it is the duty of all to whom the gospel is revealed, thus to believe is evident: for thus Christ speaks to the unbelieving Jews, "This is the work (that is, the will) of God that you should believe in him whom he hath sent; for ^a if you believe not that I am He, you shall die in your sins; for ^b he that believeth not, is condemned already, because he believeth not in the Son of man."^c The business of the Baptist was to bear witness of light, '*that all men might believe in him;*' ^d and therefore he declares that '*he that believes not in him shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.*'^e And the work of the Good Spirit was to '*convince the world of sin, because they believed not in him.*' ^f The commission to preach faith and repentance for the remission of sins, is given to the apostles in these comprehensive words, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned."^g All which things, and many more of a like nature dispersed through the holy scriptures, are most plainly inconsistent with the doctrine of a restrained redemption to some few chosen persons. For,

First. Whosoever is obliged to believe in Jesus Christ, is obliged to '*believe to the saving of the soul,*' ^h since they who preached the gospel said, '*believe in the Lord Jesus and you shall be saved,*'ⁱ and promised that '*He that believed and was baptized should be saved;*' and they who writ the gospels, writ them to this end that we might believe '*that Jesus is the Son of God, and believing might have eternal life through his name.*'^k Now if it were the duty, even of them who perish under the preaching of the gospel, to own Christ as their Saviour, and to believe to the salvation of their souls, it follows either that it is, and, in all generations since our Saviour's coming, was, their duty to believe a lie, and to apply that to them which belonged not to them; or that Christ's death might truly have been applied to, and therefore was most certainly intended for, the salvation of those souls that perish.

^a John vi. 29.
^f John xvi. 9.

^b Ibid. viii. 24.
^g Mark xvi. 15. 16.

^c Ibid. iii. 18.
^h Heb. x. 39.

^d John. i. 7.
ⁱ Acts xvi. 31.

^e John iii. 36.
^k John xx. 31.

Secondly. To say "it was the will or the command of God, that any person should believe a lie; that the Baptist's testimony was designed to teach men lies; or that the Holy Ghost was sent to convince any man of sin because he believed not **what** was false,"—is blasphemy: And yet this must be true, or else it must be God's command that they of the Jews who believed not in Christ should believe in him, and that all men who heard the Baptist's testimony ought to have believed in him, though few of them actually did so; and that all who saw the miraculous operations of the Holy Spirit in the apostles and primitive professors, and believed not in Christ, were guilty of sin, because they believed not in him; and if so, Christ must have died for their salvation, and shed his blood for the remission of their sins.

Thirdly. To promise generally, and without exception, salvation to men upon believing, must be a promise made to most men upon an impossible condition, or else all they to whom the gospel is revealed may believe to salvation, and so Christ must have died for their salvation. To say "God promiseth salvation to most only on terms which he himself knows are impossible, because they neither can do it without him, nor will he enable them to perform them," is in effect to say, "I promise, you never shall be saved:" And is not that a strange promise from a God rich in goodness to the sons of men? Surely a promise upon condition, in the mouth of any good and honest man, is intended as a motive and encouragement to him to perform the condition that he may enjoy the good thing promised. Now where the condition annexed to the promise is impossible, if I know it, it can give me no encouragement to set about it, if he who promises knows it so to be. As he indeed promiseth nothing, because nothing that I can obtain or be the better for; so he also deludes and puts a cheat upon me, pretending kindness to me by making me the promise, and intending none by making the obtainment of it to depend upon that which he knows I never can or shall be able to perform. And therefore, to represent God as promising salvation to the greatest part of mankind only upon an impossible condition, is to represent him as a deluder, and one that puts a cheat upon them, and acting with them so as no good, wise, or honest man did or would act towards his fellow-man.

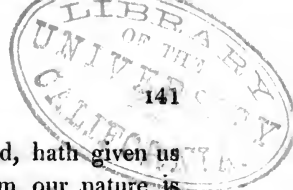
Fourthly. To say that "men shall die in their sins, shall be condemned to abide under the wrath of God, and be excluded from eternal life, because they believe not to salvation," that is, because they do not apply Christ's merits to them, or believe He died for them, is either to assert "Christ died for every unbelieving Christian," or to assert "they shall hereafter be excluded from eternal life, and condemned to everlasting punishments, for not believing what is false."

Fifthly. Were any christian under such condemnatory decree as that he could not believe, he would not be condemned because he believed not, but he would not believe because he was condemned; and whensoever punishment is duly threatened for the omission or non-performance of an act, it must be supposed both that the act might not have been omitted; and that the punishment would not have followed, had it been performed. To conclude, it is never said in scripture, that "the devils shall be condemned for not believing in Christ," of which no reason can be given but this,—because he died not for them.

II. It therefore cannot be sufficiently admired, that the grave Synod of Dort should urge such texts as these against this doctrine, viz. that "through his name, whosoever shall believe in him shall receive remission of sins.⁴ God hath set forth him to be a propitiation through faith in his blood; and Christ is the end of the law for justification to every one that believeth;"^m it being demonstrable that—either all men are not obliged to believe for the remission of their sins, or for justification, or to have faith in Christ's blood, although the gospel be revealed and preached to them, and then they cannot be condemned for not believing in Christ;—or that being thus obliged to believe, it must be true, that all to whom the gospel is revealed are enabled to believe that Christ died and shed his blood for them for the remission of their sins, and for their justification upon that condition which God requires them to perform under the highest penalty imaginable. "Whilst you have light,"ⁿ saith Christ, "believe in the light, that ye may be the children of the light, lest darkness come upon you." Where observe, (1.) That '*to believe in the light,*'^o is to believe in Christ; for '*I,*' saith he, '*am the light of the world.*'^p (2.) Observe,

Acts x. 43. *m* Rom. iii. 25. x. 4. *n* John xii. 55. 56. *o* John ix. 5. *p* Ibid. viii. 12.

that he exhorts them to believe in him, that by this faith they might become '*children of the light*,' that is, might be justified and reconciled to God by the blood of his Son, as are all the children of God or of the light: For "if we walk in the light we have communion with God, and the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin,^g we being all made the children of God through faith in Christ Jesus." (3.) Observe that Christ speaks this to those Jews which then believed not in him, and the generality of that nation, and so to those who, when he spake, continued unbelievers, and remained under that darkness which after came upon them for their unbelief: Therefore our Lord exhorted them to believe in him, (that they might be justified and saved with the children of light,) who perished in their infidelity; which justification they could not obtain, or rationally be exhorted to believe that they might attain, unless Christ died for them. Moreover a brief inspection into all these places will be sufficient to discover, that they are so far from saying any thing that is not well consistent with this extent of our Lord's salutary passion, that they do manifestly establish it. Thus when St. Peter saith, "To Christ give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins:" Is not this a testimony of a promise of remission of sins unto every one to whom the gospel is preached on the condition of faith in Christ? Is then this a promise made upon a condition possible to all to whom the gospel is revealed or not? If it be made on a condition possible to them all, then all to whom the gospel is revealed may receive remission of sins through faith in Christ; and so Christ must have died for them all. If only upon an impossible condition, then is it, in the mouth of all God's prophets, a pretence of the kindness to the most he never intended they should have; for then he would not have suspended it on an impossible condition. Yea then, is it a promise only in name and show, but in reality none at all: For the Civilians tell us, with the highest reason, that "an impossible condition is as none at all." And here observe, that it is the same thing as to the future state of all men, whether the condition be naturally impossible, or through lapsed nature; whether it be simply impossible, or to corrupted nature: For, seeing God,



by whose benediction we all come into the world, hath given us no other nature; seeing our parents, from whom our nature is derived, have imparted to us no other nature, it is naturally impossible we should come into the world with any other nature than what is lapsed and corrupted: And so it is evidently the same, as to the future state of all men thus corrupted, to promise any good thing to them upon a condition simply impossible, and to promise it on a condition impossible to lapsed and corrupted nature. Moreover, we learn from St. Paul, that this “word of salvation was sent to the whole nation of the Jews, to all them who were children of those fathers to whom the promise of the Messiah was first made;”^s that to all them this remission of sins, by him was proffered, and therefore he must die for their sins of that whole nation, of which those that obtained Justification by him were only a small remnant, the rest continuing in their unbelief, and perishing, saith the apostle, for their unbelief, verse 41. Now could they perish for not believing that remission of sins which was preached by the apostles to them through him, if he never died to procure it for them? Surely upon this supposition it must rather follow, that the apostles in this declaration were false witnesses concerning him, and that they who perish for not believing this, must perish for not believing an untruth.

In the third chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, the apostle saith, ‘we have before proved, Ἰουδαίους τε καὶ Ἑλλήνας πάντας, that ALL THE JEWS AND GENTILES were under (the guilt of) sin.’^t Now here I suppose it will not be denied that every single person of them were sinners; when therefore he proceeds to say that, ἡ δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, THE RIGHTEOUSNESS, or justification, which is OF GOD, through faith in Jesus, is upon all, and to all that believe, ἔστι γὰρ ἐν διαστολῇ, for there is no distinction,^u must he not intend that this justification of God through faith in Jesus Christ, was offered to and intended for all that were sinners, whether Jews or Gentiles? Why else doth he add, that “all were sinners, and had fallen short of the glory of God, and so were (to be) justified freely by his grace through the redemption that was in Jesus?”^w

In the tenth chapter, having told us that ‘Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes,’^w he adds this proof

^s Acts xiii. 26. 32. 38.^t Rom. iii. 9.^u Verses 23, 24, 25.^w Verse 4.

of that assertion, “ For the scripture saith, every one that believeth in him shall not be ashamed, for there is no distinction of Jew nor Gentile; for the same Lord of all is rich unto all that call upon him: for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” * Now is not this God the Lord of all men in particular? When therefore it is said, that ‘ *he is rich to all that call upon him,*’ doth not this suppose that all who have the knowledge of him may thus call upon him; and that upon their doing so, they may be saved through Christ? And then must he not have died for their salvation? Moreover the apostle saith not, there is no distinction in this matter betwixt THE ELECT of Jews or Gentiles, but betwixt JEW AND GENTILE in general. Now limit this to A SMALL REMNANT both of Jews and Gentiles, who only are in a capacity of being justified by faith in Christ, and calling upon him so as to be saved, whilst all the residue of Jews and Gentiles, to whom the same remission of sins is preached, are left incapable of this justification and salvation by that Jesus who never died for them;—is there not a deplorable distinction made betwixt them, as to their eternal interests, even by him who is the same Lord of all, as can be well imagined? I conclude therefore with CECUMENIUS, that “ the apostle here, τὸ πᾶσι κοινὸν τῆς χάριτος ἀνακηρύττει, ‘ declares this is grace common to all.’”

CHAP. V.

Contains an answer to the pretended arguments from scripture, against the doctrine of universal redemption.

THE arguments against this doctrine of universal redemption rightly stated, founded upon pretence of scripture, are scarce any, not one place being offered, (against those many which in express terms assert it,) saying either expressly, or by plain and immediate consequence, that “ Christ DIED NOT for all.” Those texts which have the fairest show of an argument have been both fully answered

and retorted; and for the rest even a short answer is more than they deserve, they being rather a begging of the question than proving it from scripture.

OBJECTION FIRST. "They for whom Christ died may say, '*Who shall condemn us?*' (Rom. viii. 34.) But all men cannot say this; *Ergo*, Christ died not for all." Now,

ANSWER FIRST. Is it not evident that this argument supposeth that Christ died for none who shall hereafter be condemned? And must it not hence follow, that none of the unbelieving Jews, among whom Christ preached, shall be condemned for not believing in him, since they can never be obliged to do so for whom he never died, and so will never be the better for believing in him? Now (1.) is not this contrary to the whole tenor of the Gospel, especially to the gospel of St. John, wherein Christ tells them, that "God having sent his Son into the world that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life?" He adds, '*he that believeth not the Son, is condemned already, because he believeth not in the only-begotten Son of God.*'" (2.) Will it not hence follow, that none of the unbelieving world, to whom the apostles preached, shall be condemned for not believing in him? For seeing they preached remission of sins to be obtained through his name, how can they justly be condemned for not believing in him to this end for whom he never died? And why then did our Lord say to his disciples, when he sent them through the world to preach the gospel to every creature, '*He that believeth not, shall be damned;*' or that his Spirit should convince the world of sin, '*because they believed not in him?*'

ANSWER SECOND. There is no such proposition in the scripture as this, that "all for whom Christ died may say, *Who shall condemn them?*" But only that "the persons there spoken of might say this:" Now they were '*the sons of God,*' (verse 14.) who had '*received the spirit of adoption,*' (verses 15, 16.) *were heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ,* (verse 17.) who had received '*the first-fruits of the Spirit,*' (verse 23.) who actually '*loved God,*' (verse 28.) and were '*justified*' by him. (verse 33.) These elect of God, saith the apostle, may say, '*Who shall condemn us?*' (to lie

still under the power of death by virtue of that law which threatneth death to the sinner?) ‘*It is Christ that died, (to redeem us from death, and from the condemnation of the law,) so that there is no condemnation to them who are (thus) in Christ Jesus, that is, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*’ (verses 1. 2.) In a word, all for whom Christ died may say so, upon that faith and repentance which interests them in Christ Jesus; but none for whom Christ died, not the elect themselves, can say so, till they have believed and repented.

II. OBJECTION SECOND. From the thirty second verse of the same chapter they argue thus, “To all those for whom God delivered up his Son, he *together with him will freely give all things.*” But there are many thousands in the world to whom God will not give all things: *Ergo*, for none of these did God deliver up his Son.”

ANSWER FIRST. Here it is observable again, that the major proposition is a direct assertion that “Christ died only for those who shall be saved,” or the elect only, because to them alone he will give all things; and so it is liable to all the absurdities mentioned in answer to the first objection, and also to these following, viz.

FIRST. That God could not equitably ‘*require all men every where to repent,*’ or send his apostles to call the Jews in general “to repent and be baptized, in the name of Jesus for the remission of sins, or that their sins might be blotted out,”^a or to preach to all the Gentiles ‘*repentance and remission of sins through his name.*’^b For what good could this repentance do them? What remission of sins could it procure for all those for whom Christ died not? Yea, hence it follows, that no impenitent person can justly be condemned for dying in his impenitent estate: For, on this supposition, he may fairly plead that Christ not dying for him, his repentance, had he been ever so careful to perform it, must have been in vain, since it could not procure the remission of his sins. If here you say “It is an impossible supposition, that any one, for whom Christ died not, should repent,” you only strengthen this his plea, enabling him to say he is condemned and perisheth for want of that repentance which, from his birth to his dying day, it was impossible for him to perform.

^a Acts ii, 38. ^b Luke xxiv, 47.

SECONDLY. Hence it must follow that God could not equitably require of them for whom Christ died not, obedience to the laws of Christ; since that obedience, could they be ever so willing or so industrious to perform it, could not avail for the remission of their sins, it being only an interest in the blood of Christ which cleanseth even the righteous from all sin: They therefore cannot be condemned for '*loving darkness more than light,*' that is, than Christ the true light, seeing he never could be truly offered to them who never died for them: Nor can that rationally be said to be despised by any, or postponed to any other thing, which never was proposed to them as their option, and which it never was in their power to chuse or to embrace; they therefore cannot reasonably be damned for '*not receiving the truth in the love of it, that they might be saved,*' who never had a Saviour dying for them, and therefore never were in a capacity of receiving the truth, so as that they might be saved by it.

ANSWER SECOND. There is no such proposition in scripture as this,—“to all those for whom God delivered up his Son, he will give all things;” the scripture cited respects only '*us,*' that is, those who are the adopted '*sons of God,*' who have the Spirit dwelling in them, and who truly love God; to such God will give all things, that is, all the blessings of the new covenant, because they have performed the conditions of that covenant.

III. OBJECTION THIRD. “They who by the death of Christ are reconciled to God, '*shall be saved by his life.*' (Rom. v. 9.) If therefore all men are reconciled to God by the death of Christ, all must be saved by his life. But all will not be saved by him: *Ergo.*”

ANSWER FIRST. This objection doth again suppose, that “Christ died to reconcile no man to God who shall not be saved;” whence it must follow, (1.) that no man can be condemned at the last day for neglecting the great salvation tendered to or purchased for him, Christ having neither purchased for nor offered to them any salvation, unless he offered to them that salvation which he never died to purchase for them. (2.) Hence it must follow; that all who are not saved never had any Saviour or Redeemer, since he who died not for them could be no Saviour or Redeemer to them, and so they never were in a capacity to sin against a Saviour; nor can their sins be aggravated by this consideration,—

that they are committed against redeeming love! Both which are palpable absurdities, confuted by the whole tenor of the gospel, and almost by every sermon that we preach.

ANSWER SECOND. The conclusion of this argument, "all that are reconciled to Christ shall be saved," may be true; but it is not true that all for whom Christ died are reconciled to God, but only that Christ died for them when sinners, unjust, ungodly, that he might bring them to God, and to engage and to encourage them to believe in him that they might be justified. Hence the apostle speaks first of '*Christ's dying for the ungodly,*' when they were yet without strength, and for sinners not yet justified; and then adds, that if God were so kind as to send his Son, to die for us in this state, much more '*being justified (by faith, verse 1.) in his blood, we shall be saved by him from the wrath of God,* εἰ γὰρ ἐχθροὶ ὄντες, *for if being before AT ENMITY with God, we have been reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more shall we be saved by his life.*' '*By the death of his Son,*' that is, by that faith in it by which we being justified have peace with God, and so have access by faith in him to the grace and favour of God. And this exposition is certain from this consideration, that God never justifies any but through faith in Christ; nor is he ever reconciled to any whom he did not justify. It is therefore certain, that he never sent his Son to purchase actual reconciliation for any; but conditionally,—if and when they believed, '*he that believeth not in him is condemned already, because he believeth not in the Son of God:*' It is therefore certain he died for the unbeliever, and yet he is not actually reconciled to God or justified, because it is only by faith that we are justified, and being justified, have peace with God.

IV. OBJECTION FOURTH. "Those for whom Christ died he loved with the greatest love,^c this being a testimony of the greatest love: But thus he loved not all, for he applies not the salutary effects of his death to all: Ergo, he died not for all."

ANSWER FIRST. Here again it is plainly supposed, that Christ died for none who shall not actually enjoy the salutary fruits of his death, that is, who shall not actually be saved; whence it must follow, that only the elect are or can be guilty of sinning against the love of God in Christ Jesus.

^c John xv. 15.

ANSWER SECOND. There is no such assertion in the holy scripture,—that “those for whom Christ died he loved with the greatest love;” Christ only saith that “one man shews no greater love than this to another, than that of laying down his life for him; and this, man never doth but for his friend:” But this he neither did nor could say of the love of the Father, in sending his Son to die for mankind, nor of himself in dying for them;^a for ‘*God commended his love to us in that when we were sinners Christ died for us;*’^e he died *for the ungodly, the just for the unjust.*^f This text is therefore nothing to the purpose. Add to this,

ANSWER THIRD. That God the Father, in sending of his Son into the world that the world through faith in him might be saved, shewed the greatest love of benevolence to all mankind, as Christ expressly teacheth, John iii. 16, 17; and the apostle, in these words, ‘*Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us first, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins;*’^g and so did Christ in dying ‘*for us all when dead.*’^h So that all unbelievers, all wicked and impenitent persons, continue in their sins against the riches of God’s love and mercy to them in Christ Jesus. But then God’s love of beneficence, and the salutary effects of Christ’s death, or God’s love of friendship to us, depends on our repentance or conversion to him, our faith in Christ by whom alone we have access to God, and who is our peace, and our obedience to the laws of Christ, we being then ‘*his friends when we do that which he commands us;*’ⁱ and so they only can be the proper objects of this love of friendship, or enjoy the blessings of the new covenant which Christ hath purchased by his death, who perform the conditions of that covenant. It is therefore granted, that Christ shewed the greatest love of benevolence to all for whom he died; but then it is added, that he shews his love of friendship and beneficence only to those that bear a true reciprocal affection to him; for ‘*as grace will be to all those who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity;*’^k so ‘*if any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, he will be Anathema Maranatha.*’^l

^e Ibid.

^e Rom. v. 6, 7.

^f 1 Pet. iii. 18.

^g 1 John iv. 9, 10, 19.

^h 2 Cor. v. 14.

ⁱ John xv. 14.

^k Eph. vi. 24.

^l 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

CHAP. VI.

Containing arguments from reason for this universality of Christ's redemption.

THE arguments which plainly offer themselves from the precedent sections to confirm this doctrine are these :

I. FIRST. If God intended not the death of Christ for the saving of any but the elect, then he never intended the salvation of any to whom the gospel is revealed but the elect; and then he never designed any salvation for the greatest part of men to whom the gospel was or is revealed on any condition whatsoever: For since *'there is no other name under heaven given by which we can be saved,'*^a salvation could not be intended for them on any condition whatsoever, to whom the benefit of Christ's death was not intended. Now were this so, how comes that gospel, which first brought to light this reprobating doctrine, to be styled *'the time when the goodness and love of God our Saviour appeared to mankind?'*^b Why doth Christ say, *'God so loved the world, that he sent his beloved Son into the world, not to condemn them, but that the world through him might be saved;'*^c and the apostle, *'Herein is love made manifest, that God sent his Son into the world to be the propitiation for our sins, that we might live through him?'*^d Why is he styled a God *'rich in mercy,'* and plenteous in goodness to the sons of men, who is so sparing of mercies to the greatest part of mankind, that seeing them in equal misery and want with his elect, and as worthy of it as they were, he should shut his bowels of compassion up against them, and even from all eternity exclude them from his loving kindness and mercy? Why is it said, *'that his tender mercies are over all his works,'*^e if they are so restrained from his most noble creatures? *'Doth God take care for oxen?'*^f saith the apostle; yea, saith this doctrine, much better than for man; he making plentiful provisions for the preservation of their life, but none at all for the spiritual and eternal life of the far greatest portion of mankind, but having left them under a necessity of perishing and being miserable for ever.

^a Acts iv. 12.^b Tit. iii. 4.^c John iii. 16, 17.^d 1 John iv. 9, 10.^e Psalm ciii. 8. cxlv. 9.^f 1 Cor. ix. 9.

'*Their heavenly Father feeds the fowls of heaven,*' saith our Lord, '*and are not you much better than they,*'^g and so more sure of your provisions from this loving Father? "True," saith this doctrine, "as to the provisions for this mortal body which we have common with the brutes that perish; but most of us are so neglected, by him who bears the name of Father, and is the '*Father of our spirits,*' that he hath peremptorily excluded these immortal beings from a capacity of obtaining that food which nourisheth to eternal life." Again, why is he represented as one who '*waiteth to be gracious,*'^h and '*stretcheth out his hand all the day long to a rebellious people,*'ⁱ when from eternity he hath excluded so great a number from his grace, and left them inevitably to suffer what his hand and his counsel had determined before that they should suffer? God, saith the apostle, '*loved us first before we loved him.*'^k "God," saith this doctrine, "hated the generality of us first, before we hated him, and did prevent us, not with his blessings, but with subjection to an eternal curse." How could the apostle truly say to the hardened and impenitent Jew, '*Despisest thou the riches of his goodness, patience, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?*'^l 'Why,' saith the Jew, 'dost not thou tell us '*God hardeneth whom he will,*' and that 'we are of that number; that he hath given us up to a spiritual 'slumber, and so never intended any benefit to us, never provided 'any salvation for us by the death of his Son? What therefore 'meanest thou by the riches of his goodness, to men lying under 'his decree of preterition? Or how can his patience be designed 'to lead them to repentance, who were appointed for wrath, and 'not salvation, from eternity? We may indeed be treasuring up 'wrath against the day of wrath; but it is inevitable wrath which 'we had never any power to avoid, God having no intention to 'give us any interest in that Jesus who alone '*delivers from the 'wrath to come.*' Talk then no more of the revelation of the 'righteous judgment of God; for we appeal to the reason of man- 'kind whether it be a righteous thing to condemn men to eternal 'misery for that which it was never in their power to avoid.'

In fine, why doth God say that '*he delighteth in mercy,*'^b and in '*the exercise of loving-kindness,*'^c and that to think thus of him

g Matt. vi. 26.

h Isa. xxx. 18.

i Isa. lxv. 2.

k 1 John iv. 19.

l Rom. ii. 4

b Micah vii. 18.

c Jeremiah ix. 24.

is truly to know him, since it is his good pleasure to leave us under an absolute incapacity of his mercy, and his loving kindness? Why doth he say, '*He would have cleansed us and we would not be cleansed,*'^e when he never intended us any interest in that blood of Christ which alone cleanseth from all sin? Why doth he say and swear, '*He hath no pleasure in the death of him that dies,*' but rather taketh pleasure in this, that they should '*turn and live,*' when his mere arbitrary pleasure hath left them under a necessity that they should die and not live, and put this unanswerable question into their mouths, '*If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and no Saviour was by God intended to redeem us from them, how should we then live?*'^a Why, lastly, doth he say, '*O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help?*'^f For, be it, this respects their temporal condition in this world and the concernments of the body, there is no thought more dishonourable to the Father of spirits and the lover of souls, than that he should be helpful to men in temporals, but, when he sees their souls sinking into eternal misery, intend them no help, and put them under no possibility of escaping it; or that his providence should be still employed in making provisions for the bodies even in the wicked and unthankful, but that, when, by the same power, and the same sufferings of his Son, he could have made the same provision for the souls of others as he is supposed to have done for his elect, he should, by a mere arbitrary act of preterition, eternally and inevitably exclude them from it, and leave them under a necessity of being the everlasting objects of his wrath.

II. SECONDLY. Hence it must follow, that Christ never died with an intention to save them whom he doth not actually save, and deliver from the wrath to come: and why then doth he say, '*that he came down from heaven to give life unto the world,*'^f and that his Father '*sent his Son into the world, that the world through him might have life; and that he will give his flesh for the life of the world: I am the bread of life; if any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever:*'^g *Verily, verily, he that believeth in me hath everlasting life,*'^h plainly encouraging all to do so? Why doth he say to them '*who would not come unto* (that is, believe in) *him*

e Ezekiel xxiv. 17.

d Ezekiel xxx. 10.

e Hosea xiii. 9.

f John vi. 53, 55.

g John iii. 16.

h John vi. 47.

that they might have life, *These things I say unto you that ye might be saved?*ⁱ Yea, why doth he enquire ‘*how oft would I have gathered ye as a hen doth her chickens under her wings, and you would not be gathered; and so pathetically wish that they, from whose eyes those things were after hid, ‘had known in their day the things belonging to their peace?’* You may as well hope to reconcile light and darkness, as these words of Christ with his intention to die only for them who should actually be saved.

III. THIRDLY. Hence it must follow, that none of those to whom God never intended salvation by Christ, or who shall not be actually saved by him, are bound to believe in him. For had not this Saviour come into the world, they could not have been obliged to believe in him; and is not it to them all one, to have no Saviour come at all, and none come for them? Moreover, if he died not for them, they cannot believe in his death; if there be no salvation for them in Christ, they cannot believe he is their Saviour. Should they believe, must not their faith be in vain, seeing it cannot alter the intentions of God in delivering his Son up to the death, or of Christ in dying for the elect only? And why then do the ministers of the gospel promise salvation to all men, provided they believe, when no salvation is provided for all; and so none can be tendered by them to all on any condition whatsoever? Since God himself never intended salvation should be obtainable by all, and therefore never could give them commission to tender it to all on any condition whatsoever, why doth Christ say to all the Jews that came to him, ‘*This is the command of God, that ye believe in the name of the Son of God;*’^k since this command must be a declaration of God’s will that they should all believe, and his intention that the generality of the Jews should not have salvation by Christ, shews his contrary will? And, lastly, why doth he promise salvation to all if they believe, by saying ‘*He that believeth shall be saved;*’^l *whosoever believeth in him shall have everlasting life;*’^m and then enquire thus, ‘*If I say the truth, why do you not believe me;*’ seeing he died not with an intention to purchase salvation to many of them whom he would not actually save?

ⁱ John v. 34, 40.^k John vi. 29.^l Mark xvi. 16.^m John vi. 40. viii. 46.

IV. FOURTHLY. Hence it clearly follows, that no man can be condemned hereafter for final impenitency and unbelief, seeing he transgresseth no law of God by his unbelief. For surely God commandeth no man to believe in Christ for salvation, for whom he never intended salvation by Christ, or to repent for salvation whom he intended not to save by Christ. Since therefore where there is no transgression there can be no condemnation, why doth Christ threaten to the Jews, *‘that if they did not believe he was the Christ, that is, the Saviour of the world, they should die in their sins?’*ⁿ Why doth he declare them who believe not in him *‘inexcusable and without all cloak for their sins?’* And why doth the apostle say, *‘How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?’* Since that can be no salvation at all to them for whom it never was intended, and it must be all one to them to neglect and use the greatest diligence about it. In a word, either it was possible for them who die in their impenitence and unbelief to believe and repent to salvation, or it was not so; if it were possible, then either Christ must have died for them, or it must be possible for them to be saved without a Saviour; if it was not, they either must not be obliged at all to believe and repent, or they must be obliged to do what it was impossible for them to do. Yea, seeing this impossibility ariseth only from God’s denial of that grace to them which he vouchsafes to his elect, (for had they the same grace, it would or might have the same effect upon them,) it follows that God must both will they should repent and believe, because he commands and obliges them so to do, and yet will they should neither repent nor believe, because he wills the denial of that grace without which it is impossible they should do so.

V. FIFTHLY. Hence it will follow, that neither the elect nor non-elect can rationally be exhorted to believe: not they who are not elected, because Christ died not for them: not the elect, for he that knows himself to be one of that number, hath believed and repented already; if he do not know this, he cannot know that Christ died for him, and so he cannot know it is his duty to believe in him for salvation. Whereas if you assert “Christ died for all,” then may you rationally exhort all men to believe, since every one must know that he who died for all,

ⁿ John viii. 24.

^e John xv. 22, 24.

died for him also, and therefore that it is his duty to believe in him for salvation.

VI. SIXTHLY. Hence it must follow, that God hath not vouchsafed sufficient means of salvation to all to whom the gospel is revealed. For seeming there is no pardon, no justification, no peace with God, no deliverance from the wrath to come, to be obtained but through faith in him, '*no other name given by which we can be saved,*'^p they who have no interest in his death can have no means of obtaining pardon and salvation.' Now as '*all were not Israel who were of Israel,*' so all are not of the number of the elect to whom the gospel is revealed; so that if salvation by Christ can be obtained only by the elect, the residue of those to whom the gospel is revealed can have no means sufficient for salvation. But this is contrary

First. To the whole tenor of the gospel, which is, saith the apostle, '*the power of God through faith to the salvation of every one that believeth;*^q *the word of grace which is able to build us up and give us an inheritance among those that are sanctified;*^r *the saving grace of God which hath appeared to all men;*^s *those scriptures which are able to make us wise unto salvation;* that gospel which was written that we *might believe that Jesus is the Christ, and believing might have life through his name.*' (John xx. 30.)

Secondly. If men have not sufficient means to be saved by the covenant of grace, then have they only means given them to increase their condemnation, yea, such means which they cannot but use to their greater and more heavy punishment; since '*he who knows his master's will, (as all to whom the gospel is revealed may do,) and doth it not, shall be beaten with more stripes.*'^t And so it had been better for them not to have known the way of life, or to have had no covenant of grace tendered to them. For if they be not able by the assistance of that grace which God is willing to vouchsafe them, to repent and believe the gospel, they must lie under a necessity of being damned for '*not receiving the truth in the love of it,*' and of that neglect of this salvation which renders it impossible they should escape the wrath of God, and under a necessity of perishing; for '*if we repent not, we must all perish.*'^u

^p Acts iv. 12.

^q Rom. i. 16.

^r Acts xx. 32.

^s Titus ii. 11.

^t Luke xii. 47.

^u Luke xiii. 5.

And this impenitency and unbelief must be more criminal for being committed under the gospel dispensation, than otherwise it would have been: so that the revelation of the gospel must be the sorest judgment to them, seeing it must increase their damnation without a possibility, in them who wanted means sufficient, to procure pardon and salvation, or of obtaining any blessings by it. Whereas it is certain, that this '*Father of Spirits*' cannot be so unnatural to his own immediate offspring as to design their greater misery by his most gracious dispensations; since, as our Saviour argues, '*If earthly parents being evil, will not be so unnatural to their children, much less will our heavenly Father,*'^w be so to his; and that this lover of souls, who hath declared his ways cannot be unequal to them, because '*all souls are his,*'^x can design nothing, much less act any thing, on purpose to increase their condemnation and their inevitable ruin.

Thirdly. If all men under the gospel have not means sufficient to repent and believe, so as they may be saved, vouchsafed by God, then must he still withhold something from them without which they cannot repent and believe to salvation, viz. special grace, so called, because it is peculiarly granted to the elect; an irresistible impulse, with which the conversion of the sinner, faith, and repentance will certainly be produced, and without which they neither will nor can be wrought in us; a divine energy, or an almighty power like that which God exerts in the creation, or the raising of the dead, we being by it made '*new creatures,*' and raised *from a death in Sin, to a life of righteousness.* Now if the want of all or any of these things be the reason why so many, who live under the gospel dispensation, do not believe and repent to salvation; and upon this account it is that they continue in their impenitence and unbelief, because they want this special grace and divine energy to do so,—these great absurdities will follow,

1. That God condemns them to destruction for that which is no sin; for sure it is no sin in the creature not to do that which can alone be done by the almighty power of God, and which cannot be done without that proper act of God he never would afford to them; for then it must be the sin of man not to be God. If

^w Matthew vii. 11.

^x Ezekiel xviii. 4.

therefore God should punish men for not doing that which therefore is not in their power to do, because it requires a divine energy which he will not exert on their behalf, he must punish them for not being equal in power with God himself.

2. Then must every impenitent and unbelieving person have a just excuse, and a sufficient plea why he should not be punished or condemned for his infidelity and unbelief; and they might cry to God, as did the officers of the Jews to Pharaoh, ‘*Wherefore dealest thou thus with thy servants? There is no straw given to us, and thou sayest to us, Make bricks;*’^y no special grace, ‘no divine energy afforded us, and thou sayest to us, ‘Do that,’ which can no more be done without it than men can make bricks without straw, and ‘*thy servants are beaten, but the fault is in him*’ who denies us straw, and yet requires bricks; yea, who requires that faith and that repentance which he never would afford us ‘means sufficient to perform.’ For the plea of insufficiency, or want of strength for the doing that which is commanded, is an excuse sufficient in the judgment of all mankind where it is truly pleaded: ‘I could not help, or I could not avoid it; I had no means, and no ability to do it,’—is an apology sufficient in the mouths of all men, nor scarcely can a man be found so barbarous as to condemn and punish, when he is assured this is indeed the case. And shall we then ascribe greater severity to a righteous God? If not, it must be certain men cannot appear inexcusable for their impenitence and unbelief, unless God had vouchsafed them means sufficient to repent and believe.

VII. REPLY. Here it is said, “We all had strength sufficient to believe in our first parent Adam, and therefore may be dealt with as if we had it still.”—To this lamentable pretence, “so weak,” saith the judicious Dr. Claget, “that nothing but a desperate cause should force a man to take shelter in it,” I ANSWER,

First. That it owns the truth of the objection, viz. that to require of men what was ever impossible for them to do under the highest penalties, and to punish and condemn them for not doing it, is evidently unjust and cruel.

Secondly. It is evidently false that Adam in the state of innocence, that is, before he had sinned, had power to repent of his

^y Exodus v. 15, 16.

iniquity, and to believe in a Saviour not yet revealed, for the remission of sins. These are the powers of a lapsed sinner only, and therefore could only agree to Adam in his lapsed state, or when he was as impotent as we now are; so that if he then, who was become as one of us, was able to repent and believe without special grace, so were his posterity. If he had no ability, in case he should fall, to rise again by faith and repentance, we could have no such power in him.—(2.) They who then were not, were not in Adam, for *non entis nulla sunt prædicata*,* and that which is not, hath no power, that being always in a subject, and a consequent of the essence, for *potestates sequuntur essentiam*.† To say “our nature was in Adam, and so our power and our will might also be in him,” is also false; for Adam was a particular man, an *individuum*, and therefore could have only an individual and particular nature, and therefore only a particular will and power. To say “he had a nature like to that of ours derived from him,” is to say he had not the same numerical or individual nature, for *nullum simile est idem*.‡ Hence, whereas that which is said of human nature in common, agrees to every human nature; many things may be said of the human nature of Adam, which agree to the human nature of none of his posterity, viz. that it was the first human nature that was in the world; that it was entirely and immediately created by God, and came not into the world by generation; that it was free from sin, and made upright; that it was able to perform perfect obedience; that it dwelt in paradise, and was cast out thence for eating the forbidden fruit; and lastly, the nature of Adam had a power to continue innocent, and without sin, whereas it is certain our nature never had so; for we could never hinder the sin of our nature, nor the influence which the sin of Adam had upon it to make us sinners. In a word, the question is not concerning the justice of condemning the nature of Adam, but concerning the justice of condemning our persons to eternal punishment for not doing that which it was always impossible for them to do.

Thirdly. Admitting this absurd imagination, that we had this power in our first parents, and that we lost it by the sin of our

* ‘Nought can be affirmed of a thing which is not in existence.’ ED.

† ‘All powers follow their essence.’ ED.

‡ ‘Nothing, however similar to another, is identically the same as that other.’ ED.

nature in them,—what is this to the import of all those texts of scripture which exhort all men to repent, and proffer life to them that do so, and command all men to believe, and promise salvation to them upon that condition, threatening at the same time damnation to the impenitent and unbeliever; since all these things are spoken to the fallen race of man, and so, if God be serious in them, declare his great unwillingness that fallen man should perish by his impenitence and unbelief, and his passionate desire that he should believe and repent? And seeing he that wills the end must also will the means absolutely necessary to the obtaining of that end, he cannot be supposed wanting at the same time in affording means sufficient to obtain the end, and so cannot have left even lapsed man under an impossibility of obeying his commands and exhortations to repent and believe. Moreover the law of repentance, and faith for the remission of sins, was not, nor could it be, in force till we had lapsed; and so it was, by this hypothesis, impossible to be fulfilled before it was in force. The exhortations to repent and believe, the promises of pardon and salvation to the penitent believer, and the threats made to the impenitent, and him that is not justified by faith in Christ, must be all given to fallen man; and so, according to the same hypothesis, must be promises on a condition impossible to be performed, and threats upon a default impossible to be avoided. They are declarations of the will of God, and so must be commands and exhortations to perform it; and so, suppose God willing that he should perform what he commandeth and exhorts us to perform, and yet by leaving him under an impossibility of doing that which he commandeth and exhorts him to, and peremptorily denying that assistance, without which it must always be impossible, he shews he is not willing he should do what he commandeth and exhorteth him to do. Again, to deter men from doing such an action by the severest threats, is to pretend a great unwillingness that action should be done; and yet to leave them under an impossibility to avoid it without that assistance which he will not yield, is to be both willing and resolved it shall be done. To promise pardon to a lapsed person upon condition, is in effect for God to say he will not impute to him his former fault, but will deal with him according to his future carriage, to which a conditional promise always hath relation; but if he requires what

he knows that first fault hath rendered utterly impossible to be done by him, he still imputes that fault, and punishes him at the same time for it as he pretendeth to remit it. And surely it is no small matter to render God so deceitful and delusory, so insincere and hypocritical, as this opinion makes him.

Should a physician come to a patient, whose stomach was so weakened through his intemperance or lust, that it could bear no strong meat, and his feet so enfeebled that he could scarce walk from his couch to his bed-side, and profess an earnest desire to cure his distempers, and promise him recovery, provided he would follow his prescriptions, might it not reasonably be expected he should prescribe such means for his recovery that it was possible for him in this condition to make use of? If then he should enjoin him to eat, and to digest the strongest meats, and walk some hours in the fields, because he formerly could do so before he fell into this disability and feebleness, would not all men pronounce him a deluding cheat, and one that hypocritically and insincerely pretended his recovery, and promised it with equal vanity and folly, intending only to insult over his present misery? And yet this is the representation of our gracious God in this affair which these men offer to us. For the blessed Jesus is the physician which God sent to heal our natures of the disability we had contracted by the fall, and to promise us a remedy, which, if we would use, we should recover that, or a better life than that, from which we fell, and to threaten the severest judgments if we neglected so to do. But then, if only he doth promise this recovery on such a condition as that very fall hath rendered us unable to perform, and which he never will enable us to perform, must he not be guilty of the like hypocrisy and insincerity in propounding to us an impossible remedy, and insult only over the misery of his creatures whilst he pretendeth kindness to them? And how unreasonable is it to impute such deceit, falsehood, insincerity, and injustice to a good and righteous God, which we cannot but abhor in man? For sure, most graciously to exhort, most affectionately to invite, most earnestly by the greatest promises and threats to move us, to repent and believe, when he at the same time is firmly purposed to withhold the means by which alone we can do either, is to insult over his miserable creatures in the highest manner. And to deal thus with myriads of myriads

for the sin of Adam, is, as it were, to meditate revenge upon the greatest part of his posterity to the world's end, for what was only done by the first man. Yea, it is to do this under pretence of love and kind affection, and a vehement desire and concern that they should escape the misery that very sin had brought upon them, and recover the felicity they had lost by it, by those very means he doth prescribe; and yet to leave them under an utter incapacity to perform those means:—Which to conceive and to assert of our most gracious God, is highly to dishonour and blaspheme his Sacred Majesty, and represent him so unto the world, as even the worst of men would not endure to be represented.

VIII. We find our blessed Saviour marvelling at the unbelief of his own people; for *'he marvelled at their unbelief.'*^u Now, can he who knows they could not believe by reason of the disability they had contracted by the sin of Adam, wonder that they did not what it was impossible for them to do? Again, when he heard the answer of the centurion, *'He marvelled, saying, Verily I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel;'*^w but if this faith, whenever it is wrought in any, is the effect of an Almighty power, what reason could he have to marvel, that it was found where that Almighty power was exerted, or that it was not found where the same power was withheld? To clear this by some few instances from scripture,

First. St. Matthew informs us that Christ upbraided the cities in which most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not, saying, *'Wo unto ye, Chorazin and Bethsaida, and to thee, Capernaum, who shalt be brought down to hell: it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah, Tyre and Sidon, in the day of judgment than for you; for if these mighty works had been done in them, they would have repented in sackcloth and ashes, and have remained to this day.'*^x Now, not to dispute whether the repentance of Sodom and Gomorrah, Tyre and Sidon, would have been sincere, or only external and hypocritical, (though it is not reasonable to conceive that such repentance would have caused them to remain to that day, or that Christ would upbraid them for want of a sincere repentance produced in them by those mighty works, which doubtless he required by saying to these very persons, *'repent you, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,'*^y) by an

^u Mark vi. 6.^w Matthew viii. 10.^y Matthew xi. 20, 24.^z Mark i. 14, 15.

example of an hypocritical repentance which only would have been produced in others by the same works,—I say, not to insist on this—why should our Lord denounce these woes upon them, and declare their future punishment more intolerable in the day of judgment than that of those unnatural sinners and most vile idolaters, for want of that repentance which, notwithstanding all the mighty works which he had done among them, he knew it was impossible for them to perform? He might, according to the vain hypothesis confuted, have said to them, ‘Wo to you that ‘the sin of Adam hath disabled you from repenting!’ but could not with any show of justice pronounce such dreadful woes and judgments on them for not doing that then, which they so long ago were rendered wholly unable to perform, and that upon a reason which did not in the least remove the disability.

Secondly. ‘The men of Nineveh,’ saith Christ, ‘shall rise up in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it, (for its impenitence,) for they repented at the preaching of Jonas, (though he did no miracle among them) and behold (though) a greater than Jonas is here,’^a (calling you to repentance, you do not repent.) Now if the men of Nineveh only repented by virtue of that divine assistance which God would not vouchsafe to the Jews; if notwithstanding all Christ’s exhortations to repentance, it was impossible they should repent for want of like assistance; why should they be condemned at all, or why, for want of that repentance which Nineveh only performed by that assistance which they could not have?

Thirdly. Our Lord upbraids the Scribes and Pharisees for not repenting, and entering into the kingdom of God as the very Publicans and harlots had done before their eyes, saying, ‘Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you: for John came to you (to instruct you) in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not; but the publicans and harlots believed him; and ye, when ye have seen (them do) it, repented not afterwards that ye might believe him.’^b Now is it matter of reproach and shame to any person that they do not what another doth, unless it be supposed that they have, or at least might have, had the like power and abilities to do it? This passage

^a Matthew xii. 41.

^b Matthew xxi. 51, 52.

therefore shews (i.) that the Scribes and Pharisees, and other Jews, might and ought to have been moved by the admonitions of the Baptist, and the example of the publicans, to repentance and faith; for why else doth Christ here upbraid them that *'they afterwards repented not, that they might believe?'* (ii.) That therefore an internal, irresistible force or power cannot be necessary to produce this repentance and this faith; for if the publicans and harlots were thus moved to repent, what wonder is it that they went before the Scribes and Pharisees, who having no such impulse, were left under an impossibility of repenting that they might believe? Why is it represented as their crime, that they repented not at the preaching of John, or did not follow the example of the Publicans, since the event shews that no such irresistible motive to repentance was contained either in the preaching of the Baptist, or the example of the Publicans?

Fourthly. In the parable of persons invited to the wedding-supper, we find, that he who came, not having on a wedding-garment was speechless,^c as being self-condemned, “ τῷ γὰρ μηδὲν ἔχειν ἀντειπεῖν κατέκρινεν ἑαυτὸν, ‘for having nothing to say against the sentence to be passed upon him, he condemned himself,’” saith Chrysostom. But why should he be speechless, if he could have pleaded with truth and a good conscience, that he never had or could have means to procure such a garment, and therefore ought not to be cast out into outer darkness, for that which he could never help?

Fifthly. In the parable of the Talents, he who improved not his single talent is declared to be *'a slothful and a wicked servant,'*^d and that because he did not what he ought to have done. Now there can be no obligation to impossibilities, no iniquity in not doing what he could not do, and no punishment due on that account, this being to punish him because he did not an impossibility; and Christ by saying to all who had received talents, *'negotiate till I come,'*^e demonstrates he conceived they all had power so to do.

IX. SEVENTHLY. That which doth render this doctrine most worthy to be rejected by all who truly love their God and Saviour, is this consideration,—that it unworthily reflects upon our good

^c Matthew xxii. 13.

^d Matthew xxv. 26, 27.

^e Luke xix. 15.

and gracious God, our blessed Lord, and merciful High Priest, who is in scripture often said, but by this doctrine is denied, to be *'the Saviour of the world.'* For,

First. It in effect declares, that he who is in scripture styled LOVE, hath from eternity hated the greatest portion of mankind, so far as to leave them under, and even condemn them to, a state of everlasting and inevitable misery. For, if he himself saith, *'Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated,* only because he laid the *mountains and heritage of Esau waste,'^f* is there not greater reason to say, he hated all those souls whom he hath utterly excluded from any interest in that Jesus who alone delivers from the wrath to come? If he is said to *'hate his brother in his heart,'^g* who suffers him to go on in his sin without reproof, must not he hate those souls much more, who by his decree of preterition concerning them, when he was designing the great work of man's redemption, hath laid them under a sad necessity of sinning, so as to be obnoxious to still greater misery? Our Lord makes it the particular case of Judas, that *'it had been better for him if he had not been born,'^h* whereas this doctrine makes it the case of all, save only the elect. Now can we imagine, that that God who will require the blood of souls from every watchman who doth not warn the sinner to turn from his iniquity that he die not, should himself leave them inevitably to perish in it? So that what he doth threaten to him only, *'who being often reprov'd hardeneth his heart,'ⁱ* should be the state and case of almost all men before they came into the world, viz. *'to be destroyed without remedy.'*

Secondly. It represents that God, who is continually declared in scripture to be a God *'rich in goodness, plenteous in mercy, and of great pity'* towards all his creatures, as having no bowels of compassion, no drop of mercy, no inclination to do good to the generality of his most noble creatures, obnoxious to death and endless misery, and therefore as proper objects of his mercy and compassion, as those whom *'in his love and pity he redeemed,'* but rather an unmoveable resolution before they had a being, to withhold from them his loving-kindness and mercy, and to shut his bowels of compassion up against them. And is not this to represent our God and Saviour more uncompassionate to the souls

^f Malachi i. 2, 3.

^g Leviticus xix. 17.

^h Matthew xxvi. 24,

ⁱ Proverbs xxix. 1,

of men, than were that Priest and Levite to their brother's body, who seeing him ready to perish by his wounds, passed unconcerned by another way?^k When this Great Lord saith to his servant to whom he had forgiven the great debt, '*Oughtest not thou to have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity upon thee?*'^l would not this doctrine teach him to answer, 'Lord, I have chosen to deal with him as thou dealest with the greatest part of mankind, to whom thou never intendest to forgive the least mite, and on whom thou wilt never have the least compassion?' And when the apostle enquires, '*If any man see his brother in need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?*'^m would not this doctrine teach him to reply,—'Even as it dwells in God himself towards the generality of mankind?' To make this more apparent, let us consider these four things:

1. That God by sending his Son to be the Saviour of the world, or in giving him up to the death, had no other primary end than the glorifying himself in the salvation of men: '*He sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins, that we might live through him;*'ⁿ *that the world through him might be saved.*'^o Had therefore he designed his death for the salvation of all men upon conditions possible to be performed by them, he must have glorified himself more, than by restraining the design of it only to the salvation of a few.

2. That the death of Christ was a sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, and so might have procured a conditional pardon for all men as well as for the elect, had God been pleased to give him up to the death for us all.

3. That it could be no ways more dishonourable to God, or more inconsistent with his justice, wisdom, hatred of sin, or any other of his attributes, to have designed Christ's death for the salvation of all men, than to intend it only for the salvation of those few whom they style *the elect*.

4. That they who are supposed to be excluded by God from any benefit by Christ's death, were as much the offspring of the '*Father of spirits,*' and '*the souls that he had made,*' as much partakers of the same nature in which our Saviour suffered, and

^k Luke x. 51, 52. ^l Matthew xviii. 35. ^m 1 John iii. 17. ⁿ 1 John iv. 9, 10. ^o John iii. 17.

every whit as miserable and as much wanting an interest in our Lord's salutary passion, as they who are supposed to be the objects of the pardon and salvation purchased by our Saviour's blood. Can it be then consistent with the grace, goodness, and mercy of the divine nature, and of the '*Lover of souls,*' and the relation which this '*Father of spirits*' beareth to them, to consign the death of Christ to procure pardon and salvation only to a few, and to suffer the far greater part of souls (which were equally his offspring, as capable of salvation by the very same means, as miserable, and so in the same need of pardon and salvation with the rest,) to remain inevitably miserable only for want of God's designing the same sacrifice for the procuring mercy to them as well as others?

If it be said "God doth this to declare his sovereignty or prerogative over his creatures, in shewing and denying mercy to whom he pleaseth:"

ANSWER, God never exerciseth any sovereignty or prerogative over his creatures, which is repugnant to his rich grace, goodness, love, mercy, and compassion to the souls which he hath made; and therefore never so as to leave the greatest part of them obnoxious to eternal and inevitable ruin, when he hath a remedy provided sufficient to prevent it, if he did not arbitrarily exclude them from it. When under the Roman and the Grecian government the Father had an absolute power over his children, and in the Eastern nations the prince had absolute power over his subjects; would this prerogative and sovereignty excuse them from a severity and rigour unworthy of a father or a sovereign, in leaving most of their subjects and their children under the extremest misery, when by the very same means that a few of them have been rescued from it, they might all have been so? And shall we then impute that rigour, want of natural affection and compassion, to the Lover of souls and the benign government of our Heavenly Father, which we could not but condemn and abhor in earthly governors, and in the '*fathers of our flesh?*' And

Thirdly. This opinion renders the God of truth and of sincerity, and who hath '*magnified his truth above all his name,*' so full of guile, deceit, and insincerity, dissimulation and hypocrisy, that he who doth conceive God may address himself to his creatures without distinction, as in the scripture he continually doth, and yet hath left them destitute of a capacity of mercy, and of all ability

to help themselves, may doubt of his sincerity and truth in all the declarations contained in his sacred word. For

1. It represents that God (who declares expressly and AFFIRMATIVELY, that '*he would have all men to be saved, all men to come to repentance,*' and swears that the conversion of a sinner from that iniquity in which he may die would be highly pleasing to him, and NEGATIVELY, that he '*would not that any one should perish,*' that he delighteth not in, would not the death of him that dies,) denying to send his Son to die for their salvation, or to vouchsafe them means sufficient to repent and turn to him; and so rendering it impossible they should repent, or avoid perishing in their iniquity.

2. It represents him who declares, '*He would have purged them who would not be purged, he would have gathered them who would not be gathered,*' and enquires what could he have done more to enable them to bring forth good grapes, who only brought forth sour grapes; denying them any interest in the blood of cleansing, or any sufficient means to enable them to bring forth good grapes.

3. It introduceth that God, (who, according to the whole tenor of the scripture, calls upon men without exception to repent and be converted that their sins may be blotted, and they may not die in them, sending all his prophets to reduce his people from their sinful courses, '*because he had compassion on them,*' enquiring of them, '*Why will you die? Will you not be made clean? When shall it once be? Yea, waiting that he might be gracious, and stretching out his hand all the day long to a rebellious people,*' and exercising the riches of his goodness, patience, and long-suffering, '*to bring them to repentance,*') denying, to the most of them to whom he thus affectionately speaks, any possibility of being made clean, of turning to him, or repenting, or escaping death.

4. It represents him (who saith with the greatest passion, '*Oh that they were wise, that they would consider their latter end!*'^a '*Oh that my people had hearkened to me, and Israel had walked in my way!*'^b '*Oh that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments!*'^c '*Oh that thou hadst known in this thy day the things which belong to thy peace!*'^d and enquireth in the most affecting manner, '*How*

^a Deuteronomy v. 29.

^b Psalm lxxxi. 15.

^c Isaiah xlvi. 18.

^d Luke xix. 42.

shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim? My heart is turned in me, my repentings are kindled,^e) after all these seeming transports of affection and desire of their welfare, and yearning bowels of compassion, refusing to have the least compassion for them, and decreeing to leave them without a Saviour, without means of being spiritually wise, truly obedient, or having any saving knowledge of the things belonging to their peace.

5. It represents him as one encouraging the foolish and the scorner *'to turn at his reproof,* by a promise of *'pouring his Spirit on him;*^f the simple *'to forsake the foolish and live;*^g the wicked man *'to forsake his way, and turn to the Lord that he may be abundantly pardoned;*^h *'to cease from evil, and learn to do well, that though his sins were as crimson he might be as white as wool;*ⁱ yea, more concerned to find the lost sheep, than for the ninety-nine that went not astray, and rejoicing more at the return of his prodigal son, than in him who never wandered from him; yet leaving the generality of men under an incapacity to return from their simplicity and folly, or to cease to do evil; leaving the prodigal to famish on his husks, and the lost sheep without ability to return to the shepherd of his soul.

X. LASTLY. This doctrine is visibly destructive of almost all the acts of piety and virtue.

And, *First,* all prayer and supplication is the duty of all christians; it is to be performed by them in every place,^k and at all times *'without ceasing;*^l it is to be offered up for all christians and all men, and this in faith, believing that we shall receive our petitions; and all these prayers are to be put up *'in the name of Christ,*^m imploring all mercies and blessings for his sake and through his meritorious passion, which how can we do seriously, and in faith, if we may reasonably question whether Christ's merits do respect us, or are available in our behalf? How can we do this for all men, provided God himself hath taught us that his Son never died for all, nor did he design his passion for the benefit of all, but only for the benefit of his elect, for whom alone we

^e Hosea xi. 8. ^f Proverbs i. 25. ^g Proverbs ix. 6. ^h Isaiah v. 7. ⁱ Chapter i. 16, 18.
^k Ephesians vi. 18. ^l 1 Thessalonians v. 17. ^m 1 Timothy ii. 1, 8.

cannot pray, because we cannot know them? Moreover, we have no access to God the Father but by him, by whom *'we are brought to God;'*ⁿ it is through faith in *'him we have this freedom of access with confidence;'*^o it is only *through the blood of Jesus* that we can come to God *with full assurance of faith;*^p how therefore can we have access to him in our prayers for pardon, or for any other spiritual blessings for all men through him, or through the blood of Christ, if he did not shed his blood for all? *'I exhort,'* saith the apostle, *'that prayers and intercessions for spiritual blessings, deprecations for the averting of those judgments which our sins deserve, and giving of thanks for the blessings which they have received, be made for all men.'*^p Now if, as there we read, *'God would have all men to be saved,'* and Christ hath given himself *'a ransom for all,'* it is easy to discern how we may pray in faith for all these blessings to all men. But if, according to the doctrine maintained in express contradiction to these words, Christ did not give himself a ransom FOR ALL, but for the elect only, who are known to God alone; and if God intended not the salvation of all men, but of his elect only, it is hard to conceive how we should thus pray for all in faith, since it must then be certain that we cannot put up our petitions for them in the name, and through the merits, of that Jesus who never died for the most of them, or have a freedom of access to the Father for them through that blood which by him never was intended to be shed to procure pardon, or any other spiritual blessing for them. *'I will,'* saith the same apostle, *'that men pray every where, lifting up pure hands without doubting.'*^q which precept how can any man observe? That is, how can he pray with confidence who is not assured that Christ is his and their Saviour for whom he prays, or that God for Christ's sake, is disposed to grant his request? It is a great encouragement to pray for pardon, and for the saving grace of God, to believe that God is truly willing and desirous to afford them to all that do thus ask and seek them, and are ready to use the means prescribed by him to enjoy them; and that his Saviour died to procure this pardon, and these blessings, to all men thus desirous of them, thus willing to do all they can to have them. Whereas the contrary apprehension must needs damp devotion,

ⁿ Ephesians ii. 13, 18.

^o Hebrews x. 19, 20.

^p 1 Timothy ii. 1.

^q Verse 8.

and render us unable to come to God with that faith he so expressly doth require, and without that doubtfulness and double-mindedness he as expressly doth forbid. For when a man must thus conceive within himself, "Perhaps God hath loved me; perhaps he from eternity hath passed an act of preterition on me, and so can never have any regard to my welfare; perhaps Christ died to procure pardon and salvation for me upon possible and reasonable terms, if I be willing to perform them; perhaps he never intended to procure any blessing for me by his death;"—surely he can apply himself to God for any of these blessings but faintly and distrustfully, who is thus taught to doubt whether he hath any Redeemer or Mediator, or not.

Secondly. It is the duty of all christians 'to give thanks always, for all things, to God, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,'^s to offer the sacrifice of praise continually by him,^t to give thanks to God the Father by him.^u *In every thing give thanks,'* saith the apostle, 'for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you;'^w and this we are to do for all men. That opinion therefore which obstructs this gratitude, which deprives God of his praise, and stops our mouths from being opened in thanksgivings to him, must be repugnant both to scripture and to reason. Now sure, most men can never be obliged to thank God for sending his Son into the world, if he was never sent with a design of doing good to them, or Christ for their redemption, if they were not redeemed by him. They cannot heartily resent* the kindness of their God and Saviour, who know not that he is their Saviour, or that his kindness ever was designed for them, or will be extended to them. They cannot give thanks to God "for all men," who are obliged to believe he hath no kindness for the greatest part of men; so that either Christ is an universal Saviour, or the greatest part of christians are disobliged and incapacitated reasonably to thank or to praise him for any thing that he hath done or suffered. If indeed God, to redeem men from eternal misery, was so kindly affected towards them as to provide, for all that were obnoxious to it, a Saviour from wrath to come, all men may easily discern how much they are obliged to praise and celebrate him for his favour and mercy.

^s Ephesians v. 20. ^t Hebrews xiii. 15. ^u 1 Thessalonians v. 18. ^w 1 Timothy ii. 1.

* 'An old acceptance of the word, signifying to receive favourably.' ED.

If our Lord Jesus “for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was made man, and was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate,” then may we say with saints and angels, ‘*Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive honour, and glory, and blessing, for he hath redeemed us to God by his blood.*’* But then supposing Christ is not the Redeemer of all, but of those only who shall be finally saved, these grounds of thankfulness cannot respect all christians, but rather those alone who are assured of their salvation.

Thirdly. The great duty required both of Jew and Gentile, is, ‘*to love the Lord with all our hearts; this, saith our Lord, is the great commandment*’ most certainly obliging all mankind. Now if God hath been so kindly affected to *all men*, so careful of their welfare as, for procuring and promoting their salvation, to send his own beloved Son to be their Saviour, and to give him up to the death that they might live through him, that he doth heartily design their happiness, and hath put no bar on his part to the obtaining of it; they must have then the highest obligations to love him as their gracious friend and benefactor, and to say, with the royal Psalmist, “*Love the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, and crowneth thee with mercy, and with loving-kindness.*”^y But if he intended no such kindness to the greatest part of mankind, what motive can they have to love him who never had any love to their souls? Surely they cannot be obliged to love him for that redemption which never was intended for them, or for that grace which will not be vouchsafed to them.

Fourthly. The doctrine of general redemption layeth the greatest obligations on us to fear the Lord and his goodness, and to perform our duty to him from the resentment* of his kindness to us, and the assurance it affords us that our sincere endeavour to perform it will find acceptance with him. For if God thus loved us first, surely we all stand bound to shew our love to him again by that obedience which is the only test of our sincere affection; if Christ hath bought us with the price of his own precious blood, we ought to ‘*glorify him with our souls and bodies which are his.*’ But how can he be moved to serve God in consideration of these

* Rev. v, 9, 12.

y Psalm ciii. 1, 2, 3.

* ‘See the note in the preceding page.’ ED.

benefits, who is ignorant that they were intended for him? How can any man apply himself cheerfully to serve that God, whose favourable inclination towards him, whose readiness to accept his service, he doubteth of? It is partly the benefits we have received, and partly the advantages we may receive, from a superior, which are the prevailing motives to serve him. If then God never intended any benefit to the greatest part of mankind, if they have no beloved through whom their persons and performances can be accepted, if through the want of an interest in Christ they never can have any advantage by him, or any spiritual blessing; must they not be entirely deprived of these prevailing motives, to the service of their God and Saviour?

Fifthly. The doctrine of universal redemption tends highly to the promotion of God's glory; it gives him the glory of his free love, rich goodness, great mercy and compassion to the sons of men, far above the contrary doctrine. For if to redeem *any* doth magnify his goodness, to redeem *many* doth increase it, to redeem *all* doth advance it to the highest pitch; for the more are benefited, the greater is the glory of the benefactor. For should a king, finding five thousand of his subjects under miserable thralldom, redeem one hundred of them, leaving the rest, as worthy of his favour and in equal need of it, to perish in their misery; would he magnify his love, goodness, his pity, and compassion to them as much as if he had extended his love and goodness to them all? Had they all forfeited equally his favour, would his mercy be as much magnified in pardoning one hundred of them, as in pardoning them all? If the king should declare that now was the time '*his love unto his subjects should appear, that he would shew himself gracious to them all, and that he delighted in exercising loving-kindness to them all, and was unwilling any one of them should perish,* that he had tender bowels of compassion for them, and that whosoever of them was not redeemed and saved, were *despisers of his rich goodness, and neglecters of his great salvation;*' would it not highly tend to his dishonour, that, after all these declarations, he intended not his favour to any more of them? Would not all men think he acted insincerely, and very unsuitably to these declarations of his love and kindness to them all? And shall we then impute this to the great God of love, our Heavenly Father and benign Governor, which, in an earthly prince, we should account delusory and insincere, inhumane and unmerciful?

SECONDLY. This is a farther confirmation of our doctrine; for if God be so bountiful to all men in things temporal, if he preserves their life from destruction, if he *'freely openeth his hand, and filleth all things living with plenteousness;'* can we think that he should altogether neglect their spiritual estate, and leave their souls to starve and perish everlastingly without using any means for their recovery? Doth *'God take care for oxen'* more than men, saith the apostle? Doth he, I say, who takes such care of human bodies, make no provision for their souls? He that *'giveth to all men life, breath, and all things,'* will he withhold from any the best of gifts, and most worthy of him to give, that grace by which alone they are enabled to serve and glorify him, and do what is well pleasing in his sight? "They think unworthily of God," saith the Pagan Philosopher, "who represent him liberal in giving lesser matters, *πρὸς δὲ τὰ κρείττω ἀπορῶν,* 'but sparing in the gifts of piety and virtue,'" especially seeing he hath declared that he confers these temporal enjoyments on them on purpose to engage them to seek and serve him; and to be thankful to him, expecting they should have these spiritual effects upon them, *'that they should fear the Lord their God who giveth them rain, the former and the latter in his season, and reserveth to them the appointed weeks of harvest;'*^h and to instruct them that they should seek the Lord so as to find him;ⁱ where *'to seek the Lord'* is, so to seek after him that they might truly know and worship him as God. *'To find him'* is to obtain his grace and favour, and to find him good and propitious to them, *'and a rewarder of them who diligently seek him;'* as hath been largely proved, note on Acts xvii. 27. and on Acts xiv. 17.

Seventhly. This truth administers just ground of comfort to the greatest sinner, when, through the terror of God's threats, and the convictions of his conscience, he is forced to cry out, *'O miserable man that I am!'* It is indeed but little comfort that we can administer to him upon this supposition,—that Christ only died for, and that God will only give sufficient grace to, a small remnant of mankind; since then it is great odds against him, that he is not of that little number, and so his hope can be but little. But if we can assure him that Christ *'tasted death for every man,'* and intercedeth now in heaven for every

^g M. Tyrius, Dissert. 22. p. 216.

^h Jer. v. 24.

ⁱ Acts xvii. 25, 27.

penitent believer, and that God will graciously admit of the return of every prodigal to him, that he delights to see it, that he exceedingly rejoiceth at the return of every lost sheep, that he has told us, *as he lives*, he takes the greatest pleasure in it, and that he hath been thus long-suffering to him in particular, *'because he is not willing he should perish, but rather should come unto repentance,'* he can have no just reason to continue in a desponding state, but thankfully admiring the greatness of his patience, to resolve now to be *'led by it to repentance,'* and to set cheerfully upon the means prescribed for his reformation, as knowing that *'the Lord will be with him.'*

Lastly. This doctrine gives life and energy to all our exhortations to the sinner to return and live; whereas the contrary persuasion robs them of their strength and virtue. For were not God willing that *'all men should be saved and come to repentance,'* or had not Christ died for them, our exhortations to our whole congregation to believe and repent would be vain and sinful; for then we should exhort the greatest part of them to do that which God was not willing they should do, and should inform them that he wills what he doth not. We know not how to put the question to them seriously, *'Why they will die,'* if we know nothing to the contrary but that it is the will and the decree of God that they should die; or to enquire, *'How they will escape, if they neglect so great salvation,'* if it might never be designed for them, or if they had no power to help it. But we may briskly put the question, *'How shall we escape if we neglect that great salvation'* which is freely tendered to, and was certainly designed for, us, and which we cannot miss of but by our vile neglect of grace, vouchsafed on purpose that we might obtain it? We may enquire boldly, *'Why despisest thou the riches of that goodness which was vouchsafed on purpose to lead thee to repentance,'* and that long-suffering which was designed to prevent thy ruin? *'Why will you die,'* when God is so unwilling you should perish, and is so passionately desirous you should be for ever happy? Why, after all his great compassions for you, will you have no pity on yourselves? Why will you chuse to be the objects of his wrath, when there is nothing wanting on his part to make you objects of his everlasting love? If so, must not our mouths eternally be stopped when God shall plead in fury with us, or only opened

to confess *'We have destroyed ourselves, when of him would have been our safety?'*

XI. Now from these considerations we shall discern an easy answer to an

OBJECTION levelled against the force of them, viz. that "after all our quarrelling about this affair, we seem both at last to say the same thing; the one that *Christ will save none but the elect*; the other that *he will only save those who perform the conditions of the new covenant*. Now these are the same men both for number and quality. And the actual salvation of men being not enlarged by this doctrine, it seems not to be much more worthy of God, or to represent him more a lover of souls, or more concerned for their welfare than the other." To this I

ANSWER, That though the persons saved be eventually the same, yet the doctrine is by no means the same; nor is the honour of God as much consulted, or his love to souls as much demonstrated, by the one as by the other. For,

First. Is it the same thing to say, "Salvation was by God's gracious purpose intended even for them that perish, so that they could not have missed of it but by fastidious contempt of God's rich grace vouchsafed to prevent their ruin, and by acting in plain contradiction to the reason, conscience, and natural desires of mankind; and being deaf to all those powerful motives to repent and live, the gospel offers?" And to say that "no salvation ever was by God designed for them, nor any grace afforded which could make it possible for them not to perish?"

Secondly. Is it of the same import to say, "the greatest part of the world cannot be saved, because that God, *'of whom cometh salvation,'* designed no salvation for them, and the Saviour of men died not for them; and so if they are damned for unbelief, they must be damned for what they neither could do, nor were by any law of God obliged to do, that is, for no transgression?" And to say "they cannot be saved because they would not come to that Jesus who died for them that they might have life; they would not obey the commands of that God, who, out of love to them, *'sent his Son into the world, that the world by him might be saved;'* No, not when he condescended to beseech them to be reconciled to him, and gave them all the necessary means of salvation, and all the incitements that could be offered to reasonable creatures to improve them to that end?"

Thirdly. Is it all one to say “men are not saved because they want sufficient means on God’s part to render their salvation possible?” And to say, “they only are not saved, because when they have salvation freely tendered to them, and means sufficient to obtain it, and the most powerful inducements to use them to that end, they stubbornly refuse, they wilfully despise, and wickedly neglect this *great salvation?*”

Fourthly. Is it a thing as worthy of God to represent the God of love as an hater of the greatest part of mankind, as to say “he truly loves them, and passionately desires their salvation?” Or that God, who is ‘*rich in goodness, plenteous in mercy, and of great pity*’ to men, as one who hath determined, before he made them, to withhold, from the greatest part of men, his saving goodness, mercy, and compassion; as it is to represent him extending his rich goodness, mercy, and compassion to all the souls that he hath made? Is it all one to represent the God of truth and sincerity, full of guile, deceit, dissimulation, and hypocrisy; and to represent him truly declaring ‘*he would have all men to be saved,*’ and sincerely promising salvation to them upon terms possible and reasonable, and which can only be refused by men who wilfully despise and wickedly neglect that salvation which they might obtain? And,

Lastly. Is it the same thing to advance a doctrine which is visibly destructive of all the acts of piety and virtue, faith and repentance; of all encouragements to pray to God, to praise him for his mercies; to love, to fear, to serve, to glorify him, and to imitate his exemplary perfections; as to assert a doctrine which plainly doth encourage and lay the highest obligations on men to the performance of these duties? If not, then, though the persons eventually saved will be the same, the doctrine which is cloyed with all these absurdities can never be the same with that which is entirely free from them.

OBJECTION SECOND. And whereas it is further said, that “God is no debtor to any man; he was at perfect freedom whether he would shew mercy to any, or make provision for the salvation of the smallest number; and so he could not be termed *unmerciful* had he made no provision for the salvation of any, much less in not making provision for the salvation of all.” To this I

ANSWER FIRST, That God is no debtor to the righteous, they being only *'unprofitable servants when they have done their best,'*^a and therefore not thank-worthy, saith our Lord. But is it therefore consistent with his love to righteousness, to call men to the greatest self-denial and sufferings for his sake, and not reward their constancy to him? Why then doth the apostle say, *'it is a righteous thing with God to recompence, to you that are troubled, rest with us,'*^b since otherwise they would be obliged to perseverance to the end, and to be faithful to the death without the prospect of a recompence, and so without sufficient motive so to do? Or is it consistent with his truth to promise them a reward, and not to perform it? Why then doth the apostle say, his promise gives *'strong consolation, because it is impossible for God to lie?'*^c He doth not owe them that assistance he affords them under these sufferings, and yet the apostle saith, *'God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able, &c.'*^d

Again, God is no debtor to the sinner, though he is so to God; but is he therefore not obliged by his hatred of sin, and by his threats, and by that justice which inclines him to deal with all men *'according to their works,'* to punish the offender? So in like manner God is no debtor to any man; but yet he is most certainly obliged by the perfection of his own nature to act suitably to his attributes: His justice therefore binds him not to command on the severest penalties what he knows his servants were by him made and sent into the world unable to perform; or to forbid, on pain of his eternal wrath, what they were never able to avoid: And his sincerity and truth oblige him not to encourage them to do that which he knows they cannot do; and yet in all these cases he is antecedently resolved not to enable them to do or to avoid. "God's grace," they say, "is free, and he is not obliged to give it." I answer, this is true, if he doth not require that which cannot be performed without it; but to exact what I can never do without it, under the most dreadful penalties, and yet deny that grace, is to act like those Egyptian task-masters, who called for brick, when they allowed no straw.

ANSWER SECOND. I verily believe, (1.) that if a good and gracious God will give being to any man, he is obliged by his

a Luke xvii. 10.

b 2 Thessalonians i. 6. See the note there.

c Hebrews vi. 18.

d 1 Cor. x. 13.

goodness to render that being capable of enjoying the natural desires he hath implanted in it, or at least not to make it so as that it should be better it had never been, or that it unavoidably should be subject to such miseries as render its condition worse than not being. And (2.) that if he would make a creature under an obligation to serve him, he must prescribe laws by which he will be served, and annex rewards to his obedience, and penalties to his refusal of obedience to them, according to those words of the apostle, '*he that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*'^e For what engagement, what motive can he have to serve him, who neither can expect advantage by his obedience, or disadvantage by neglecting it? And certain it is, that God never made any man otherwise; God therefore is so much a debtor to his own wisdom, justice, and goodness, that we may be sure he never could make any man to be inevitably miserable, or under a worse state than non-existence; and never made a man to serve him without ability, or a sufficient motive so to do.—Now the

COROLLARIES or inferences, which follow necessarily from this doctrine are TWO,

XII. FIRST. That God hath passed no absolute decree of reprobation upon the greatest part of mankind; that is, he hath not absolutely decreed to exclude the greatest part of them from saving mercy; and then, by an immediate consequence, it follows, that there is no absolute decree of election of a certain number of particular persons to salvation; for as Tertullian truly saith *prælatio unius sine alterius contumeliâ esse non potest, nec ulla electio non reprobatione componitur*,^f 'there can be no election of some, without the preterition of the rest.'

SECOND. That he hath not made it absolutely necessary to the salvation of all men to do those things which they, without the assistance of his special grace, can never do, and yet hath peremptorily determined not to vouchsafe that grace to many of them: this being in effect an absolute decree of reprobation, or that which leaves these men under an absolute exclusion from salvation, and so under a sad necessity of suffering the wrath to come. And can any reasonable man imagine, that God should be unwilling

^e Hebrews xi. 6.

^f Apol. c. 13. ad Nat. c. 10.

any man should perish; yea, that he should send his Son into the world, that *'whosoever believeth in him should not perish;'* and yet himself decree, that they should perish, or be eternally excluded from his saving mercy? That he should truly be desirous that "all should come unto repentance," and not be willing to vouchsafe that grace without which they cannot repent? After those solemn declarations God hath made, that *'he would not the death of him that dies, but would have all men to be saved;'* after his sacred oath by his own life, that he *'delights not in the death of sinners, but would they should return and live;'* after all his serious commands, his frequent calls and invitations of all men to repentance that they may not perish; after his enquiries and expostulations, "why will you die, will you not be made clean, when shall it once be?"^g and his complaints of the impenitent, "that they would not turn and seek God; they would not come to him that they might have life;" after such pathetic desires as these, "Oh that there were such a heart in them that they would fear me always! Oh that they had known the things which did belong to their peace!" after he hath declared to all his readiness to pardon, his delight in shewing mercy, and that the riches of his goodness and long suffering is designed to lead them to repentance; after his frequent declarations that "he would have gathered them who would not be gathered," he would have purged them who were not purged, and that he had done all that could be reasonably expected from him for that end; after his express declaration, that "he sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved:"—I say, after all these things, to dream of any absolute decree of God excluding most of them he speaks of, or thus addresses himself to, from a possibility of repenting that they might be saved, or doubt his willingness to afford them grace sufficient to perform this duty,—is to cast a horrible reproach upon the truth and the sincerity of God, and in effect to say, "He only tenders salvation to the most upon impossible conditions, and only doth delude them with vain hopes."

XIII. I should now proceed to the confirmation of this doctrine from the suffrage of all antiquity; but this is sufficiently

^g Jeremiah xliii. 27.

done, *First*, by Vossius, in his *Historia Pelagiana*,^h where he asserts and proves,

1. That *Veteris hæc ecclesiæ sententia fuit, velle Deum conversionem et salutem omnium*; 'the doctrine of the ancient church was this, that God would have all men to be converted and saved.'

2. That *Veteris ecclesiæ iudicium fuit, Christum pro culpâ universali hominibus providisse et remedio universali, solvendo λότρον infiniti pretii, ne ejus defectu periret quisquam*;ⁱ 'this was the judgment of the ancient church, that Christ had provided for the fault of all men by an universal remedy, viz. by paying a price of infinite value, lest any one should perish through the defect of it.'

Secondly. This is more copiously done by Mr. Dally,^k by producing the testimonies of the ancients from the first to the twelfth century, and concluding thus, *Certè qui Christum pro solis electis mortuum absolutè dixerit octo prioribus christianismi seculis invenio neminem*; 'Certainly I find not one man who, during the eight first ages of christianity, ever said expressly, that Christ died only for the elect.'

CHAP. VII.

I PROCEED, LASTLY, to consider the objections made from rational accounts against this doctrine, viz.

I. OBJECTION FIRST. "It is not reasonable to believe, that Christ should die in vain with respect to any; whereas if he had died for all, he must have died in vain with respect to the greatest part of mankind."

ANSWER. To this the answer is apparent, it being evident that all those acts of divine grace whose effect depends upon the will of man, or which are offered to him upon conditions which he may perform or not, are, through man's wickedness, too oft done and offered *in vain*, as *that* imports their being done and offered without any benefit man receiveth by them: for instance, how do both Moses^a and the Psalmist^b magnify the divine goodness in giving

^h Lib. 7. Thes. ii. from p. 635 to p. 656.

ⁱ L. 7. Th. 5. a p. 656 ad p. 670.

^k Apol. from p. 755 to 944.

^a Deuteronomy iv. 6, 7, 8.

^b Psalm cxlvii. 19, 20.

his word, and making known his *‘statutes and his ordinances to Israel?’* And yet the prophet Jeremy introduceth God complaining thus of them who knew not the judgments and the law of the Lord, *‘in vain hath he made it, the pen of the scribe is in vain.’*^c Again, are not God’s fatherly corrections designed for the good of his children, to teach them *‘wisdom by the rod,’*^d and obedience by the things they suffer, and make them say, “I have born correction, I will not offend any more?”^e And yet when they had lost this good effect upon them, doth not God say *‘in vain have I smitten them, they have refused to receive correction?’*^f Was not the publication of the gospel to the gentiles the greatest blessing that ever God vouchsafed to them? And yet doth not the apostle of the Gentiles say to the Galatians thus, *‘I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain?’*^g Does he not write to the Thessalonians thus, *‘I sent to know your state, lest the tempter should have tempted you, and our labour be in vain?’*^h Does he not exhort the Philippian *‘to hold fast the word of life, that he might rejoice that he had not run in vain, nor laboured in vain?’*ⁱ What an infinite mercy was it that “the grace of God which brings salvation had appeared to all men!” And yet doth not the apostle earnestly beseech the Corinthians *‘that they would not receive this grace of God in vain?’*^k And doth not this signify his fears they might do so? And to come to the instance of this objection, when the *evangelical prophet* foretells of Christ’s being sent to the stubborn Jews, doth he not introduce him thus complaining, *‘I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength in vain?’*^l Doth not St. Paul declare to his Galatians, that if they yet sought to be justified by the law, *‘Christ should profit them nothing; he was become of none effect to them, and so, as to them, he was dead in vain?’*^m To say indeed “Christ died to no purpose, or to no good end,” is a great absurdity; but to say “he died in vain, eventually, for them who will not repent or believe in him,” is none at all.

II. OBJECTION SECOND. It is objected that “a general will that all men should be saved, carries some marks of imper-

c Jeremiah viii. 8. d Proverbs xxvi. 19. Micah vi. 9. e Job xxxiv. 51. f Jeremiah ii. 50.
 g Galatians iv. 11. h 1 Thessalonians iii. 5. i Philippian ii. 16. k 2 Corinthians vi. 1.
 l Isaiah xlix. 4. m Galatians v. 2, 3.

fection in it, as representing God wishing somewhat which he would not accomplish; whereas infinite perfection can wish nothing but what it can execute, and if it be fit for him to wish it, it must be fit for him to execute it."

ANSWER. This objection advances a metaphysical nicety against the clearest revelations of the holy scripture; for if God wills, or, in the scripture import, wisheth nothing but what he also doth think fit to execute, what is the meaning of all these passionate expressions?—*'Oh that my people had hearkened to me, and Israel had walked in my ways!* even that Israel, whom, for rejecting me, I have now *given up to her own heart's lusts?*^o *'O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments;*^p *Oh that they were wise, that they would consider their latter end,*^q saith God to the same obstinate revolting people. And after such serious wishes, can any one be tempted to believe, God did not seriously desire it should be otherwise with them, and even do all that it was fit for him to do, in order that it might be otherwise? Why else doth he enquire, *'What could I have done more to make my vineyard fruitful?'*^r When our Saviour speaks thus to the Jews, *'How oft would I have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings!*' and says, *'Oh that thou hadst known in this thy day the things that do belong to thy peace,'* weeping at her neglect to do so; can we reasonably doubt the truth or the sincerity of his desire for their good, though through their infidelity and perverseness he did not procure it? Or will any body say, "he did not all that on his part was fitting to be done towards their reformation?"

2. Let us consider the dreadful consequences of this assertion, that "God wills not what he sees not fit to execute,"—they being plainly these; that God is not willing any should obey his will who doth not obey it; that he is not unwilling any one should sin, whom he restrains not from it; and that he is not willing any one should repent, who doth not repent; that when they still continue, and even die in their impenitency, they do nothing contrary to the will of God, because they do nothing he saw fit to hinder: And can there be any force in an objection of which these are the plain but dreadful consequences? Like to this,

^o Psalm lxxxi. 12, 15.

^p Isaiah xlvi. 18.

^q Deuteronomy xxxii. 29.

^r Isaiah v. 4.

III. OBJECTION THIRD. Is that objection, that "if Christ died for all men, and all are not saved, the wisdom of God must be defective and imperfect; for to fall short of what a man intends, argues a deficiency in point of wisdom."

ANSWER. If this be so, then every prince that cannot make his subjects as good as he intends they should be, every parent that cannot make his children so, every good master that cannot prevail with his servants to be so, every man that cannot persuade his friend or neighbour to be as good as he would have him to be, and every schoolmaster who cannot make his scholar as learned as he intends he should be, must be deficient in wisdom: which yet it is ridiculous to affirm, seeing to make a person who hath a freedom over his own will, to be what any good and wise man doth intend he should be, depends not wholly on his wisdom or persuasion, but on the disposition and inclination of him with whom he hath to do, to hearken to, and to comply with, his persuasions. The supposition therefore of this objection must be false: And,

2. If a God perfect in wisdom can intend nothing but what he actually doth compass and perform, it plainly follows that he intended not by his prohibition of sin that any person should avoid or abstain from it, who doth not actually do so: or by his exhortations to repentance, holiness, obedience, that any person should repent, be holy, or obedient, who is not actually so. And why then doth he blame, or punish them, for that iniquity he never did intend they should avoid, or for the want of that repentance and obedience he never did intend they should perform? Like to this is a

IV. FOURTH OBJECTION, which saith, "if Christ died for all men, and all men are not saved, then is not God omnipotent, since he could not apply to them that benefit which he was willing should be procured for them."

ANSWER FIRST. When it is said in scripture that "God could not do this or that," this doth not signify a want of power in him to do it, but a want of will and a perverseness or evil disposition in others obstructing his kind influences on, or intentions towards, them. As when God enquires, *'What could I have done more for my vineyard which I have not done?'*^s When he

^s Isaiah, v. 4.

saith, ‘*though Moses and Samuel stood before me, my mind could not be towards this people;*’[†] and the prophet, that *the Lord could no longer forbear, because of their abominations;*”[‡] as then Christ *could do no mighty works*[‡] in his own country, because of their unbelief; so here the benefit which by the death of Christ is procured for all who do believe in him, cannot by God be applied to men obstinately rejecting Christ, and refusing to own him as their Saviour, because of their unbelief.

ANSWER SECOND. According to this way of arguing, it follows, that if all men do not actually enjoy what God is willing they should have, or be partakers of all the benefits conditionally intended by him, or by his Son procured for them, he cannot be omnipotent; and why then doth he say, ‘*We would have healed Babylon, and she would not be healed;*’[‡] *I would have purged Jerusalem, but she would not be purged?*[‡] Why doth Christ say unto the same Jerusalem, “How oft would I have gathered thy children as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not?” In a word, do all men actually enjoy those blessings temporal, spiritual, or eternal, which God conditionally hath promised, or did ever promise, to them? Or is it for want of ability in God that they do not enjoy them, or want of will in God that they should have what he thus promiseth? Or is it not wholly from the unwillingness of men, to perform the conditions upon which only they are promised? How oft doth God declare, that “he sent to them all his servants the prophets, rising up early, and sending them, saying, Return ye now every man from his evil way, and amend your doings, and go not after other Gods, and you shall dwell in the land which I have given you, and I will do you no hurt?”[‡] This he did, (1.) ‘*Because he had compassion on his people,*’[‡] and was very unwilling they should perish in their sins. (2.) This he did with the greatest solicitude and care, to prevent their ruin, as that phrase, “he sent his prophets rising up early, and sending them,” plainly imports. (3.) The reason why all these exhortations of God by his prophets became ineffectual, and had not the desired effect, was this; because “they inclined not the ear, and hearkened not to his word,” but said, ‘*We will walk*

† Jeremiah xv. 1.

‡ Chapter xlv. 22.

‡ Mark vi. 5, 6.

‡ Jeremiah li. 9.

‡ Ezekiel xxiv. 13.

‡ Jeremiah xxxv. 15. Chapter xxv. 5, 6.

‡ 2 Chronicles xxxvi. 15, 16.

after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart."^b (4.) Observe that *'therefore the wrath of God arose against his people, so that there was no remedy;'* (HEBREW, *'no healing,')* not, sure, because an omnipotent God was not able to heal them, or a good God, who out of compassion to them, and solicitude for their welfare sent all his prophets to reclaim them, would not heal them; but because they despised his word, and would not be healed, but "would every one do the imagination of his evil heart."

V. The FIFTH OBJECTION is but the FIRST in other words, viz. That "if Christ died for all men, and all men come not to be saved; then the great love of God in giving his Son to men is useless and unprofitable. For to what purpose, or of what use, is the love of God, and the gift of his Son to men, if he doth not withal give them faith in his Son?"

ANSWER. As if all God's acts of grace and favour to men, which are not effectual, through men's perverseness and the stubbornness of their wills, to obtain his gracious purposes, must be vain and fruitless on his part, if he also giveth not that grace which will make them effectual to his ends; and we might reasonably enquire, To what purpose was that *'riches of God's goodness, patience, and long-suffering to the Jews, which did not lead them to repentance?'* Or of what use was it, if he did not give them repentance unto life? To what purpose was it that the "grace of God, which brings salvation, hath appeared to all men," if all men were not actually taught and engaged by it, denying "all ungodliness and worldly lusts, to live righteously, soberly, and godly in this present world?" To what purpose are all God's prohibitions and revelations from heaven "against all unrighteousness and ungodliness," if he doth not by his grace effectually restrain them from these things? Or of what use are his commands, if he doth not by his grace constrain men to obey them; or all his gracious calls, if he doth not effectually engage men to answer them?

VI. OBJECTION SIXTH. "No man wittingly pays a price of redemption for a captive, which he certainly knows this miserable man will never be the better for; Christ therefore paid no price of redemption for any man who will never be the better for it."

ANSWER FIRST. To shew the absurdity of this objection, let it be considered, that it depends entirely on this foundation,—*that God and Christ never did or could do that to any persons which they knew they would never be the better for*;—which that it is extremely false, all his dispensations from the beginning of the world do testify. For,

Did he not send his Spirit to strive with the old world? Did he not allow them the space of a hundred and twenty years to repent in, though he knew they would not be the better for it?

Did he not send to the Jews his '*prophets, rising up early, and sending them*' to admonish them to turn from their evil way, that they might not be carried away captive? Did he not chastise them when they refused to receive correction? Did he not use the greatest diligence to make his vineyard bring forth good grapes, when it brought forth only sour grapes? Did he not use means to purge them when they would not be purged? Were not all his promises made to encourage them to the performance of their duty, that it might be well with them, and all his threats to deter them from their iniquity? And shall we deny, that God did these things to these ends, because his wisdom knew they would not have these salutary effects upon them?

Again, doth not God reveal his gospel, offer his grace, and send his ambassadors to call them to faith and repentance, whom he knew would never be the better for these things? Did not Christ come to his own, who received him not? Did he not speak to them that they might be saved, who would not come to him that they might have life? Did he not say to them who would not be gathered, '*How oft would I have gathered you? &c.*' And did he not know what would be the issue of his coming, his speaking to, and his endeavours to do them good?—Wherefore in all exhortations and persuasions, and all moral means whose effect depends upon the will of man, it is sufficient that they are proper means for producing the designed end, and that God knows they may be, and if they act according to that reason and discretion he hath given them, they will be, better for them: otherwise we may argue, as this objection doth, no good man would put another into a state in which he knows he will be miserable, and therefore a good God would never make those men he knows will finally be so. No good prince would have any sub-

jects he should be forced to cut off; and therefore a good God would not give being to those men of the old world, which his vindictive justice forced him to destroy.

ANSWER SECOND. I answer, that this objection is built upon a false supposition, viz. that Christ paid no such price for them that perish, as for them that will be saved. The price for both was one and the same,—his sufferings on the cross, his blood shed for the remission of sins: And thus he equally must have suffered for the redemption of ANY sinner from death, as for the redemption of ALL, as under the old law the same sacrifice was offered to make atonement for a SINGLE PERSON, and for the WHOLE NATION of the Jews. That any receive remission of sins by virtue of his death, is, because they, through faith in his blood, are justified, and so have peace with God: And that all do not so, is not for want of an atonement made for them by the same blood, but for want of that faith and those conditions of the new covenant, which can alone give them an interest in that atonement.

Discourse III.

OF SUFFICIENT AND EFFECTUAL, COMMON AND SPECIAL GRACE.

The state of the question.

CHAP. I.

FOR the right stating of this question it will be requisite to shew,

- I. What is the scripture import of the word "grace."
- II. What is the manner of the operation of this grace upon the soul, to convert, or to dispose it to what is spiritually good.
- III. What renders it efficacious in some, and not in others, to produce faith, repentance, and conversion of the soul to God; and what is the account the scripture and our blessed Saviour giveth of this matter.

I. To begin with the first particular,—Grace in the scripture, when it is styled *‘the grace of God’* imports his favour and his kind affection to us, as hath been largely proved in the note on 2 Cor. vi. 1. Accordingly,

1. The gospel preached to Jew and Gentile, is styled *‘the grace of God which brings salvation;’*^a *‘the word of his grace which is able to build us up, καὶ δένει AND TO GIVE us an inheritance among them that are sanctified.’*^b This also must be the import of the word, when it is said, *‘that the law came by Moses, but grace and truth by Jesus Christ;’*^c when the apostles exhort their converts to *‘continue in the grace of God;’*^d when they say that *‘God confirmed the word of his grace by doing signs and wonders;’* when the gospel is styled *‘the word of grace, and the gospel of grace.’*^e And this is probably the import of the word in many other places cited by Doctor Hammond, note on Heb. xiii. 9. where, saith he, they that believed *‘through grace,’* (Acts xviii. 27.) are they that believed *‘through the preaching of the gospel;’* and in this sense the grace of God is absolute; there being nothing either in Jew or Gentile which made them worthy of this revelation, nor any condition required on their part that it might be preached to them.

2. This grace which thus appeared to all men, being ἡ χάρις ἡ σωτηρία, that is, in its design, and in its influence, (where it was not obstructed by men’s infidelity, and love of darkness more than light,) *‘saving grace;’* the calling of men, by the preaching of it, to the faith, is sometimes said to be *‘the calling them by grace;’* and when they embrace that call, *‘the saving them by grace;’* as when it is said, *‘we are saved by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; by grace ye are saved, not of works.’*^f For seeing this is spoken to men yet alive, and so obliged *‘to work out their salvation with fear and trembling;’*^g it cannot mean that they were actually saved, but only that they were called to a state of salvation, enjoyed the means and were put in the way of salvation by grace, of which import of the word *‘saved,’* see the note on Eph. ii. 8. Hence the apostle saith, *‘he hath saved us, and (or that is) called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but the grace*

^a Titus ii. 11. ^b Acts xx. 32. ^c John i. 17. ^d Acts xiii. 43.—xiv. 5. ^e Acts xx. 32, 24.

^f Acts xv. 11. ^g Ephesians, ii. 8, 9.

given us in Christ Jesus.’^h And to be thus saved by grace, is to be saved by the mercy and favour of God to us, according to these words of the same apostle, ‘*when the kindness and love of God our Saviour to man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, (before faith,) but by his mercy he saved us.*’ⁱ And this grace is again absolute, it being purely of the mercy and the free-grace of God that any nation is, by the preaching of the gospel to them, called to the knowledge of salvation by Christ.

3. When men thus called, embrace the gospel, and believe in Christ, and so obtain the pardon of their past sins, this also is said to be done by grace, we being justified ‘*by the grace of God through the redemption that is in Jesus,*’^k and obtaining the forgiveness of sins ‘*according to the riches of his grace.*’ And though this grace be not absolute, but conditional, we being justified ‘*by faith,*’ yet since that faith is not of ourselves, but is ‘*the gift of God,*’ and it is of mere grace that this act of faith, which deserves nothing, is ‘*imputed to us for righteousness,*’ it is certain that we are ‘*justified by the grace of God.*’

4. The gift of the Spirit is, in the scripture, styled “the grace of God,” especially his extraordinary gifts, as when St. Paul saith, ‘*having gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us; whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith, &c.*’^l To the Corinthians he speaks thus, ‘*I thank my God for the grace which is given to you, so that you come behind the other churches in no gift.*’^m And again, ‘*not in fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God we have had our conversation in the world, and more especially towards you.*’ⁿ To the Ephesians thus, ‘*to every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.*’^o And St. Peter speaketh thus, ‘*as every one hath received the gift, so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*’^p On which account they who fell off from the faith, after they had tasted of these gifts, and were made ‘*partakers of the Holy Ghost,*’ are said to have ‘*despised the Spirit of grace.*’^q Now this grace, being peculiar to the first ages of the church, can have nothing to do with this controversy, unless by way of proportion and analogy, in which the or-

h 2 Timothy i, 9. i Titus iii, 4, 5. k Acts xv, 17. Romans iii, 24. Ephesians i, 7.
 l Romans xii, 6. m 1 Corinthians i, 4, 6. p 2 Corinthians i, 12.—See the note there.
 o Ephesians iv, 7, 8. r 1 Peter iv, 10. s Hebrews vi, 4—x, 29.

dinary gifts and assistances of the Holy Spirit derived from the same God may also be called '*the grace of God.*'

Now this being all the senses in which the word '*grace, or the grace of God,*' is used in the holy scripture, we may hence discern how, in the schools and in our common language, the word *grace* hath been abused and wrested from its proper sense; for, whereas, both in the Old and the New Testament, it signifies "the favour, goodness and mercy of God to us in giving us such and such blessings," they have made it commonly to signify some "supernatural and infused habits, or christian virtues," which in the scripture are never styled "*grace,*" but '*the fruits of the Spirit;*' as Gal. v. 22. Ephesians v. 9.

II. I add that, besides this calling of men to the profession of the christian faith, and this vouchsafement of the gospel to them as a rule of life, it seems necessary to assert that "God vouchsafes some inward operations or assistances to incline them to what is good, and work conversion in them." For were it otherwise,

1. Why is this Spirit styled a quickening or life-giving Spirit?^f Why is he said to '*strive with man?*'^u Why are wicked men said to '*resist the Holy Ghost?*'^w And why are they who are converted said to be '*born of the Spirit,*'^x and to be enabled '*through the Spirit to mortify the deeds of the flesh?*'^y For how can he be said to strive with men, or they to resist his motions, if he makes no impressions on our spirits? How can He quicken, work in us the new birth, or enable us to mortify the deeds of the flesh, without some vital energy, some renewing operations, or powerful assistances to subdue those motions of the flesh which lust against the Spirit?^z

2. Why else is it expressly said that "*God works in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure,*"^a and doth within us what is acceptable in his sight?^b For, sure, he cannot properly be said, "*ἐνεργεῖν καὶ ποιεῖν ἐν ἡμῖν,*" 'TO ACT AND WORK WITHIN US,' who does, and worketh nothing in us. How doth the word itself, when heard or read, work on us, but by making impressions on our minds? And shall that be denied to God himself which we allow to his word? Or shall he not be believed when he saith, '*he*

^f Romans viii, 2.^u Genesis vi, 3.^w Acts vii, 51.^x John iii, 5, 6, 8.^y Romans viii, 13.^z Galatians v, 17.^a Philipplians ii, 13.^b Hebrews xiii, 21.

worketh in us both to will and to do, he doth within us what is acceptable in his sight? And,

3. Doth it not seem unreasonable to deny that influence to God and his good Spirit to incline men to goodness, which generally is, and must be, according to the scripture, allowed to the evil spirit tempting men to wickedness? Now, though this evil spirit cannot lay us under a necessity of doing wickedly, yet is he represented in the scripture as the great tempter to sin, which he can only be immediately by raising some ideas in our brain which do excite, dispose, and move us, as our own thoughts or inward sentiments at other times are wont to do, to what is evil. He also is styled '*that spirit which, ἐνεργεῖ, WORKS INWARDLY in the children of disobedience;*'^c which words seem plainly to import some inward energy of satan to excite them to this disobedience. Seeing then '*stronger is he that is in us, than he that is in the world,*'^d that is, that good Spirit, who dwells in pious men, is more powerful in them than satan is in wicked men; we must allow this good Spirit, ἐνεργεῖν, 'to work inwardly' in the children of obedience, as satan is allowed to work in his own children. Moreover, the evil spirit is represented as '*a lying spirit in the mouth of Ahab's prophets;*'^e *he moved David to number the people;*'^f *he entered into Judas;*'^g *he filled the heart of Ananias to lie to the Holy Ghost;*'^h—all which things cannot be accounted for, without allowing him some power to work upon the minds of those persons, so as to raise within them some such ideas as would excite and stir them up to the performance of those actions. When therefore in like manner God is said to '*put a new Spirit, and to put his Spirit within us, to create in us a clean heart, and renew in us a right Spirit, to put his fear, and his law in our hearts, to circumcise,*'ⁱ and *to convert the heart;*'^k if he by his good Spirit raiseth no good motions or ideas in us which may dispose us to his fear, and by attention to them may convert and cleanse our hearts; if he vouchsafes to us no inward illuminations, by attending to which we may discern '*the wondrous things of his law;*' what can these words or metaphors import? Seeing the heart is purified by an inward change and temper, which renders it averse from

c Ephesians ii, 2. d 1 John iv, 4. e 1 Kings xxii, 21. f 1 Chronicles xxi, 1.

g Luke xxii, 5. h Acts v, 5. i Ezekiel xi, 19. xviii, 51. xxxvi, 27. Jeremiah xxxii,

10. Hebrews viii, 10. Deuteronomy xxx, 6. k Jeremiah xxxi, 18.

sin, and sets the affections, desires, and inclinations of the soul against it; seeing the deeds of the flesh are only mortified by such a renovation of the mind as makes us to discern the pernicious effects and dreadful consequences of living still according to our fleshly appetites, and so begets a dread and hatred of them, a resolution to forsake them, a vehement desire to be freed from them, a sincere endeavour to resist the motions of the flesh, and a care that we do not for the future yield obedience to it in the lustings of it;—if there be no renovation wrought in us by the assistance and co-operation of the Spirit, how can we possibly conceive God should ‘*put in us a new Spirit, create in us a clean heart, renew in us a right Spirit, circumcise and convert the heart, or put his fear into it,*’ if his good Spirit works nothing on the mind and the affections of a man, and consequently upon his will, to make this change within us?

To say that “all these operations of the Holy Spirit were peculiar to the first ages of the church, and therefore are now ceased,” is in effect to make the dispensation of the gospel cease, the difference betwixt that and the law being, by the apostle, placed in this,—that the one is ‘*the ministration of the letter only, the other also of the Spirit;*’ and if it were so only whilst the extraordinary dispensations of the Spirit lasted, then, from the time that they have ceased, the gospel doth not in this differ from the law, or deserve to be preferred before it upon that account. And,

4. The denial of this assistance seems to take off from the energy of prayer in general, and from the virtue of prayer for the Holy Spirit in particular, and so to make men slight and neglect that duty of which the scripture speaketh so magnificently, and to which it so frequently exhorts us: At least, it seems not well consistent with the tenor of these inspired prayers, or these prescriptions for it recorded in the holy scripture. For who can reconcile it with these expressions, in which holy men of God so often beg he would ‘*incline their hearts unto him,*’ since this he cannot do without some operation on their hearts; or that ‘*he would draw them that they might run after him, that he would open their eyes, and give them understanding to discern his law, that he would lead them in the right way, in the way everlasting?*’ For if God by his Spirit hath no influence upon the heart and soul, how doth he incline or draw it? If none upon the understanding, how doth

he enlighten or instruct it? If this be done only by the words read, preached, and pondered in the heart, we may as well apply ourselves to that work *without*, as *with* prayer.

Moreover, according to this doctrine it seems both fruitless and absurd to pray for the assistance of the Holy Spirit, or to expect we should enjoy it; and so that passage of St. Luke,—*‘ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you; for if evil parents give good gifts to their children, how much more will your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him’*ⁿ—must be of no use or virtue to us. For what do these words bid us pray for but the Holy Spirit, and what assistance can he afford us if he doth not operate at all upon us?

To say “this promise is to be confined to the first ages of the church,” seems not agreeable to reason; for why then doth it run in words so general, *πᾶς γὰρ*, ‘FOR EVERY ONE *that asks receives.*’ Moreover, those spiritual and ordinary effects for which the Holy Spirit was then given, those fruits of the Spirit he produced in them, are as needful and good for christians now, as when our Saviour spoke these words. For as the Holy Spirit was then needful to strengthen Christ’s servants ‘*in the inward man, to do his will, to comfort them in tribulations,*’^o and to support them in fiery trials, and to preserve them from the subtillies of satan, and the temptations of the wicked world; so is there the same need of his assistance now for all these gracious ends, and therefore the same reason to expect him still for all these purposes. The conditions also of this promise may be performed now by us, as well as by them then: we may be now sincerely desirous to obey the holy will of God, and with true fervency and importunity may beg the Holy Spirit to this end. And if we may acceptably perform those duties to which this promise is annexed, why may we not as confidently expect the blessing promised? For the encouragement here given to expect the assistance of the Holy Spirit is this, that we ‘*ask him of our Heavenly Father.*’ Now this most comfortable relation God bears to all his children of what age soever, and therefore there is now and ever will be the same benignity in God, the same good-will and readiness in him to give his Holy Spirit

ⁿ Luke xi, 9, 13.

^o Ephesians iii, 16.

to his children for all needful purposes, as in all former ages: if therefore in like manner we do ask, we must have equal reason to expect we should receive him. To proceed then,

SECONDLY. To explain, as far as I am able, what is the manner of the operation of God's grace and Holy Spirit on the soul.

III. *First.* I assert that the manner in which God's grace and Holy Spirit acts upon the minds and hearts of men for the production of the fruits of the good Spirit, and the preparatory dispositions of the soul towards them, may reasonably be conceived to be such as is suitable to the reason and faculties of men, the understanding and the will. Now it is certain that what naturally makes the understanding to perceive, is evidence proposed and apprehended, considered or adverted to; for nothing else can be requisite to make us come to the knowledge of the truth, and understand *'what the will of the Lord is,'* and so be wise to salvation. Hence the apostle prays that his Philippians *'might abound more and more in knowledge and in all wisdom, ἐν πάσῃ αἰσθήσει, IN ALL PERCEPTION, that they might approve the things that are most excellent;'*^p and saith to the Romans, *'Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, εἰς τὸ δοκιμάζειν, THAT YOU MAY DISCERN and approve what is according to the good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.'*^q Again, what makes the will chuse, is something approved by the understanding, and consequently appearing to the soul as good; and whatsoever it refuseth, is something represented by the understanding, and so appearing to the will as evil: whence all that God requires of us is, and can be only this, *'to refuse the evil and to chuse the good.'* Wherefore to say that "evidence proposed, apprehended, and considered, is not sufficient to make the understanding to approve;" or that "the greatest good proposed, the greatest evil threatened, when equally believed and reflected on, is not sufficient to engage the will to chuse the good and refuse the evil," is in effect to say "that which alone doth move the will to chuse or to refuse, is not sufficient to engage it so to do; that which alone is requisite to make me understand and approve, is not sufficient to do so;" which, being contradictory to itself, must of necessity be false.

^p Philippians i, 9, 16.

^q Romans xii, 2.

Be it then so, that we have naturally an aversion to the truths proposed to us in the gospel;—that only can make us indisposed to attend to them, but cannot hinder our conviction when we do apprehend them and attend to them; whence for removal of it the apostle only prays, *‘that the eyes of our understanding may be enlightened that we may know them;’*⁷ adding, that where *‘the light of the knowledge of the glory of God was revealed, if, after this, their gospel was hid from any, it was only so, because the god of this world had blinded their eyes, or the conceptions of their minds, that the light of the gospel might not shine into them.’*⁸ Be it, that there is in us also a renitency to the good we are to chuse;—that only can indispose us to believe it is, and to approve it as our chiefest good. Be it, that we are prone to the evil that we should decline;—that only can render it the more difficult for us to believe it is the worst of evils; but yet what we do really believe to be our chiefest good, will still be chosen, and what we apprehend to be the worst of evils, will, whilst we do continue under that conviction, be refused by us. It therefore can be only requisite, in order to these ends, that the Good Spirit should so illuminate our understandings, that we, attending to and considering what lies before us, should apprehend, and be convinced of our duty; and that the blessings of gospel should be so propounded to us, as that we may discern them to be our chiefest good, and the miseries it threateneth, so as we may be convinced they are the worst of evils, that we may chuse the one, and refuse the other. Now to consider in order to approbation and conviction, to chuse in order to our good, and to refuse that we may avoid misery,—must be the actions, not of God but man, though the light that doth convince, and the motives which engage him thus to chuse and to refuse, are certainly from God.

IV. To illustrate this by a familiar instance taken from ourselves, or our deportment towards others; when a man in words plain and intelligible speaks to another, if he will hearken to what he says, he must understand his mind: for by that very impression the words make upon his brain, he immediately perceives his mind. And cannot the divine impression on the mind, which is God’s speaking inwardly to man, do the same thing? This action

⁷ Ephesians i, 18.

⁸ 2 Corinthians iv, 3, 4.

is indeed so necessary, that, as it is not virtuous or praiseworthy in any man to understand the mind of him that speaks to him, so neither seemeth it praiseworthy in us to understand the mind of God thus speaking to us. Again, these words of man contain sometimes an exhortation to another to do what he desires he would do, taken from the proposal of some advantage, or the promise of some good he shall receive by complying with his exhortation; or they contain some dehortation from doing what he would not have another do, because it will be hurtful to him, or will be certainly attended with some evil consequences: is not this the method used by all the world in dealing with one another? And do they not all do this with hopes and expectation of success? And is it not a great disparagement to the word of God to say or think, that all his persuasions, admonitions, exhortations, promises, and threats, should be insufficient to prevail with us to turn from our sinful courses, and turn to him, when men who use these methods towards their children, servants, friends, or relations, do it in hopes that they shall be successful by these means? Moreover, if the person they address to, be slow of understanding, do they not hope to overcome that difficulty by the clearness of their discourse, and by reiterating the same thing in such variety of expressions as he is best able to perceive? If he be averse from doing that which is desired, do they not hope to overcome that averseness by repeated exhortations and vigorous impressions of those encouragements they tender, to prevail upon him to comply with their desire? If he strongly be inclined to that from which they vehemently dehort him, do they not endeavour to turn the bent and current of his inclinations by the like repeated exhortations and lively representations of the evils he will be certainly exposed to by so doing? All men are therefore of this opinion in their practice,—that acting with men by convincing reason, and by motives and persuasions, is acting with them suitably to their faculties, and so as that they may prevail. And is not God himself of the same mind? Hath he not revealed his will on purpose that we may know it? Hath he not directed his letters and epistles to us, that by reading we may understand them, and *‘know the things which do belong to our peace?’* Did not our Saviour utter all his discourses to the same end? Why else doth he enquire, *‘Why is it you do not under-*

stand my speech?^c *How is it that you do not understand?*^d Why doth he preface them with this instruction, '*Hear and understand?*'^e Doth not God call upon us to '*consider of our ways,*'^f and lay to heart his sayings and his dispensations? Doth he not prescribe this as a remedy to prevent his judgments, when he says, '*Oh consider this, ye that forget God?*'^g and of being wise, by saying, '*Oh that they were wise, that they would consider their latter end?*'^h Doth he not represent this as the source of all the wickedness and idolatry of his own people, that '*they would not consider in their heart?*'ⁱ Doth he not make conversion the effect of this consideration, when he saith, '*because he considereth and turneth away from all the transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live?*'^k Yea, doth he not represent this as a just ground of hope, that even the most stubborn sinners may be reformed, when he saith to the prophet, '*Remove by day in their sight; it may be they will consider though they be a rebellious people?*'^l Does not God require his people to '*chuse life,*'^m pronouncing a blessing upon them who '*chuse the things that please him,*'ⁿ and threatening destruction to them who '*would not chuse the fear of the Lord,*'^o but *chose the things in which he delighted not?*'^p Now doth he any thing more to prevail with them who do not chuse the fear of the Lord, and do not do the things that please him, to engage them so to do, or not to do the contrary, but teach them his ways, and persuade them to walk in them? Must it not then be certain that either he transacts with them as men, who, notwithstanding any acts of preterition on his part, or any disability or corruption of will on their part, might by these things be induced to chuse to fear him, and do the things that please him, and might abstain from the contrary; or threateneth to destroy them for not chusing what they could not chuse, for doing what they had not means sufficient to avoid, and for not doing what it was not possible for men so vitiated and so deserted to perform? Again, doth not God exhort the Jews to be '*willing and obedient,*'^q promising a full pardon and a blessing to them that do so? Doth not Christ resolve the destruction of the Jews

c John viii, 43. d Mark viii, 21. e Matthew xv, 10. f Haggai i, 5, 7.
g Psalm i, 22. h Deuteronomy xxxii, 29. i Isaiah i, 3. xlv, 19. k Ezekiel xviii, 28.
l Psalm cxix, 59. l Ezekiel xii, 5. m Deuteronomy xxx, 19. n Isaiah lvi, 4.
o Proverbs i, 29. p Isaiah lvi, 4. q Isaiah i, 18, 19.

into this,—‘*you will not come unto me that you might have life?*’^r Declaring this to be the reason why they were not gathered,—because he often ‘*would have gathered them, but they would not be gathered;*’^s because being so graciously invited to the marriage, ‘*they would not come.*’^t Now what did he to engage them to come to him, to gather them, or prevail on them to come to the marriage-feast, but shew them the way of life, exhort and invite them to come to that feast? Either then he transacted with them as one who knew this was sufficient to these ends, and that these things might have prevailed with them, notwithstanding any decrees of God’s preterition, or any disability through the corruption of their wills, to be willing and obedient to his invitation; or else he resolved on their exclusion from the marriage-feast, and their not *tasting his supper*, for not doing what, in that state, they could not do; and condemned them for not coming to him when they could not come, because the Father did not draw them, or give them to him;^u and for not being gathered, when he would not do that for them without which they could not be gathered. Doth not God earnestly exhort and persuade men to repent and turn from the evil of their ways? Doth he not say, ‘*Oh that my people would have hearkened to me, that Israel would have walked in my ways!*’^w *O that they were wise, that they would understand this!*’^x *O Jerusalem, wilt not thou be made clean? When shall it once be?*’^y *O that thou hadst known, in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace!*’^z Now either in these exhortations and persuasions made to men, vitiated not only by original but many actual corruptions, God dealt with them suitably to their faculties, that is, abilities, exhorting them to do, and pathetically wishing they had done, what he saw they might have done, though they, for want of due attention, consideration, and reflection, did it not; or called them to repent that they had not done what they never could do, or that they did not avoid what it was not possible under their circumstances they should avoid; and seriously and passionately wished they themselves would have done what, if it ever had been done, must have been done by himself, and therefore was not done because he did not unfrustrably work the

^r John v, 40.^s Luke xiii, 34.^t Matthew xxii, 3.^u John vi, 37, 44.^w Psalm lxxxi, 13.^x Deuteronomy xxxii, 29.^y Jeremiah xiii, 27.^z Luke xix, 42.

change in them; that is, he passionately wished they had been of the number of his elect, when he himself by an absolute decree from all eternity had excluded them out of that number.

In fine, doth not God encourage men to repent and believe, to be willing and obedient, by great and precious promises of the most excellent and lasting blessings? Hath he not threatened *eternal damnation* to them that do not believe? Hath he not told us that ‘*Christ will come in flaming fire, taking vengeance on all that obey not his gospel?*’^a And must not all these things sufficiently convince us, that God acts with men as one who doth indeed suppose that men may hearken to his exhortations, and comply with his persuasions to believe and to obey his gospel, may be prevailed on by his promises to the performance of their duty, and terrified, by his judgment threatened, from their disobedience? Why else is it said that God hath given us these “great and precious promises, that by them we may be made partakers of a divine nature?”^b Why are we exhorted, “having these promises to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God?”^c Or why doth the apostle say, “knowing then the terror of the Lord we persuade men?”^d If, beyond all this, there be some physical and unfrustrable operation on God’s part requisite to make men know, and, knowing, choose the good and refuse the evil; this being not vouchsafed to, or wrought in, them who are not born anew, why is the want of this new birth and this spiritual regeneration so often imputed to the voluntary want of their consideration, and their “not laying to heart”^e the things propounded to them, to their not “applying their heart to wisdom, not applying their minds to understanding, and their not framing their doings to turn to the Lord?”^f Admit that desperate refuge which the assertors of the contrary doctrine are here forced to fly to, viz. that these exhortations and persuasions may be yet made to us, though we are utterly unable to comply with them, and, by God’s act of preterition are left under that disability, because we once had grace and strength sufficient to perform them, though we have lost it by the fall: What is this to the import of all the exhortations, persuasions, and motives contained in the gospel, which are all directed to

^a Mark xvi, 18. 2 Thessalonians i, 7.

^b 2 Peter i, 4.

^c 2 Corinthians vii, 1.

^d 2 Corinthians v, 11.

^e Proverbs i, 14—30.

^f Hosea v, 4.

fallen man? And so, if God be serious in them, declare his great unwillingness that fallen man should perish, and his passionate desire that he should be saved; and if he speaketh in them suitably to the capacities and faculties of fallen man,—plainly supposes him in a capacity, by the assistances which God is ready to afford him, and by the consideration of the motives which he offers to him, to understand his duty, and to chuse the good and refuse the evil.

V. Wherefore, to give to outward means, and inward assistances, their due respective energy;

First. That honour must be due to God, and to his word, as to assert that the motives there offered must be sufficient, in the way of motives, to produce the ends for which they were designed. Seeing then the motives contained in the scripture to engage fallen man to turn from the evil of his ways, were certainly designed for that end, either they must be sufficient to engage him to turn from the evil of his ways, or else the highest motives that can be offered must be insufficient for that end, all other motives to deter us from any action as disadvantageous and pernicious to us, being as nothing when compared to that, '*depart from me, ye wicked, into everlasting fire;*' all evils we can suffer from the hand of man, being little in respect of that we must have cause to fear from him who can '*destroy both soul and body in hell-fire.*' Seeing, again, the promises of eternal happiness recorded in the same scriptures, as the reward of our obedience, were certainly designed to render us obedient, either they must be sufficient to engage us to yield that obedience to the good and holy will of God, or no inducements can be sufficient for that end; seeing this motive eminently contains all other motives in it, there being in those few words, '*the enjoyment of God and everlasting happiness,*' more than kingdoms and treasures, and all that can express the good things of this world, import; and therefore a more vehement constraining power in them to the performance of our duty, than in the united strength of worldly greatness, honours, pleasures; and that which representeth, to our desires and hopes, what far exceedeth all we can hope for or desire besides. But then,

Secondly. Because the blessings and miseries of another world are things invisible, and are discerned only by the eye of faith, they being moral and spiritual motives, which only work upon us as

they are present to our minds by actual consideration and reflection on them, which naturally we are not inclined to do; seeing they are not always present with us, when the temptations of the devil, the world, and the flesh, by sensual objects which we much affect, are thus present with us;—it is therefore necessary, that at all times when they are not thus present with us, and therefore cannot operate upon us, the Holy Spirit should, either by representing to us from the scriptures those divine truths with which our understandings have not been sufficiently enlightened or instructed, or else by reviving and inculcating on our spirits those motives and inducements to resist those temptations, and to perform those duties of which we are convinced by the word, assist us so to do. I therefore humbly conceive that inward operation of the Holy Spirit to consist in these two things:

1. In representing the divine truths, which holy scriptures do contain and press upon us, more clearly to our understandings, that we may have a fuller evidence, stronger conviction, and assurance of them; *'the eyes of our understanding being thus enlightened to know what is the hope of our calling, and the glorious riches of the inheritance of the saints;'*^a and this is styled THE ILLUMINATION OF THE MIND.

2. In bringing these truths to our remembrance, that so they may be present with us when this is requisite to enable us to resist temptations, and to encourage us to the performance of our duty; and upon supposition of these two things, that God acts with us suitably to the nature of our faculties,—on our understandings by representing the light to it, and on our wills by motives to chuse the good and refuse the evil; and that the highest motives and inducements possible offered to us in the name of the great God of heaven, when firmly believed and present to the mind, must be sufficient to produce their ends; it can be only requisite to our conversion and sincere obedience, that the Good Spirit should assist us in this work by that illumination which is sufficient to produce in us this strong conviction, and should present these motives to our memories, and make a deep impression of them there; which being present, will be sufficient to move our wills and our affections to prosecute the ends for which they are designed.

^a Ephesians i, 18.

VI. I know there be many who, beyond all this, require a physical and irresistible motion of the Holy Spirit, in which we are wholly passive, to the conversion of a sinner, which assertion shall be afterwards considered; at present I only shall endeavour fairly to compound and state this matter.

First. Then, I say, that it must be granted, that in raising an idea in my brain by the Holy Spirit, and the impression made upon it there, the action is truly physical.

Secondly. That in those actions I am wholly passive; that is, I myself do nothing formally to produce these ideas, but the good Spirit, without my operation, doth produce them in me. And,

Thirdly. That these operations must be irresistible in their production, because they are immediately produced in us without our knowledge of them, and without our will, and so without those faculties by which we are enabled to act.

But then I add, that as far as they are so, they cannot be imputed to us; that is, it cannot be praiseworthy in us, or rewardable, that we have such ideas raised in us, but only that when they are thus raised in us we attend to them, comply with them, and improve them to the ends for which they were designed by the Holy Spirit. To make this evident by an example,—it is generally granted, that satan can so work upon the brain as to raise up in it impure and vile ideas; but then it is as generally held, that the thoughts they immediately produce, will never be imputed to us as our sins, nor will God be displeased with us for them, if we do not after shew any good liking to them, or consent to them, but manfully resist and rise up in detestation and abhorrence of them,—and that because the raising these ideas is the devil's action, not our own; and we are purely passive in them till we consent to, or shew some liking of, them; and they are also inevitable and irresistible, it being in the power of no man to help them, to prevent their being raised in his brain, or any ways to suppress them, till he perceives them raised there. And therefore for the same reasons those ideas which are objectively good, being thus raised in us, cannot be imputed to us for reward, nor can God be well pleased with us for them till we co-operate with them, because the raising of them is properly God's, not our own action, and we are purely passive in it, nor is it in our power to prevent or resist them; but then God having planted in us a prin-

principle of reason and discretion, we can attend to them when they are raised in us, and so improve them to the illumination of our understandings, and to the approbation of them in our minds. He also having given us a will to chuse the good, and to refuse the evil, we may consent to the good suggestions and pursue the good motions thus raised in us; for to what other ends can they be raised in us by the Holy Spirit? As therefore our attending and consent to the suggestions of the evil spirit being free and avoidable, is culpable, so our attendance to and compliance with these motions of the Holy Spirit, being things in which we are free and active, and that upon deliberation, and so in them we do perform the free and proper actions of a man, doing that willingly which we ought to do, and refusing to do that which we have both power and temptations to perform, these things must be praise-worthy, and acceptable in the sight of God.

I also add, that these ideas being thus raised up in us by God alone, and even the power of attending and consenting to them being, together with our nature, entirely derived from him, and all the inducements which we have to attend to them, and comply with them, being properly of divine external revelation, or such divine internal operations, as if they had not intervened, we should have had none of these good effects produced in us; these effects are properly to be ascribed to God, and all the praise and glory of them must be due to him alone, because the principle of acting, and the inducement so to act, is solely from him.

Moreover, (1.) as these ideas raised in us are powerful inducements to the performance of our duty, as also all the other motives contained in the gospel revelation are, and as they all proceed from the free grace of God, they may be properly called *exciting grace*.

2. As they tend to restrain us from that sin to which we naturally are too much inclined, and to baffle those temptations which the world, satan, and our own evil hearts suggest unto us, they are as fitly styled *restraining grace*.

3. As they are given before we desired them, and these ideas are often raised up in us when we think not of them, they are properly *preventing grace*.

4. As they help us in the consideration of, and our endeavours and inclinations to perform, our duty, and resist temptations, they may be styled *assisting grace*.

And (5.) as they continue to do this more and more, even after the first turn of the heart from sin to God, and after some prevailing dispositions to love, fear, and serve God with sincerity of heart, they may be called the *subsequent grace of God*.

6. The distinction of grace into sufficient and efficacious grace is not, as Petavius well observes, *generis in species, sed ejusdem speciei secundum accidens distinctio*, 'a distinction of grace into different kinds or species, but only a distinction of the same kind of grace, according to its accidentally different effects,' all efficacious grace being sufficient, and all sufficient grace being such as would be efficacious, did not the indisposition of the patient hinder the effect of it. And,

Lastly. The distinction of grace into common and special may be understood two ways, viz. that grace which is afforded without any condition required on our part, as the vouchsafement of the knowledge of the gospel, and the calling men by it to the faith, may be called *common grace*, because it is common to all who live under the sound of the gospel; but that grace which is suspended upon a condition, as the receiving the assistance of the Holy Spirit upon our asking, seeking, knocking for him, our receiving more upon the due improvement of the talents received, the remission of sins upon our faith and repentance, may be styled *special grace*, because it only is vouchsafed to them who perform the condition; and so it is the same with grace *absolute* and *conditional*: Or else that may be styled *common grace* by which we are led to the faith of Christ, and so it includes all those good desires which are excited in us, and all those good dispositions which are produced in the minds of men before they believe, all this grace being common to men before they are admitted into the *new covenant*; and that will be *special grace* which is given to believers only, for the strengthening of their faith, the increasing of their good desires, and the enabling them to live according to the gospel.

VII. That any supernatural habits must be infused into us in an instant, and not produced by frequent actions, or that any other supernatural aid is requisite to the conversion of a sinner, besides the forementioned illumination of the Holy Spirit, and the impression which he makes upon our hearts by the ideas which he raises in us, is that which my hypothesis by no means will allow;

which ideas, though they are raised by a physical operation, yet are they moral in their operations: even as a man's tongue in speaking to persuade, or to dissuade another, performs a physical operation, though the effect of it is only moral.

Some Remonstrants, by granting this necessity of supernatural and infused habits, seem to have run themselves into this dilemma, that either these supernatural habits, viz. of faith and charity, may be wrought in men, and yet they may not be converted; or else that all who are not converted, are therefore not converted because God's Spirit hath not wrought these habits in them, which is the very absurdity they labour to avoid.

CHAP. II.

Proposing the arguments which seem to overthrow this assertion, of an irresistible or unfrustrable grace, necessary to the conversion of a sinner.

AND this I shall begin with some general considerations, as v. g.

I. That which is sufficient to cause any man to distrust, if not entirely to reject, this doctrine, is this,—That the defenders of it are forced, by the evidence of truth, to grant what is inconsistent with their doctrine, and to assert an universal grace, which to all, excepting the elect, is really no grace, as v. g.

First. They grant, “that preventing grace, as it is given irresistibly, so likewise is it given universally to men, and that this initial and exciting grace being once granted, is never taken away by God from any man, unless he first of his own accord rejects it;” and yet they resolve the non-conversion, or not believing of all those who are not effectually converted into the want of means sufficient for their salvation, or, which is the same thing, into God's dereliction of them in that state of disability into which Adam's fall had cast them. And what grace is it then, to have that initial and exciting grace which they cannot but reject, and which can never work faith and repentance in them for want of that farther and effectual grace which God will not vouchsafe to them, or that they have a talent put into their hands which they cannot but

abuse to their greater condemnation, for want of farther talents which he is resolved to withhold from them?

Secondly. They grant, “that there are certain inward workings and effects wrought by the word and Spirit of God preceding conversion and regeneration in the hearts of persons not yet justified, which God ceaseth not to promote and carry on towards conversion, till he be forsaken of them by their voluntary negligence, and his grace be repelled by them; and yet that he intends to restrain his saving grace to his elect, and to afford means sufficient for salvation to them only.” And why again, then, are these inward workings and effects wrought in them by the word and Spirit, from whom God intendeth to restrain his saving and converting grace, without which they cannot but neglect and repel his former grace? Or how can he properly be said to *carry on this work towards the conversion of them*, whom he hath decreed to leave in an utter disability of being converted, or recovered from their undone condition?

Thirdly. That God doth very seriously and in earnest invite and call all those to faith and repentance and conversion, in whom by his word and Spirit he works a knowledge of the divine will, a sense of sin, a dread of punishment, some hopes of pardon; and yet that all these men, excepting the elect, are not converted through a defectiveness in the grace of God to do it, or for want of means sufficient for their conversion or salvation; and because God never intended by these means salvation to any, but the elect, he having passed a decree of preterition on the rest of mankind, whom therefore he hath left under a necessity of perishing, since *idem est prætermitti ac dimitti*, ‘it is the same thing to be omitted out of the decree of election, and to be left to perish;’ and who then can conceive how his word or Spirit should work in any other a hope of pardon? Or how can God be serious and in good earnest in calling them to faith and repentance, and yet serious and in good earnest in his decree to deny them that grace without which they neither can believe nor repent? To call them seriously to faith and repentance, being to call them to salvation by faith and to repent that they may not perish; and to pass antecedently a decree of preterition on them, is seriously to will they should inevitably perish. To think to salve all this by saying, “God is serious and in good earnest in inviting these men to be-

lieve that they may be saved, and to repent that they may not perish, because he would save them if they would believe; he would preserve them from perishing if they would repent," is vain. For if faith be the 'gift of God,' if he 'gives repentance to life,' and hath restrained both these gifts to his elect, and hath left all the rest of mankind under a necessity to perish for want of an ability to believe and repent, because this ability was lost to them by the fall of Adam, then must not all these invitations made to them to believe that they might be saved, and repent that they might not perish, be only an invitation to escape perishing, and to obtain salvation upon a condition which his decree of preterition hath rendered it impossible for them to perform? And can he then be serious, and in good earnest, who only doth invite them to use things on a condition which he himself hath decreed to leave them under an utter inability to perform? These are such evident absurdities and contradictory propositions, that nothing but a strong and shining evidence of that which manifestly destroys their doctrine would force them to admit them. To proceed now to the arguments which evidently seem to confute this doctrine:

II. ARGUMENT FIRST. And (1.) this is evident from those expressions of the holy scripture, which intimate that God had done what was sufficient, and all that reasonably could be expected from him in order to the reformation of those persons who were not reformed; '*for what could have been done more, (HEBREW, what was there more to do?) for my vineyard, which I have not done in it? Wherefore then when I looked (or, expected,) that it should have brought forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?**' For doth not this enquiry make it evident, that the means which God had used to make this vineyard bring forth good grapes were both intended for that end, and were sufficient, (though not effectual, through her perverseness,) to produce in her those fruits which he expected from her? If an unfrustrable operation on her were absolutely necessary to that end, must he not in vain have used all other means here mentioned to produce it, whilst that was not vouchsafed? Admit this supposition, and it demonstrably follows that this vineyard had not grace sufficient to answer her Lord's expectations; and if so, must he not unreasonably complain that

a Isaiah v. 4.

she brought forth wild grapes, and more unreasonably expect good grapes, and chide his vineyard for want of them, and most unreasonably punish her for not doing that which he would not give her grace sufficient to perform, and which could never be performed by her without grace sufficient?

III. ARGUMENT SECOND. Of this we shall be more convinced, if we consider with what vehemence, and in what pathetic expressions God desires the obedience and reformation of his people. Thus when the Jews said to Moses, *'speak thou to us all that the Lord shall speak to thee, and we will hear it and do it;'*^b God answers, *'they have well said all that they have spoken; מִי־יִתֵּן (mi jitten) τὴς δόσεαι. Oh that there were such an heart in them that they would fear me and keep all my commandments always!'* Can it rationally be imagined that he himself, who so passionately desires they might have, and thus enquires *who will give them this heart*, should himself withhold from them what was absolutely requisite that they might have it? Could he approve their willingness to hear and do his commandments, and yet himself deny them grace or strength sufficient to perform them?—*"Who will give that there may be in them such an heart?"* is" saith the bishop of Ely, "an expression of the most earnest desire; but withal signifies that if what he had done for them would not move them to fear and obey him, it was not possible to persuade them to it. Not but he could miraculously work upon them (by an irresistible or unfrustrable operation) saith Maimonides,^c and change their hearts, if he pleased, as he miraculously changed the nature of other things; but if this were God's will to deal with them after this fashion, there would have been no need to send a prophet to them, or to publish laws full of precepts and promises, rewards and punishments, by which, saith he, God wrought upon their hearts, and not by his absolute omnipotence."—Again, can it enter into the heart of man to conceive this,—God was not so desirous of their reformation and obedience as to do all that was requisite on his part to procure it, and so to give them means sufficient for the performance of their duty, when after all his unsuccessful labours that it might be so, he breaks forth into such ardent wishes, *'O that my people had hearkened to me, and Israel*

^b Deuteronomy v, 27, 28, 29.

^c More Nev. Part. 3, cap. 32.

had walked in my ways! Even that Israel whom, for rejecting me, I have now *given up to her own heart's lusts; Oh that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments,* saith God to that obstinate people, whose *neck was an iron sinew, and their brow brass;*^d Now can these expressions come from one who had from all eternity decreed their reprobation, and consequently the denial of means sufficient to enable them to do what he thus wishes they had done? Can there be any doubt of the sincerity or ardency of Christ's desire of the welfare and salvation of the Jews when his eyes first wept over Jerusalem, and then his mouth utters these words, '*Happy hadst thou been hadst thou known in this thy day the things belonging to thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes;*' they are so now, therefore they were not always so. For Christ here plainly taketh it for granted that the people of Jerusalem in this day of their visitation by the Messiah, might have *savingly known the things belonging to their peace;* since otherwise, I know not how our Saviour's tears could be looked on as tears of charity and true compassion. And either his assertion, that they might have been happy, would have been contrary to truth; or his trouble, that they had not known the things belonging to their peace, must have been trouble contrary to the decree of his Father; both which are palpably absurd. And seeing the will of Christ was always the same with the will of the Father, it follows also that God the Father had the same charitable affection to them, and so had laid no bar against their happiness by a decree of preterition, or been wanting in any thing on his part requisite towards their everlasting welfare; and then it must be certain that an unfrustrable operation being not vouchsafed to convert them, it was not necessary to that end.

IV. ARGUMENT THIRD. If conversion be wrought only by the unfrustrable operation of God, and man is purely passive in it, vain are,

First. All the commands and exhortations directed to wicked men '*to turn from their evil ways, to put away the evil of their doings, to cease to do evil, and to learn to do well, to wash and make themselves clean,*^e *to circumcise their hearts, and be no more stiff-necked,*^f *to circumcise themselves to the Lord, and take away*

^d Isaiah xlviii, 18. i, 2, 3.

^e Isaiah i, 16.

^f Deuteronomy x, 16.

the foreskins of their hearts, to wash their hearts from wickedness that they may be saved,^g to put off the old man and put on the new,^h to lay aside all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and to receive with meekness the ingrafted word.ⁱ For to suppose that God commands the duty, or imposes that as our duty, under the penalty of everlasting wrath, which he both knows, and, according to this hypothesis, hath declared we never can do without that mighty aid which he neither doth nor ever will vouchsafe to the greatest part of those to whom these precepts are directed,— is to require them in vain to do these things, and in effect to declare they are to look upon themselves as inevitably damned, and that even for not doing that which it is no more in their power to do, than to create a world.

To say here that “the end of these commands and exhortations is to declare, not what we can do, or God would have us do, but what we ought to do,” is, (1.) to suppose we ought to do what we cannot do, yea that we ought to do what God would not have us do, which is a manifest contradiction, seeing we only ought to do it, because his will requires it. (2.) It is in express terms contrary to the tenour of those numerous scriptures which say, he hath commanded men to do his commandments, and given them such precepts that they may keep and do them. And, (3.) it is repugnant to the plainest reason, for that one end of the precepts, prohibitions, and exhortations contained in God’s law is obedience, is therefore evident because they are there enforced with promises to the obedient, and threatenings to the disobedient; the only end of which is to move us to obedience by the inducements of hope and fear.

Now obedience is one thing, and knowledge another; therefore knowledge is not the only end of God’s precepts and exhortations, and so the only end of them is not to declare to us what we ought to do. Moreover that is to be deemed the principal end of the law and of exhortations grounded on it, without which all other ends of the law, being attained, do not profit, but do rather hurt. Now thus it is with respect to knowledge of what we do not; *‘for he that knoweth his master’s will and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes;^k and he that knoweth to do good, and doth it*

^g Jeremiah iv, 4, 14.

^h Ephesians iv. 22, 24.

ⁱ James i, 21.

^k Luke xii, 47.

*not, to him it is sin;*² therefore obedience and not knowledge, is the principal end of these things. Moreover, would not God have all men to obey his commands? Are they not declarations of his will concerning what he would have them do, or leave undone? Would he not have us to comply with his exhortations, and hearken to the voice of his word? Is not obedience to them styled "the doing of his will?" Do not all the world conclude that they should do what he commands? Do they not look upon his precepts as a sufficient indication of his will and pleasure? Are not all men obliged to believe God would have them do what he requires of them? And can they be obliged to believe this if it be not true? Can any person rationally think that an upright God in whom is no hypocrisy or guile, should seriously command that which he is not willing men should do, especially when his commands are so agreeable to his nature, and so beneficial to the souls of men, as the commands of faith, repentance, and obedience are?

The only instance produced to the contrary from God's command to Abraham, to offer up his only Son, is both impertinent and inconclusive: It is not pertinent, because it is not paralleled to the case in hand. Had indeed God after these precepts given a contrary command to the sinner not to repent and obey him, as in this case he did to Abraham; had he complained of Abraham, as he doth of them, for not obeying his command; had he threatened to and executed his judgments on him, on that account, as he doth on them, then, and then only, would the case have been parallel. (2.) It is inconclusive; for as precepts of this nature are never made but to private persons, so neither are they made concerning things which have a real goodness and suitability to reason in them, as the fore-mentioned precepts have; for then they would be no temptations. Add to this that Abraham obeyed upon this very principle, that God would have him do what he commanded, and ceased to continue in and to complete this act, only by virtue of a contrary command; we therefore must, even by this example so much urged, conclude we must repent and obey his precepts till he is pleased to give us a command to the contrary.

² James iv, 17.

Now it being thus evident that obedience is the end of God's precepts, laws, and exhortations, it is also evident that those precepts which are impossible to be performed, even as impossible as for the dead to raise themselves, are vain and ludicrous, and they are yet more so when they are backed with promises and threats; for where the thing required is impossible, it is as vain to hope or fear, as to think of doing it. But most of all are those exhortations ludicrous which are grounded on the law, if the matter be utterly impossible; for exhortations carry the appearance of a serious and charitable intention, and some hope of prevailing; whence God so frequently declares he presses them upon his people *for their good*, and that it may be *well with them*; but nothing of this nature can really be implied in an exhortation to another to do that which he knows he never can do, and therefore in such cases his exhortations can be nothing better than hypocrisy and mockery.

Secondly. According to this hypothesis, vain also are all the threats denounced in the scripture against them who go on without amendment in their evil ways, and who persist in their impenitency and unbelief, as v. g. that of the Psalmist, '*The Lord is angry with the wicked; if he turn not, he will whet his sword. He hath prepared for him the instruments of death.*'^m—That of the prophet in God's name, '*I will destroy my people sith they return not from their ways.*'ⁿ And again, '*Behold I frame evil against you, and devise a device against you; return ye therefore from your evil ways, and make your ways and doings good.*'^o and those of Christ himself, '*If you repent not, you shall all likewise perish.*'^p '*If you believe not that I am he, you shall die in your sins.*'^q For (1.) either those threats are proper to move the elect to faith, repentance, and obedience: and then, (i.) they may move them so to do, and then an unfrustrable action cannot be necessary to their conversion. Then, (ii.) seeing threats only move by exciting fear of the evil threatened, they may be moved, and God must design to move them, by the fears of perishing and dying in their sins; that is, God must design to move them by a false and an impossible supposition. Or, (2.) they are proper to move those who are not elected; but this they cannot be, because then they

^m Psalm vij, 11, 12, 13.ⁿ Jeremiah xv, 1.^o Chapter xviii, 11.^p Luke xiii, 5, 5.^q John viii, 24.

must be moved to endeavour to believe, repent, and turn from the evil of their ways by the hopes of avoiding this death and ruin threatened by so doing; whereas seeing it is the same thing to have God's decree of preterition past upon them, and to be left inevitably to perish, they must, by virtue of it, be left without hopes that they may not perish. True it is, that these decrees are secret, and so neither can the elect know, certainly they are of that number, nor they who are not elected, that this act of preterition hath been past upon them; but yet this alters not the case, seeing upon supposition of such eternal decrees, they must know disjunctively, either that they cannot die in their sins because they are elected; or that they cannot avoid it, because they are not elected.

Vain (*Thirdly*) upon this supposition, are the promises of pardon, life, and salvation made to them who do consider and turn from their evil ways, and who repent of their iniquity, as, v. g. *'wash ye, make ye clean, put away the evil of your doings; then though your sins be as crimson, you shall be white as wool, though they be red like scarlet, ye shall be as snow.'*^a *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him turn unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.'*^b *O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness that thou mayst be saved. How long shall vain thoughts lodge within thee?*^c *Repent and turn yourselves from all your transgressions, so iniquity shall not be your ruin; for I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God, wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.'*^d For no promises can be means proper to make a dead man live, or to prevail upon a man to act who must be purely passive. Nor can I seriously design to induce him by them to do what I know he can never do himself, and which, whenever it is done, must be done by me alone. To promise therefore, and give no strength for the performance; or to promise on an impossible condition, or on a condition which I only can perform, and which I have determined never to enable him to do, is indeed to promise nothing, because it is to promise nothing that I can obtain; and nothing of this nature being ever done by any wise and upright governor, how absurd is it to impute such actions to a God infinite in righteousness and wisdom, and who

^a Isaiah i, 18.

^b Chapter iv, 7.

^c Jeremiah iv, 14.

^d Ezekiel xviii, 30, 31, 32.

is doubtless serious, and not delusory, in all his dealings with the sons of men! When therefore these men say, "God promises pardon and life seriously even to those who are not elected, but lie under an act of preterition, because he doth it upon condition that they believe, repent, and be converted, and will, if they perform them, give this pardon and salvation to them;" this is as if I should say, "God threateneth damnation to his elect seriously and in good earnest, because he threateneth it to all, and therefore to them also, if they do not turn to him, if they continue in impenitence and unbelief, or if they persevere not to the end." Whereas if, notwithstanding, he hath in his word of truth declared concerning them that he hath from eternity prepared for them that grace which will unfrustrably produce faith, repentance, and conversion in them, and stands engaged by promise to make them persevere unto the end, no man can rationally conceive he threateneth damnation to them seriously, because then he must only do it on a condition which he himself by his decree and promise hath rendered it impossible for them to be subject to: So, in like manner, if God doth only promise this pardon and salvation to the non-elect, on a condition which his own act of preterition, and leaving them under the disability they had contracted by the fall of Adam, hath rendered impossible for them to perform; this being in effect no promise, a promise only made on an impossible condition being equivalent to none at all, how can a God of truth and of sincerity be said to promise to them pardon and salvation seriously and in good earnest, who are by his own act of preterition infallibly and unfrustrably excluded from it?

V. ARGUMENT FOURTH. If men are purely passive in the whole work of their conversion, and so are utterly void of all power of believing, living to God, or performing any acceptable obedience to his commands, is it righteous to consign them to eternal misery for their disability to do that which God sees them unable to do when he lays these commands upon them? Is not this to require brick where he affords no straw? Yea, *'to require much where nothing is given,'* and then to punish eternally the not-doing that which is so unreasonably required? Yea, is not this equal to an absolute decree to damn them for nothing? It being in effect, and in the necessary event and consequence the

same thing to damn them for nothing, and to damn them for not doing what they never could do, or for not abstaining from what they never could avoid. If God makes laws which we cannot without his assistance observe, and then denies that assistance, he by so doing makes obedience to such men impossible, and what sin is it—not to obey beyond possibility?

If it be said “this disability is their sin,”

ANSWER, then by the definition of St. John, it must be a *transgression of some law of God*, and then some law of his must be produced requiring fallen man to do, on pain of damnation, without divine assistance, what he knows he can no more do than he can create a world; that is, a law declaring it is his will that they should do what it is his will they never should have power to do, or that it is his will we should exert an act without the power of acting. (2.) Either this divine law is positive or moral: if it be only positive, then all the heathen world must necessarily be ignorant of it, and therefore not obliged by it, God having given them no positive laws, and so their state must be, as to this particular, much better than that of christians, they being under no obligation to do any thing which they cannot do. If it be moral, how comes it to pass that all the Heathen world should be not only ignorant of it, but possessed with a contrary principle, *impossibile nulla est obligatio*, ‘that there can be no obligation to a thing impossible,’ “which is,” saith Bishop Saunderson, “a thing self-evident, and needs no proof;” and that ‘there can be no fault in doing that which we cannot avoid, or not doing that which we have no power to do; and that God could not produce or nourish that, which, when it had done its utmost, must fall into eternal misery;’ and that *quod omnibus necesse est id ne miserum esse uni potest*. ‘that which is necessary to all, can be the ground of misery to none.’ (3.) Either this sin is avoidable or it is not; if it be not avoidable, must it not unreasonably be required under this dreadful penalty that men should avoid it? If it be avoidable, then is there no such disability as is pretended in us, for we are not disabled from avoiding that which we have power to avoid.

e De Leg. Prælec. V. sec. 6.

f Culpam nullam esse, dicit Cicero, cum id quod ab homine non potuerit non præstari egerit. Tusc. Q. 5. N. 31. Nec id gigneret, aut aleret, quod, cum exantlavisset omnes labores, incideret in mortis sempiternum malum. Tusc. Q. 1. N. 107.

VI. If it still be said, that “it is just to condemn us for what we are now disabled to perform, because this disability came upon us by a guilt which is truly our own, because it came upon us by the sin of our first parents, in whose loins we then were;” this miserable refuge, and first-born of absurdities, hath been sufficiently confuted in *the state of this question*, SECTION the SIXTH. It hath been also baffled by many plain and cogent arguments in the discourse concerning *the extent of Christ’s death*. And because it is the foundation of the doctrine of absolute election and reprobation, and the whole system of these men must fall together with it, I shall here shew farther the inconsistency of this imagination, both with the tenor of the holy scripture, and with the principles of reason. And,

First. This vain imagination seems plainly contrary to the whole tenor of the scripture, and even to ridicule God’s dealings in them with the sons of men; for if, as I have largely proved in *the state of the question*, God dealeth with lapsed man, suitably to the faculties he still retains, endeavouring to excite him to the performance of his duty by hopes and fears, by promises and threats, by prospect of the advantages he will receive by his obedience, and of the miseries to which he will be subject by his disobedience, requiring him to consider and lay to heart these things, that he may ‘*turn from the evil of his ways, and do that which is lawful and right;*’ by all these things he manifestly declares he is not under such a disability by reason of the fall of Adam, as renders it impossible for him to be moved by all or any of these inducements to the performance of his duty; for then he might as well have used them to persuade a blind man to see, or a cripple to walk, or a new-born babe to speak, or a fool to understand mathematics, they both equally wanting or having lost the power to do what is required of them; and though one man should have lost his sight by whoring, another the use of his feet, a third the use of his reason by drinking; though they may be punished for whoring and drinking, they cannot afterwards be justly punished for not seeing, not walking, or not making use of their reason; this being to punish them for not using that which they have not to use; so in like manner, though if the sin of Adam were properly our own, we might be punished for that sin, yet could we not be justly punished for not having the ability we had lost by it,

that being equally to punish for not using that ability which we have not to use.

Secondly. God plainly seemeth, by his dispensations with the sons of men in order to their reformation, to declare he doth not look upon them as lying under this supposed disability to become better; to hearken to his calls and invitations to return and live; to be drawn to him by the cords of love; to learn wisdom by his rod, or be convinced of their duty to believe, and to obey him, by his miraculous operations. For,

1. God represents it as matter of great admiration and astonishment, and an argument of brutish stupidity, that the Jews were not restrained from their rebellions against him by the consideration of his great goodness to them, speaking thus to them by his prophet, *'Hear, Oh heavens, and give ear, Oh earth, for I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knows his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider:'*^g enquiring thus, *'Ah foolish people and unwise, do you thus requite the Lord? Is he not the Lord that made you? Hath he not created and established you?'*^h and saying, *'they remembered not the multitude of thy mercies, but were disobedient at the sea, even at the Red sea; they forsook the Lord; when he led them in the way, they walked after vanity, neither said they, Where is the Lord that led us through the wilderness, and brought us out of Egypt into a plentiful country to eat the fruits thereof?'*^k Again, *'this people, saith he, hath a revolting and rebellious heart, neither say they, Let us now fear the Lord, who giveth us the former and the latter rain in its season, and reserveth to us the appointed weeks of harvest.'*^l And on the other hand he promiseth, that in the latter days they shall *'fear the Lord and his goodness.'*^m The apostle also represents it as the effect of their hard and impenitent heart, that they *'despised the riches of God's goodness, patience, and long-suffering, and were not led by them to repentance.'*ⁿ Now if they lay under an utter inability to be restrained by all this goodness from their rebellions and their disobedience, and from walking after vanity, what matter of admiration and astonishment, what indication of folly and stupidity could it be in them, that they were not induced by it to

^g Isaiah i, 2, 3.

^h Deuteronomy xxxii, 6.

ⁱ Psalm cvi, 7.

^k Jeremiah ii, 5, 6, 7.

^l Chapter v, 25, 24.

^m Hosea iii, 5.

ⁿ Romans ii, 4.

abstain from that which they were not able to avoid? Or what sign was it of a rebellious and revolting, hard and impenitent heart, that being under this disability to be moved by this goodness to repent and fear him, they did not do it? Sure he who designed these means to their respective ends, and doth thus aggravate the sin of them who do not improve them to those ends, did not conceive these all were vain and insufficient inducements without that supernatural aid he was not pleased to vouchsafe to move them to those duties.

2. The scripture is more frequent in representing God's punishments and chastisements as sufficient to engage men to fear him, and to depart from their iniquity. *'Thou shalt, saith Moses, consider in thy heart, that as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord chasteneth thee; thou shalt therefore keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him.'* God himself declares, that *'by the Spirit of judgment, and of burning he would wash away the filth of the daughter of Zion, and purge out the blood of Jerusalem;'* and speaks of it as a thing certain, that *'when his judgments are upon the earth, the inhabitants of it will learn righteousness,'* and that *in their affliction they will seek him early.'* And when they had not this effect upon them, he complains grievously against them, saying, *'this people turneth not to him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the Lord. In vain have I smitten them, they have received no correction;'* and having mentioned a variety of judgments he had inflicted upon Israel, he still concludeth thus, *'yet have ye not returned to me, saith the Lord;'* and then adds, (verse 12,) *'therefore will I do thus unto you.'* His prophets also complain thus: *'O Lord, thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they refused to receive correction; they have made their faces harder than a rock, they refused to return.'* And again, *'this is a nation that obeyeth not the voice of the Lord nor receiveth correction.'* Yea, when these judgments do not prevail upon them to return to him, he looks upon them as incorrigible, saying to them *'Why should you be smitten any more, you will revolt more and more?'* and are only fit to be punished seven times more. Thus having threatened

e Deut. viii. 5, 6.

p Isa. iv. 4.

q Isa. xxvi. 9. lix. 18, 19.

r Hos. v. 15.

s Isa. ix. 15.

t Jer. ii. 30.

u Amos iv. 6, 9, 11.

w Jer. v. 5.

x — vii. 28.

y Isa. i. 5.

to 'set his face against them, and give them up to be slain by their enemies, who would not hearken to him to do all his commandments;' he adds, 'and if you will not yet for all this hearken to me, I will punish you seven times more for your sins. And if you will not be reformed by these things, but will walk contrary to me, then will I also walk contrary to you, and will punish you yet seven times more for your sins. And if ye will not for all this hearken to me, but will walk contrary to me, I will walk contrary to you in fury.'² Now seeing all these judgments and chastisements were only moral motives, and all men through the fall of Adam are utterly incapable of being moved by them without that *supernatural and unfrustrable operation*, which the event shews God was not pleased to vouchsafe to these lapsed persons, why doth God himself represent them as means proper and by him designed, and sometimes efficacious, to produce these ends? Why doth he speak as if they certainly would do it? Why doth he complain so much against them, and denounce such dreadful judgments on them who were not thus reformed by them, seeing these things, without that aid he was not pleased to vouchsafe, were as unable to produce these effects as to make a blind man see, or a deaf man hear? Why is the one more punishable on this account than the other? Why, lastly, doth he represent them as incorrigible who were not thus reformed by them, since it was impossible they should be so without that supernatural aid he was not pleased to vouchsafe? Surely these things are demonstrations of the falsehood of this vain opinion.

3. God doth continually represent his calls and invitations, and his messages sent to them by his prophets, as sufficient inducements to procure their reformation and repentance, and looks upon them as incorrigible and past all remedy, and worthy of his heaviest judgments, when these things could not engage them to return to him; so we read, (2 Chron. xxxvi. 15, 16.) '*he sent to them his messengers, rising up betimes and sending them, because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling-place; but they mocked his messengers, despised his word, and misused his his prophets, till the wrath of the Lord came upon them, and there was no remedy.*' So Jer. xxv. 4, 5. '*the Lord sent to you his*

² Leviticus xxvi, 14—17, 18, 21, 23, 24, 27, 29.

prophets, rising up early and sending them, but you have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear, (when) they said, Turn ye again every one from his evil ways.' Hence God speaks thus of them, Jer. xxix. 18, 19, "I will persecute them with the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, and will deliver them to be removed to all the families of the earth, because they hearkened not to my words, when I sent to them by my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, but ye would not hear." See also Jer. vii. 13. xxxv. 15. Again, "I will bring upon Judah," saith God, "and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the evil that I have threatened, because I have spoken to them, but they have not heard, I have called unto them, but they have not answered." (Jer. xxxv. 17.) So also Isaiah lxx. 11, lxxvi. 4. Wisdom is also introduced by the preacher crying "in the chief places of concourse, Turn ye at my reproof, (and) I will pour out my Spirit upon you, I will make known my words to you;"^a and at last thus concluding, "because I have called, and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh. In a word, all these things seem to be put together in those words of the prophet Ezekiel, '*because I have purged thee (that is, I have done what was sufficient to have purged thee, by my mercies and judgments, my calls, my threats, my promises, and by my prophets, and what should have purged thee,) and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more, till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee.*'^b Now could that God who sent these messengers to his people, '*because he had compassion on them,*' have decreed from eternity never to have compassion on them in reference to their eternal interests? Could he see them under an utter disability through the fall of Adam to comply with the requests of his messengers and prophets, and not vouchsafe that aid without which he well knew his messengers and prophets must be sent in vain? And when, after all that they had said, there was no remedy of this fatal disability afforded, did the good God threaten thus to persecute with sword and famine, and banish

^a Proverbs i, 25—28.

^b Chapter xxiv, 13.

ment, his own beloved people, for not hearkening to his words, and not turning from their evil ways, when they were no more able so to do than to remove a mountain? Might he not as well have threatened thus the man who by intemperance had lost his sight and limbs, because he did not see and walk? Especially if we consider that he contracted this disability by his own personal sin, they only had theirs by the transgression of another, long before they had a being, and so before they could be capable of any personal transgression. To what purpose did wisdom say to them who were thus disabled, "turn you at my reproof?" Or could she, without insulting over the misery of fallen man, thus laugh at the calamity they never could prevent? Or lastly, could God truly say '*he would have purged them,*' when he withheld that aid, without which it was impossible they should be purged; or threaten that "they should be purged no more," who never were in a capacity of being purged at all?

4. God throughout the whole book of the law, and our blessed Saviour in the gospel, still represent the mighty works done for, and before the eyes of, the Jews, as strong and sufficient obligations to believe and obey him. "Ask now of the days of old, did ever people hear the voice of God out of the midst of the fire as you have heard, and live? Or hath God assayed to go and take him a nation out of the midst of another nation, by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by a mighty hand, and by a stretched-out arm, and by great terrors, as the Lord did for you in Egypt before your eyes? (Deut. iv. 32, 33, 34.) Thou shalt keep therefore his statutes and his commandments, which I command ye this day. (Verse 40.) And chapter xi. 2, you have seen the chastisements of the Lord, his greatness, his mighty hand, and his stretched-out arm, and his miracles, and his acts which he did in the midst of Egypt; your eyes have seen all the great acts of the Lord that he did, therefore shall ye keep all the commandments which I command you this day. (Verse 8.) And chapter xxix. 2, 3, Ye have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, the great temptations which thine eyes have seen, the signs and the great miracles; keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them." (Verse 9.) So also our Lord proves the obligation the Jews had to believe in him, because of the mighty works which he had done among them, saying "the

works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me; (John v. 36.) and ye have not his words abiding in you; for whom he hath sent, ye believe not." (Verse 38.) See also John viii. 18, 24. And when the Jews came to him saying, "If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly;" his answer is, (John x. 25, 26.) "The works that I do in my Father's name, bear witness of me; but ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep; and, verse 37, if I do not the works of my Father, believe me not; and chapter xv. 24, if I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin; but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father, and so they have no cloak for their sin." (Verse 22.) Now if the consideration of this mighty hand of God, and stretched-out arm, was not sufficient to induce them to observe his statutes, why doth he so often say, "therefore thou shalt keep my statutes," that is, why doth he use a reason which he knew was insufficient to produce that effect? If all Christ's miracles, without that supernatural and unfrustrable act of God, which he would not vouchsafe to the Jews, were insufficient to produce faith in them, why doth Christ tell them, that "if they did not believe in him they should die in their sins?" Why doth he represent their infidelity as an act of hatred to him and his Father, and an evidence that they were not his sheep, nor had the word of God abiding in them? Why, lastly, doth he say, '*they had no cloak for their sin,*' who had this remediless disability to plead in their behalf?

5. This will be farther evident from God's supposition, that it might be that the methods he and his prophets used would prevail for the producing of the designed effects. Thus when God bids Jeremiah '*take the roll of his intended judgments, and read it in their ears;* he adds, *it may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil that I purpose to do to them, that they may return every man from his evil way, and I may forgive their iniquity and their sin;*^a and verse 7, *it may be they will present their supplication before me, and will return every one from his evil way.*' To his prophet Ezekiel he speaks thus, "Prepare ye stuff for removing, and remove by day in their sight; it may be they will consider, though they be a rebellious house."^b So in the parable of the

^a Jeremiah xxxvi, 3, 7.

^b Ezekiel xii, 5.

vineyard, when God sends his Son to the Jews, he saith, "it may be they will reverence my Son."^c Now what room is there for any of these suppositions, where the effect depends upon God's immediate acting upon the heart, and not upon any hearing, or consideration of man without it, or any dispositions, or any means that they can use to move him to enable them to do it? If indeed they lay under this disability by the fall of Adam, it might as reasonably be expected they should move a mountain, as be induced by these considerations to return every man from his evil ways.

6. God complains of his own people, that they were "a rebellious people, because they had eyes to see and saw not, they had ears to hear and heard not;"^d my people, saith he, is foolish, they have not known me, they are sottish children, and have not understanding; they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge."^e And again, *'to whom shall I speak and give warning? Behold their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hear: f Can the Ethiopian change his skin, and the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good who are accustomed to do evil.'*^g And Christ speaks thus to the Scribes and Pharisees, *'Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?'*^h Now if this were the sad estate of all the lapsed sons of Adam, that *'they had eyes and saw not, and ears and heard not, that to do good they had no knowledge,'* and no power, whatever motives God should offer to engage them so to do, why is this represented as the peculiar state only of the worst of men? If none of them could be induced by all the arguments the gospel offers to do good, why is this made the effect of a long *'custom to do evil,'* and an evidence of *'sottish children?'* If this be the sad state of all that are not of the number of the elect, that they cannot escape eternal misery, why is it said, peculiarly of the Scribes and Pharisees, that they could not *'escape the damnation of hell?'* And more particularly concerning Judas, that *'it had been better for him that he had not been born?'*ⁱ In a word, all God's commands and prohibitions, promises and threats, and all his exhortations to lapsed men to consider and lay them to heart, in

^c Luke xx, 13.

^d Ezekiel xii, 2.

^e Jeremiah iv, 22.

^f Jeremiah vi, 10.

^g Chapter xlii, 23.

^h Matthew xxiii, 35.

ⁱ Matthew xxvi, 21.

order to their reformation, are demonstrations of the falsehood of this vain imagination.

VII. ARGUMENT FIFTH. If such a divine, unfrustrable operation is necessary to the conversion of a sinner, then the word read or preached can be no instrument of their conversion without this divine and unfrustrable impulse, because that only acts by moral suasion. Whereas '*it pleased God,*' saith the apostle, '*by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.*'^k And St. James, by saying, '*we are begotten anew by the word of truth,*'^l plainly informs us, that this word of God is the ordinary means of our regeneration, it being the word preached, the word we are to hear, (verse 19, 22,) and to '*receive with meekness,*' by which God worketh this new birth in us, and '*which,*' saith the apostle, '*is able to save our souls.*' (Verse 21) And it is surely a great disparagement to the word of God, to think that his persuasions, admonitions, exhortations, attended with the highest promises and threats, should be all insufficient to prevail with men to turn from the known evil of their ways, and turn to him; when all men who do use these methods towards their children, servants, friends, and relations, do it in hope that they shall be successful by these means; only this is not so to be understood as to exclude the co-operation of God with his word, or the assistance of his Holy Spirit setting it home upon our hearts; provided this be not by way of physical but moral operation, by that illumination of the understanding from the word which produceth that renovation in the spirit of the mind, by which we are enabled to discern and to '*approve the good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God,*' (Rom. xii. 2. Eph. iv. 23.) to discern '*what is acceptable to the Lord,*' (Eph. v. 10,) to understand '*what the will of the Lord is.*' (Verse 17.) And if the word of God be a perfect rule, '*able to make us wise unto salvation, and furnish us to every good work,*'^m sure the good Spirit may, by his suggestion of the truths delivered in it, by '*bringing them to our remembrance,*' and opening our understanding to perceive the scriptures, remove that darkness which is in our minds either by natural corruption, or by the mists which satan casts upon them; whence the apostle doth inform us, that '*if the gospel be hid from any to whom it is*

^k 1 Corinthians i, 21

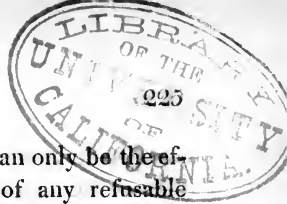
^l James i, 18.

^m 2 Timothy iii, 15, 16, 17.

preached, it is because the God of this world hath blinded the conceptions of their minds, that the light of the glorious gospel should not shine into them.' (2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.) And, Secondly, by making deep impressions on the mind of the advantages and rewards promised to our conversion and sincere obedience, and the tremendous evils threatened to the disobedient, and bringing these things oft to our remembrance, which, in the scripture-phrase, is '*putting these laws in our minds, and writing them in our hearts, that we may not depart from him.*' (Heb. viii. 10. See the note there.) For what reason can be given, why the Spirit of wisdom having thus enlightened the eyes of our understanding '*to know what is the hope of our calling, and the glorious riches of the inheritance of the saints,*' (Eph. i. 18,) and made these things, firmly believed, thus present to our minds, they should not have greater prevalence on our wills to obedience than any temporal concerns to induce us to yield obedience to the laws of sin? If, beyond this, there be some physical and irresistible operation, on God's part, necessary to make us know the things which do belong to our peace, and, knowing them, to chuse the good and refuse the evil, this being not wrought in them who are not born anew, why is the want of this new birth, and this spiritual renovation, so oft imputed to men's want of consideration and laying to heart the things propounded to them, to their not inclining their ear to wisdom and applying their heart to understanding, to their rejecting the counsel of God and not chusing the fear of the Lord? (Prov. i. 24, 25, 29, 30.) Why is it said, that they continue thus unreformed, because '*they would have none of God's counsels, but despised all his reproof,*' or because '*they would not frame their doings to return unto the Lord?*' This also St. Peter teacheth, by saying, '*We are born again of incorruptible seed, by the word of God;*'ⁿ and St. Paul by letting us know, that '*faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God,*'^o and by saying to his Corinthians, '*in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.*' For if conversion is only wrought by an irresistible operation of the Holy Spirit, and cannot be wrought in us by the word without it, then the word contributes no more to our conversion than the throwing of a pebble doth to the fall of a strong wall blown

ⁿ 1 Peter i. 25.

^o Romans x. 17.



down by the fury of a tempest. Since then it can only be the effect of that unfrustrable power, and not at all of any refusable motives and persuasions offered from the word; and why then is it said *'to be quick and lively in its operation?'*^p To say that "conversion, at the same time, may be the work of that word which sinners cannot but resist, till this infrustrable operation comes," and yet "of that operation and the word," is to speak things plainly inconsistent with truth, and with the nature of a moral instrument, which if it doth not move, doth nothing; and if it doth, as far as it doth so, is not resisted. Moreover, where an effect doth so entirely depend upon two causes, that, without the concurrence of them both, it will not be produced, he that hath it always in his power to resist, that is, to hinder the operation of the one upon him, must also frustrate the other, and consequently hinder the effect: So that it being certain that the sinner may, and too often doth resist the most powerful persuasions of the word, he may resist the concurrence of the Spirit with it, and then that operation cannot be unfrustrable or irresistible. Moreover, if conversion be wrought irresistibly by the operation of the Spirit, then the word which may be resisted is unnecessary thereunto, since an irresistible operation must do its work as well without it; and if the word cannot but be resisted, till the effect is wrought by another power which is irresistible, it is evident the effect is owing only to that power, and then the whole ministry of the word must be unnecessary: And what is this but in effect to say, what in express terms would be offensive to tell christian ears, viz. "the word of God is of no use towards the conversion or reformation of a sinner?"

VIII. ARGUMENT SIXTH. Hence it must also follow that no motive can be offered sufficient to induce the person who believes this doctrine, (as, if it be taught in scripture, all christians are obliged to do,) to enter upon a change of life, or a religious conversation, till he feel this irresistible impulse come upon him: For as an assent to mere truth doth not move the will and affections, unless it be of concernment to us, propounding good to be obtained, or evil to be avoided, so neither can this be sufficient to excite endeavour, if I know as certainly that till this impulse

comes upon me I cannot possibly by my best endeavours either obtain that good, or avoid that evil; which being plain to common sense, I shall not farther prosecute.

IX. ARGUMENT SEVENTH. If man be purely passive in the whole work of his conversion, and it can only be wrought in him by an irresistible act of God upon him, then can nothing be required as a preparation, or a prerequisite to conversion; for either that prerequisite is something to be done on our part in order to God's irresistible act, or it is not; if nothing is so to be done on our part in order to the work, no preparation can be requisite in order to it; if any thing is to be done on our part, it is certain that we are not purely passive in the whole work of our regeneration, since he that must prepare himself for his conversion, must act in order to it. Now as all God's exhortations to men to consider and turn unto the Lord, demonstrate, that this consideration is a prerequisite to conversion, so the parable of the seed sown shews (1.) Negatively, that the word becomes unfruitful, either because men do not at all attend to it, or because they are diverted from that attention by the intervening cares and pleasures of the world, which break off that attention, or are affrighted from it by the fears of suffering; and (2) affirmatively, that it becometh fruitful by being '*received into a good and honest heart.*' And sure the devil must be a fool, according to this doctrine, when he comes to '*take away the word out of men's heart, lest they should believe and be saved,*' if that word could have no influence upon men to salvation, when it was not attended with an unfrustrable assistance; and where it was so, all his attempts to hinder the believing of it to salvation, must be vain.

X. ARGUMENT EIGHTH. Were such an irresistible power necessary to the conversion of a sinner, no man could be converted sooner than he is, because before this irresistible action came upon him he could not be converted, and when it came upon him he could not chuse but be converted; and therefore no man could reasonably be blamed that he lived so long in his impenitent or unconverted state. And then God must unreasonably make these enquiries, '*how long refuse ye to keep my commandments?*' *How long will this people provoke me? How long will it be ere they*

believe me? How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity, and the scorers delight in scorning, and the fools hate knowledge? O Jerusalem, wash thyself from wickedness that thou mayest be saved! How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee? And again, O Jerusalem, wilt thou not be made clean, when shall it once be?'^u Seeing none of these changes could be wrought within them, till he was pleased to afford the irresistible impulse: And then it would not be praise-worthy in them, or any other person, that they were then converted, it being not in their power then to be otherwise, since an unfrustrable operation is that which no man can frustrate.

XI. ARGUMENT NINTH. The scripture charges men's wickedness not upon their impotency and disability, but upon their wilfulness, which therefore doubtless is the true account of the matter. It might have reasonably been expected, that if the disability we had contracted by the fall of Adam had been the true source of all that impotency that is in the sinner to hearken to all or any of the motives offered by God in the Old or the New Testament, the holy scripture should somewhere or other have given us some express declaration of it, and not have constantly ascribed this impotency to other causes acquired by, and not born with, us; whereas I verily believe, that the whole scripture affordeth not one sentence, or expression, which in the true importance of it bears this sense, or which, either in terms, or by just consequence, avers, that "man is so disabled by the fall, as that he cannot be reformed by any arguments or motives offered by God for his recovery, or by the grace offered to all men in the gospel, but that they must entirely be frustrated, offered and spent in vain upon him, unless God add unto them an unfrustrable operation of the Holy Ghost." The scripture is indeed very copious in representing the ignorance and darkness of the Heathen world, given up to gross idolatry, and lying under the dominion of the prince of darkness; declaring, that '*their foolish hearts were darkened, and that they were alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that was in them;*' that through the evil habits they had contracted, the whole Heathen world '*lay in wickedness, were*

r Numbers xiv, 11.

s Proverbs i, 22.

t Jeremiah iv, 14.

u Chapter xiii. 27.

filled with it, and were even *dead in trespasses and sins*, and through the customary practice of sin were become insensible of their own vileness: But nothing of this nature do I find charged on mankind in general, by reason of the fall of Adam. Whereas there is not any thing more frequent or common throughout the whole book of scripture, than the complaints of God and all his prophets, of Christ and his apostles, of the perverseness, obstinacy, rebellion, the inconsideration, folly, and stupidity of them with whom they had to do, and only of their indisposition and disability to hearken to their counsels, and do good, by reason of those evil dispositions, customs, prejudices, hardness of heart, or blindness, which they had wilfully contracted. Now it is reasonable to conclude the fault, lies chiefly there where the scripture chargeth it, and not where it is wholly silent in the case. Now of all these things I have already given instances sufficient; to which may be added the words of Isaiah, *‘thus saith the Lord, in returning and rest shall ye be saved, and in quietness and confidence shall be your strength, and ye would not. And again, they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient to his laws.’** And of the prophet Jeremiah, *“thus saith the Lord, ask for the old paths, where is the good way? and walk therein; and they said, We will not walk therein; they hold fast deceit, they refuse to return. I sent to them by my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, but they would not hear, saith the Lord.”^y* And saith the prophet Hosea, *“they will not frame their doings to turn unto the Lord.”^z* Now, is it to be wondered, is it just matter of complaint, that men who were disabled, by the fall of Adam, from doing any of these things, did not perform them? Were they not rather objects of divine pity, than of wrath? And was it not worthy of the divine goodness to help their unavoidable infirmity, rather than to punish them so severely for what they could not help, and to impute that to the spirit of whoredom in them, which was the natural result of the whoredom of their mother Eve?

Moreover Christ charges the impenitency and unbelief of the Jews upon this account, saying, *“Ye will not come unto me that you may have life.”* Now if they could not have the will, their condemnation would not be just; if indeed it had once been possi-

^x Isaiah xxx, 15. xlii, 21.

^y Jeremiah vi, 16. viii, 5. xxix, 19.

^z Hosea v, 4.

ble for them to be willing to come, or, supposing their will good, it had been possible for them to come without being irresistibly made to come, the fault might have been imputed to themselves; but if it were impossible for them to be willing, how should they come? Or if it were impossible for them to come if willing, to what end should they be willing?

To say, as some do, that "God's exhortations to men thus unable to return and yield obedience to him, and his promises to pardon and to save them if they will return, are very serious; because he will pardon and save them if they do these things, and only doth not do this because they will not turn unto him,"—is as if I should say, "a man is serious, when he exhorts a blind or a deaf man, (who had contracted these disabilities by their own fault,) to see and hear, and promises them the highest advantages if they would do so, because he will give them these advantages if they do see and hear, and only doth not give them because they do not do so." For if you say that "these men cannot see and hear, and therefore will not," so is it with every lapsed man according to this doctrine. Moreover it is certain, that what I know I cannot do, if I would, I cannot rationally will to do, because I cannot rationally will in vain; if therefore God hath taught the sinner that he cannot turn to him, or hearken to his exhortations to repent and believe, were he never so willing, he hath also taught him that he cannot rationally will to do so, and therefore that he must be innocent in not having such a will.

XII. ARGUMENT TENTH. And *lastly*, our opinion tendeth much more to the glory of God, than doth the contrary opinion. For seeing God is chiefly glorified by the acknowledgment and discovery of his excellencies, and more particularly of those attributes which do inform us of our duty, and are proposed for our imitation, that doctrine which tends most to the acknowledgment of those attributes, must most directly tend to the advancement of God's glory. Now,

First. The wisdom of God is most glorified by that opinion which supposeth he acts with man in all his precepts, exhortations, invitations, promises and threats, suitably to those faculties that he hath given us, and doth not attempt by them 'to engage us to impossibilities. For is it not a foul imputation upon the divine wis-

‘dom to suppose that he uses and appointeth means for the recovery of mankind, which he knows cannot in the least degree be serviceable to that end?’ But such is the consequence of that opinion which makes it as impossible for the sinner to be converted, as for the dead to be raised, by any of those arguments or motives delivered by him in the scripture to engage us to repent and turn unto him: For, according to this hypothesis, he might as well send ministers to preach to stones, and persuade them to be converted into men; for his omnipotency can, upon their preaching, produce this change in those stones: and according to this opinion, the conversion of a sinner cannot be effected without a like act of the divine omnipotency.

Secondly. Whereas according to our doctrine, the truth and faithfulness of God, and the sincerity of his dealings with men is unquestionable; according to the other doctrine, God seems to promise pardon and salvation to all men sincerely, and yet in truth intends it only to some few persons whom he designed to convert by an irresistible power; leaving the salvation of the rest impossible, because he never designed to afford them this unfrustrable operation, enquiring why those men would die, why they would not be made clean, whom he knew could not avoid that death, or obtain that purgation without that divine impulse he would not afford them; and saying he *had purged them* who were not purged, and had done all things requisite to make his vineyard bring forth good grapes, when he had withheld from them that unfrustrable operation without which they neither could be purged, nor bring forth good grapes.

Thirdly. Whereas the justice of God shines evidently from our doctrine, which asserts that God doth only punish men for wilful sins, which it was in their power to avoid; it never can be glorified by that doctrine which supposes that he punisheth men with the extremest and most lasting torments, for not accepting those offers of grace tendered by the gospel, which it was not possible for them to comply with or embrace, without that farther grace which he purposed absolutely to deny them. Now such is the consequence of that opinion which resolves the conversion of sinners into that unfrustrable operation which is vouchsafed only to a few, but is withheld from all the rest of mankind to whom grace is offered by the gospel.

Fourthly. Is it not for God's glory that the praise of what good we do should be ascribed to his grace, and the shame of our evil doings should rest upon ourselves, as our own conscience shews it doth by the remorse which follows the commission of sin? But what reason can there be for this, unless we suppose it possible for the wicked to have been converted, or to have ceased to do evil? If indeed you ascribe conversion and obedience to a cause that transcends all the power of man under the gospel dispensation to perform, his evil actions may be his misfortunes, but how they should be his faults, it is not easy to conceive.

I should now proceed to shew the concurrence of antiquity with this doctrine; but this will be fully done by me in the following DISCOURSE, where it will evidently be proved that the Fathers, in their confutation of the assertors of fate, and of the heresies of the Valentinians, the Marcionites, the Basilidians, the Manichæans, the doctrines of Origen, and upon many other occasions, use the very same arguments in confutation of those heresies and doctrines, which I have done in confutation of this doctrine. To this I shall at present only add,

That the Fathers generally teach that God doth only persuade, and by his Spirit assist those that are willing to be good; but leaves them still under the power to neglect and resist his persuasions, not laying them under a necessity to be good, because that would destroy the virtue and reward of being so. "God," saith Irenæus, "redeems his from the apostate spirit, *non vi, sed suadelâ*, 'not by force, but by persuasion;' *quemadmodum decebat Deum suadentem, et non vim inferentem accipere quæ vellet*, 'as it became God to receive what he would by persuasion, and not by force.'"^a "He sent his Son into the world," saith Justin Martyr, "*ὡς πειθῶν ἔβιαζόμενος*, 'as persuading but not compelling men to be good.'" "The wisdom of God,"^b saith Cyril of Alexandria, "thought fit to convert men rather by persuasion, than by necessity, that he might preserve the liberty of man's will; for because," saith he, "the Maker of all things *αὐτοκρατῆ τὸν ἄνθρωπον εἶναι βέλεται καὶ θελήμασι ἰδίοις πηδαλιηχᾶσθαι πρὸς τὰ πρακτέα*, 'will have man to have power over his own self, and be governed by his own will, in what he doth,' it seemed good to our Saviour, *πειθοῖ μᾶλλον καὶ ἐκ ἀνάγκης ἐπιτηρημένης ἀπαλλάττεσθαι μὲν τῶν αἰσχυρῶν ἀνθέχεσθαι*

^a Lib. 5. cap. 1. p. 393. Ed. Ox. Col. 2.

^b Apol. 2. p. 58. Vid. p. 80, 81.

δὲ μᾶλλον τὰ ἀμείνω, 'that man should be withdrawn from what is bad, and drawn to what is better, rather by persuasion than by a necessity laid upon him;' for if, having invincible power, he had commanded all men to believe, πληροφορίας ἔκετι καρπὸς τὸ πιστεῦειν ἦν, ἀναγκαιῶν δὲ μᾶλλον καὶ ἀφύκτων ἐπιταγμάτων, 'faith would not have been the fruit of a full persuasion; but rather of necessity and unavoidable commands.'"^c And again, "man," saith he, "αὐτοκελεύστοις ἐπ' ἄμφω φέρεται ῥοπαῖς, 'is carried both to good and evil by free motions;' for ἀρρήτῳ τινὶ θεοπρεπεσάτῳ δυνάμει καὶ ἐνεργεῖα χρώμενος μετεκόμιστε τὸν ἐκάστῳ νῦν εἰς ἀγαθηργίας, 'if God, by using a divine energy and virtue, (that is, an unfrustrable operation,) should turn the mind of every man to good works, his goodness would not be the fruit of counsel or praiseworthy,' ἀνάγκης δὲ μᾶλλον, 'but rather of necessity.' And if God had dealt thus with man at the beginning, and afterwards (that is, after the fall,) subjected him, περιτροπαῖς ἀναγκαιαῖς καὶ οἷον τισὶ πλεονεξίαις ἀφύκτοις, 'to necessary turns, (to vice or virtue,) and unavoidable concupiscence or lusting,' how can he be freed from blame?"^d

CHAP. III.

Answering the arguments produced to prove, First, that man is purely passive in the work of conversion, and that it is done by an irresistible or unfrustrable act of God.

THESE arguments, for method-sake, may be reduced to four heads,

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|---|---|---|
| <i>First.</i> Arguments taken from the nature of the work itself; as v. g. it being represented by such acts in which we are confessedly passive. | { | By a resurrection. Eph. i. 19, 20. |
| | | A creation. 2 Cor. v. 17. Gal. vi. 15. Eph. ii. 10. |
| | | A new birth. John iii. 5. |
| | | |
| <i>Secondly.</i> Arguments taken from the state and disability of the person to be converted. | { | As, v. g. that he is dead, and so unable to move towards a new life. Eph. ii. 1. Col. ii. 13. |
| | | |

^c Lib. 6. contra Jul. p. 215. B. C.

^d Lib. 8. p. 285. D. C.

From his disability,

1. To discern the things of God. 1 Cor. ii. 14.
2. To think any thing, as of himself. 2 Cor. iii. 5.
3. To do any thing till he be first in Christ. John xv. 5.
4. To come to Christ till he be drawn by God. John vi. 44.
5. To bring forth good fruit, being an evil tree. Mat. vii. 18.
6. To be subject to the law of God. Rom. viii. 7.

Thirdly. Such as respect God himself, he being represented either, (1,) as

- Giving faith. Eph. ii. 8.
- Giving repentance to life. Acts xi. 18.
- Opening the heart. Acts xvi. 14.

Or, (2,) as promising,

1. To circumcise the heart. Deut. xxx. 6.
2. To give a new heart and spirit. Ezek. xi. 19. xxxvi. 26.
3. To write his law in our hearts. Jer. xxxi. 33.
4. To give us one heart and one way, that we may fear him for ever. Jer. xxxii. 39.

Or, (3,) as doing this work in us, it being God,

1. Who worketh in us both to will and to do. Philip. ii. 13. Heb. xiii. 21.
2. Who turns us to himself. Jer. xxxi. 18.

Or, Fourthly, such as prove the absurdity of the contrary assertion,—that man co-operates with God in this work, and is not converted without the free consent of his own will; for if so, it follows,

1. That one man makes himself to differ from another, which is contrary to 1 Cor. iv. 7.
2. That man would have cause of boasting; which is denied, 1 Cor. i. 29, 31. Eph. ii. 9.
3. That the whole glory of our conversion would not be due to God.
4. Because, if grace be resistible by the will of man, it must be uncertain whether any man will be converted by it, or not.

I. Now before I come to a particular answer to these arguments, I think it proper to premise three things:

First. That it seems unreasonable to apply all those sayings of the scripture which concern heathen nations lying under the most

gross idolatry, and under great darkness and confusion, into which the corrupt customs of the Heathens, and the subtilty of Satan had reduced them, to prove what is the natural estate of all men, even of those who have the knowledge of the true God, and the light of the gospel. For to place them under the same disability with persons sunk into the dregs of Heathenism, seems a very great absurdity; it being in effect to say, that "men acquainted with all the inducements, arguments, and motives which christianity affords to produce faith, repentance, and conversion in them, have no more advantages towards repentance and conversion than the worst of Heathens," who, to be sure, cannot do less than nothing towards their conversion, and would as certainly be converted by an irresistible act of God, and by unfrustrable grace, as they who have attained to the exactest knowledge of God, and of the doctrine of christianity; and yet it is certain that some of those arguments depend upon such passages as only represent the state of Heathens lying in darkness and gross idolatry, and led by '*satan captive to his will.*'

Secondly. It seemeth also certain, that those promises and scriptures which respect whole nations, churches, and christians, without distinction or respect of persons, can afford no just arguments to prove such operations shall be wrought upon them which are peculiar to the elect; the reason is, because all the members of any church, nation, or public society, are not of the number of the elect, but some few of them only, and therefore the promises made to the whole body of them must either be conditional, and so require something to be done by them in order to the enjoyment of the blessings promised, and then they cannot be purely passive, or if they be absolute, they cannot be promises peculiar to the elect, as being made to many which are not of that number. And yet that this is the nature of many of the promises produced in this affair, will be evident. And,

Thirdly. It seems very impertinent to produce those places of scripture which evidently speak of men who have already believed and repented, and upon whom the work of regeneration hath been wrought already, to prove that men are purely passive in the work of faith, repentance, and regeneration: the reason is, because such places cannot concern the work of faith, repentance, and regeneration yet to be wrought upon them. If it be said, "the argu-

ment is good, *a fortiori*, viz. if after all these works have been done upon them, men are still purely passive in all the good they do, much more must they be so before these works are wrought within them;" I answer that the argument, were the case truly so, would be very good; but the supposition that men are still as unable after such grace received, as before, to do any good, is intolerably absurd; since, were it so, men would not be one whit the better for their conversion and the new nature wrought within them, their faith could not be fruitful in good works, their mind could be no more enabled to approve the things which are of God, nor their wills to chuse them, nor their affections to desire them, nor their executive faculties to perform them. Seeing then such places cannot be understood of God's working in them without any co-operation of their own, it is evident they cannot pertinently be alledged to prove such operation upon other men. To come now to a particular consideration of these arguments,

II. OBJECTION FIRST. When the apostle prays that his Ephesians may know '*what is the exceeding greatness of his power towards us who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he hath already wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead;*'^e it must be absurd hence to infer, that the power of God working faith in believers, is equal to that which effected the resurrection of our Lord, and that we must be therefore purely passive in the whole work of our conversion. For as this power is not consistent with the persuasions and exhortations used in scripture to move sinners to repent and turn themselves from their iniquity, or with a rational choice, nor could it properly be said that "they turned," but only that "they were turned to the Lord;" so is not the exposition agreeable to the words: for the apostle speaks not of the power exercised on us to render us believers, but of the power which shall be exercised on us who believe already; not of the power to be exercised on our souls to raise them from a death in sin to a life of righteousness, but of the power to be exercised on our dead bodies to give them a glorious resurrection to eternal life, as he had done already in the body of our Head, Christ Jesus.

^e Ephesians i, 19, 20.

OBJECTION SECOND. When, *Secondly*, it is said that “this work is compared to a creation, in which it is certain that which is created must be purely passive, as when by it we are said to become, *ἡ κτίσις κτίσις*, ‘a new creation,’ or ‘new creatures,’ (2 Cor. v. 17. Gal. vi. 15,) ‘we being God’s workmanship created in Christ Jesus to good works.’ (Eph. ii. 10.)

ANSWER FIRST. That this metaphor affords no certain proof that, wheresoever it is used, the person it respecteth must be purely passive, and have done nothing towards the act styled CREATION, is evident from many instances to the contrary. Thus God is said to have ‘created Jacob and formed Israel,’ when he constituted them to be his church and people. (Isa. xliii. 1.) Whence the Septuagint saith, *μνήσθητι τῆς κτίσεως τούτων*, ‘REMEMBER THIS CREATION;’* and yet they were not purely passive, but entered into covenant ‘to have him for their God.’ When God makes use of wicked men, or men of war, to punish others, he saith, ‘I create the waster to destroy;’[†] and yet it is certain that he is not purely passive in that work. And this is, in the case before us, certain from the nature of faith; for faith is man’s act, not God’s; it is an assent, and so an action of the mind. Godly sorrow, though it ariseth from the motives which God and his good Spirit, and which his ministers suggest, yet is it the sorrow of the convinced sinner, and it, saith the apostle, ‘works repentance unto life,’ which sure it could not do if we were purely passive in that work. As for the work of conversion, God’s frequent calls upon the wicked to ‘turn themselves from all their transgressions,’ God’s commission to his apostles, to declare unto the ‘Gentiles that they should repent, and turn to the Lord,’[‡] are certain indications that they are not wholly passive in that work.

ANSWER SECOND. But, *Secondly*, God is in scripture said TO CREATE that which he brings into a new and better state; thus David prays, ‘create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew in me a right spirit.’[§] Thus he is said to ‘create new heavens and new earth,’ by making such a change and alteration for the better in the face and state of things, that the frame of them seems not to be the same as it was before. (Isaiah lxv. 17.) And when he saith, verse 18, ‘I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy,’ the

* Psalm lxxiv, 18.

† Isaiah liv, 16.

‡ Acts xxvi, 20.

§ Psalm li, 10.

note of Gataker is this, that “restitution and renovation for the better, is deemed as a creation.” Seeing then the change wrought in us by that faith which purifies the heart, and makes us fruitful in good works, by a repentance from dead works to the service of the living God, and by a conversion from a life of sin to a life of righteousness, is such a renovation as changes the whole man and all his faculties for the better; seeing this renovation is begun, as creation is, by the power of God working upon the heart of man, we being made ‘*a willing people in the day of his power,*’ here is foundation sufficient for the metaphor of a new creature used in these texts. To this sense the scripture plainly leads us when it saith, “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; because old things are past away, and all things are become new in us;” and saith in one place, ‘*we put on the new man which is created after God in righteousness and holiness of truth;*’^b and in another, which is ‘*renewed after the image of him that created him;*’ and all the Greek Fathers confirm this exposition, by saying that “this new creation only importeth μεταβολὴν εἰς τὸ κρεῖττον, ‘a change for the better,’” as you may see in Suicerus.^c

OBJECTION THIRD. “Regeneration is styled A NEW BIRTH; as therefore we are passive in our generation, so must we be also in our regeneration.”

ANSWER. The falsehood of this argument is evident from this consideration,—that this new birth is ascribed to the word of God, which only works upon us by moral suasion; as when the scripture saith, “faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God;”^d that we are begotten by the word of the living God;”^e yea, that God himself hath “begotten us by the word of truth.”^f (ii.) It is also ascribed to the ministers of God, as when St. Paul tells the Corinthians he had “begotten them by the gospel.”^g If then this new birth, when it is ascribed to God’s word or ministers, cannot import that they produce it by an irresistible action, in which we are purely passive, it will not follow that God, or his Good Spirit, doth so convert men, because they are said to be born of God, or of the Spirit.

Secondly. This regeneration being the phrase used by the Jews concerning their Proselytes, they being said to be then *recens nati*,

^d Ephesians iv, 24.

^e To. 2. p. 177, 178, 179.

^d Romans x, 17.

^e 1 Peter i, 23.

^f James i, 18.

^g 1 Corinthians iv, 15.

'new-born babes,' and born in holiness. Παρὰ τοῖς βαρβάροις φιλοσοφοῖς τὸ κατηχῆσαι τε καὶ φωτίσαι ἀναγεννῆσαι λέγεται.* (Strom. l. 5. p. 552.) Our Lord translates the metaphor from them to his disciples renewed after the image of God in true holiness, and sanctified throughout in all their whole man. Now here is such an intrinsick change in "the whole spirit, soul, and body," and the whole tenour of this man's life for the better, that he may well be said to be '*born again,*' who is thus changed into another man; for if when the Spirit of prophecy came upon Saul he was '*turned into another man;*'^b much more may he be said to be so who has the Spirit of sanctification dwelling in him. And seeing it is by the operation of the Holy Spirit that this change is wrought within us, it fitly is expressed by being "born of the Spirit." Seeing, *lastly*, we are thus born '*not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible,*' that is, the word of the living God, who *of his own will hath begotten us again by the word of truth,*' therefore we are as fitly said to be '*born of God.*'

III. OBJECTION FOURTH. "The unregenerate man is represented as '*dead in trespasses and sins;*' and he that is dead, we know, hath no motion in him, and so cannot move towards a new life." (Eph. ii. 1. Col. ii. 13.)

ANSWER FIRST. That the metaphor of being '*dead in trespasses and sins*' cannot warrant our saying any thing of unregenerate persons which may properly be affirmed of the dead, is evident from scripture and experience: for a dead body is void of all sense, whereas the unregenerate man is often under strong convictions, and a deep sense of his present misery. A dead man cannot awake himself out of the sleep of death, but God saith to the spiritually-dead man, "Awake, thou that sleepest, arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee life." (Eph. v. 14.) A dead man cannot hear, but to the spiritually-dead God saith, "Hear, and your souls shall live." (Isa. lv. 3.) And, *lastly*, it would be absurd to exhort a dead body to turn about and live; whereas God thinks it not incongruous to say to persons spiritually-dead, "turn yourselves, and ye shall live." (Ezek. xviii. 32. xxxiii, 11.) Moreover good christians are said to be '*dead to sin,*' (Rom. vi. 2, 6, 7, 11.)

* 'Among the Barbarian Philosophers TO_INSTRUCT and TO ENLIGHTEN are said to be A REGENERATION.' ED.

^b 1 Samuel x, 6.

'*dead to the law, (Gal. ii. 19.) dead and crucified to the world? (Gal. vi. 14.)* Now if hence we cannot truly argue that they cannot sin at all; that they can do nothing relating to the world, or could do nothing relating to the law, as St. Paul in compliance with the Jews, still did; neither can we argue from the metaphor of being '*dead in trespasses and sins,*' that after God's call to hear and live, his excitation by all the motives and incitements of his word and Spirit, we can do nothing in obedience to these calls, and in compliance with these motions of his word and Spirit.

ANSWER SECOND. This argument offends against the first general rule laid down before, for both the places cited concern only the Gentile world, held under the government of satan, and living according to the evil spirit, '*who worketh in the children of disobedience.*' (Eph. ii. 2.) And the same persons are said to be dead in sins, and in the '*uncircumcision of the flesh,*' which put them out of a covenant-relation to God; and so their quickening must consist in their conversion from that darkness in which the Heathens lay, into the light of the gospel, and from the service of satan to the service of the true God. But this was not the state of the Gentile made a proselyte of justice, or of the Jew, and much less of the baptized christian; and so we cannot argue from those words which do so certainly relate unto the worst of Heathens, that this must be the natural estate of all men, or that the same power is requisite to convert the unregenerate christian and the worst of Heathens.

OBJECTION FIFTH. It is still more impertinent to argue this from the words of the apostle, '*the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned.*'² For

First. The natural man here is not barely the unregenerate man, but the wise man and disputer of the world, who will admit of nothing but what he can see proved by reason, and so receives not things revealed by the Spirit, because he doth not see them proved by philosophical deductions from reason; but deems them foolishness, for want of that which only is, in his esteem, true wisdom; as hath been fully proved in the note upon that place.

² 1 Corinthians ii, 14.

Secondly. When the apostle saith that this man cannot know the revelations of the Spirit, he speaks not of the inability of a Heathen to understand the meaning of any revelation discovered to him; for how then is it discovered to him? Nor doth he say that when they are declared to him, he wanteth further means to attain to the true sense of them; but only that he cannot know them by that human wisdom by which alone he will be guided: for being mysteries, and secret counsels of God's will, they are not knowable by human reason, till God is pleased to reveal them; whence the apostle demonstrates the necessity of a supernatural revelation, that the hidden wisdom of God may be made known unto the world.

OBJECTION SIXTH. The argument from those words of the apostle, '*we are not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves,*' is as impertinent to this purpose as the former. For,

First. If it proves any thing, it proves too much, viz. That we are not sufficient of ourselves, λογίζεσθαι τι, '*to think any thing*' at all, whether it be good or bad. And,

Secondly. The words relate to the apostles, and to them alone, and are a declaration of their own insufficiency to carry on the great work of the conversion of the world to the christian faith by their own strength and wisdom, and that their sufficiency for it derived entirely from that God who had '*made them able ministers of the New Testament,*' by the assistance of his Holy Spirit; for having proved, in his first epistle, that there was a necessity of a divine revelation to enable them to make known the truths contained in the gospel to the world, because human reason, without this revelation, was not sufficient to discern them; he here disclaims that sufficiency of themselves without divine assistance; that is, without those illuminations and powerful operations of the Holy Ghost, which made them able ministers of the New Testament, assisting them to preach the word '*with demonstration of the Spirit, and with power.*'

OBJECTION SEVENTH. "Christ saith, '*without me you can do nothing,*' (John xv. 5,) whence it is inferred that no man can do any thing that is good, till he be first in Christ, that is, till he be endued with justifying faith."

ANSWER FIRST. This argument offends against the third general rule: for these words of Christ are spoken expressly to those

who were ‘*abiding in Christ,*’ and truly believed already, that is, to his twelve apostles, to shew the necessity of their continuance in that state, that they might successfully perform the work he had designed and chosen them to do, viz. ‘*to go forth into the world, and bring forth much fruit,*’ by converting many to the faith, verse 16, and so it signifies that without the gifts, and powerful assistance of that Holy Spirit, who belonged only to them who abode in Christ, they could do nothing to convert the world; their sufficiency for that work deriving itself entirely from that God who gives the Holy Spirit to them for that end. (2 Cor. iii. 5.)

ANSWER SECOND. Gataker hath well noted, that *χωρίς ἐμοῦ*, ‘without me,’ is the same as *χωρισθέντες ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ*, ‘being separated from me,’ you can do nothing; and this being given as a reason engaging those he spake to, to abide still in him, if you extend it to all true christians, (as it proves that they may not abide always such, so) it only signifies that without abiding in the faith, they cannot be fruitful in the faith; and without their continuing united to Christ by the Spirit, they cannot bring forth the fruits of the Spirit. But they do not prove that a man cannot hearken or attend to what he hears, in order to the obtaining of that faith which comes by hearing; that he cannot ask, seek, and knock for the Good Spirit, that he may be born of the Spirit; or that he cannot think of his ways, that he may turn his feet unto God’s testimonies.

OBJECTION EIGHTH. “‘*No man can come to Christ except the Father draw him.*’ (John vi. 44.) Now he that is drawn, is passive.”

ANSWER. To this I answer, (*First,*) that *to be drawn of God*, cannot import our being moved by any inward and irresistible impressions to believe in Christ; for then no man could come to Christ without this irresistible impression, and then no other person could be blame-worthy for not believing on him, because they could not do it without that powerful attraction which God was not pleased to afford them; nor could it be praise-worthy to believe in him, because they only did so when they could not chuse but do it, as being moved in so doing by a force they were not able to resist; and therefore *to be drawn of God* can only signify,

First. To be persuaded and prevailed upon to come to Christ, by the consideration of the mighty works which God had done to justify that Christ was the true Messiah, or that prophet which

he had sent into the world. To these Christ still appeals as divine testimonies concerning him, by saying, '*the works that my Father hath given me to do, bear witness of me;*'^y and hence he represents the unbelieving Jews as inexcusable, that he had done '*those works among them which never man did.*'^z See the note there.

Or, *Secondly*, It is to be moved by the great promise of eternal life, confirmed by these miracles, to do it; for where there is a firm belief and lively sense of that inestimable blessing, it strongly must engage us to use the means by which we may obtain it, and so to come to Christ, when from him only this blessing is to be expected; and this is a familiar sense of the word '*draw*,' both in the scripture and in other writings. Thus God is said to '*draw them to himself by the cords of love,*' (Hosea xi. 4,) who yet were '*bent to backsliding from him,*' (verse 7;) and men are said to be '*drawn aside by their own lusts;*'^a for *trahit sua quemque voluptas*, 'every man's pleasure draws him to a compliance with it.' See the note there. And that we are only said to be drawn thus by the Father to Christ, (viz. by his miracles and divine instructions,) is evident from the words following; as a proof of this, '*it is written they shall all be taught of God, he therefore that hath heard (these things from) the Father (there is God's teaching) and learned, that is, perceived that it is even he that speaks and does these mighty things by me, (there is man's duty and his action) he cometh to me.*' Without this drawing, none can come to Christ; for God alone can give this promise of eternal life to encourage us to do so, and no power but that of God could work those miracles which confirmed this promise and the commission of our Lord.

The NINTH and TENTH OBJECTIONS are in effect the same, and so will admit of the same answer, viz. "That whilst a man is an evil tree, (Matt. vii. 18,) he can do nothing that is good, and that '*the carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be so;*' whence the inference is this, that this evil tree must be first made good, this carnal mind must be first made spiritual, before he can do any thing towards his conversion."

y John x. 25.

z Chapter xv, 22, 24.

a James i, 14.

ANSWER FIRST. Now the absurdity of these objections is visible in this, that this exposition of them renders all God's exhortations to the wicked to turn from the evil of their ways, all his promises of pardon and salvation if they turn from them, all his threats of death and destruction if they do not turn from them, all his complaints against them that they would not be converted, they would not come to him, vain and absurd; as being exhortations and commands to do what he knew they could not, and he only could do without them; promises of pardon and salvation, if he himself would do what they could not; and threats of damnation if he himself did it not, and in effect complaints against him; for he that complains against me for not doing what he himself alone can make me do, lays the whole guilt of not doing it upon himself.

ANSWER SECOND. It is said in the same place, that '*a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit;*' and elsewhere, that '*he that is born of God cannot sin.*' Now if we cannot truly hence infer that a good man, or a spiritual person, can never do an evil or a sinful action, neither can we from the words cited infer, that an evil or a carnal man can never do a good action; for if so, why doth God say to him, '*cease to do evil, learn to do well?*' but only that they cannot do it till they will use the faculties which God hath given them, to consider and lay to heart the inducements which the gospel tenders to engage them to amend their ways. Hence our Lord saith to these bad trees, '*make the tree good that the fruit may be good;*' which shews, he knew they could and ought to have done something towards that good effect. And the apostle, by his frequent exhortations to carnal men, "to mortify the deeds of the flesh, to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts, to put off the old man with his deeds;" by his threats that "if they live after the flesh they shall die," and by his promise, that "if through the Spirit they do mortify the deeds of the flesh they shall live," plainly demonstrates not only that they can, but that they must be active, if ever this change be wrought upon them.

IV. To the ELEVENTH and TWELFTH OBJECTIONS the same general answers may be given, they both depending on the same phrase, and making thus one argument: "What God gives we only receive, and so are only passive; but God gives faith and repentance." (Acts xi. 18. Eph. ii. 8.)

ANSWER FIRST. To shew the vanity of such objections, I shall confront them thus, what God commands we must do, and therefore must be active in it; but God '*commandeth all men every where to repent,*' (Acts xvii. 30,) and '*this is his commandment that we believe in the name of the Son of God,*' (1 John iii. 23,) therefore we must be active in the works of faith, (John vi. 29,) and of repentance. Yea, by this way of arguing, all that hardness of heart the Jews contracted must be (ἐδωκεν ὁ Θεός) ascribed to God, and they must have been purely passive in it, God having '*given them a spirit of slumber:*' (Rom. xi. 8.) Ahab's false prophets must be purely passive; for, saith Micaiah, '*the Lord hath given a lying spirit in the mouth of all thy prophets:*'^b The enemies of God's church must be passive in all the evils they do to her, God having '*given them to take peace from the earth, and to slay some;*'^c and in the blasphemies they utter against him, '*God having given to the beast to speak blasphemies.*' (Rev. xiii. 5.)

ANSWER SECOND. In answer to all the sayings of like nature to these, I lay down this as a general and certain rule,—that where God is said to give any thing, the exercise of that faculty is still supposed which he hath given us already, and God is only said to give it by giving us those faculties by which we are enabled to obtain it, and the means and motives which are sufficient to excite those faculties to the performance of their proper actions; I say, the exercise of those faculties is always presupposed, when God is said to give that which it is our duty to perform, and which will turn to our advantage and reward. And,

First. Thus is it always with respect to natural gifts; for thus God "giveth riches," (Eccl. v. 19. vi. 2,) because he '*giveth power to get wealth,*' (Deut. viii. 18,) but yet it is '*the diligent hand, and the blessing of God on our labours that maketh rich.*' (Prov. x. 4, 22.) He '*giveth us our daily bread,*' yea, he '*giveth food to all flesh,*'^d and yet we must eat it '*in the sweat of our brows,*'^e and with the labour of our hands procure it.^f So '*he gives all things to all men,*' (Acts xvii. 25,) and '*to the beasts their food.*' (Psalm cxlvij. 9.) But then they must employ those faculties which God hath given them to procure it: wherefore to argue thus,—"God giveth faith and repentance, therefore we do

^b 1 Kings xxii, 25.

^c Revelations vi, 4, 8.

^d Psalm cxxxvi, 25.

^e Genesis iii, 19.

^f Psalm cxxviii, 2.

nothing to obtain them, but God does all," is as if I should argue, that, because God giveth us our daily bread, we were not to labour for it, because he giveth food to all flesh, they were not to seek out after it.

Secondly. Thus is it also with respect to spirituals; for '*God giveth wisdom,*' (Eccl. ii. 26,) but it is only the '*man of understanding*' who hath it. (Prov. x. 23.) We must be at some pains to get it; (Prov. iv. 5,) and must apply our hearts to seek her out. (Eccl. vii. 25.) So that, to argue as these men do in this case, is plainly to contradict the mind of the Holy Ghost, who for this very reason that God is the giver of it, requires us to '*incline our ear to wisdom, and apply our hearts to understanding; to cry after knowledge, and lift up our voice for understanding; to seek for her as (men do) for silver, and to search for her as for hid treasure,*' suspending our enjoyment of her upon all this diligence, by saying, '*then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God, for (to such persons) the Lord giveth wisdom.*' (Prov. ii. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.) And thus hath God given us an '*understanding to know the true God,*' (1 John v. 20,) by sending his Son to reveal him to the world. (John i. 18.) Thus the Jews say, that God hath '*given repentance to the Gentiles,*' when by Peter preaching to them peace through Jesus Christ, and promising remission of sins upon their repentance, they repented and believed in Christ. (Acts x. 36, 43.) So also though faith be an assent to a divine revelation, and so an act of the understanding, requiring only the evidence of the truth of that revelation to produce it, yet is it said to be the '*gift of God,*' because the objects of our faith are only by divine revelation made known to us, and only are confirmed, and so made credible to us, by the testimony which God hath given to them.

OBJECTION THIRTEENTH. "*The Lord opened the heart of Lydia;*" therefore conversion is wrought by his immediate impulse and powerful influence." (Acts xvi. 14.)

ANSWER FIRST. That God inclined her to do this, is not denied. The question only is, whether he did this by an extraordinary and irresistible influence. And this it seems reasonable to deny; for either she alone was, *ἀξία* '*prepared,*' disposed and fitted to receive this influence, and then she had done something already towards her conversion; or if it were absolutely necessary that

she might believe, and yet she alone, though no more fitted or prepared for it than the rest, received it; the other auditors, for want of this extraordinary influence, must lie under a necessity of not believing, and so it could not be blameworthy in them that they did not believe.

ANSWER SECOND. 'To open the heart', and 'to open the ear,' are scripture-phrases of like import; for the effect of both is the same, viz. the rendering the person willing and inclined to do the thing. See 1 Chron. xvii. 15. Psalm xl. 6. Now this God is sometimes said to do when he awakeneth men by his afflicting hand; for thus speaks Elihu, 'if they be bound in fetters, and holden in cords of affliction, he opens their ear to discipline, he openeth their ears in oppression;'^g and yet these things can only do it by awakening men to consider of their ways. And sometimes he doth it by the preaching of the word: for as they who are taught by the word, or the example of God, are said to be 'taught of God;' so they who have their hearts affected with it, and inclined by it to what is good, may be said properly enough to have their hearts opened by it. Thus our Lord represents himself as 'knocking at the door of men's hearts' by the preachers of his word, and the suggestions of his Spirit; but entering only when men open their hearts to receive him. In fine, God is here said 'to open the heart of Lydia,' not to believe, but only, προσέχειν, 'TO ATTEND TO the things spoken' by St. Paul; that is, to weigh, and seriously consider of the greatness of the blessings promised to believers, viz. remission of sins, and eternal life; and that attention produced this faith in her.

V. OBJECTIONS FOURTEENTH and FIFTEENTH. "God promiseth 'to circumcise the heart,' (Deut. xxx. 6,) and Ephraim prays thus, 'turn thou us, O Lord, and so shall we be turned;' (Jer. xxxi. 18.) he therefore only doth these works in us, and we are purely passive."

ANSWER. Now in answer to such texts as these in general, I lay down this as a most certain rule, that when God doth require us to do what he himself doth promise, and hath made it our duty to perform, his promise is only to perform what is requisite on his part towards the work, he certainly expecting we ourselves should

^g Job xxxvi, 8, 13, 15. See the notes on Job vi, 45. 1 Thessalonians iv, 9.

do what he commands; and the tenor of those prayers is only to afford his assistance to help our infirmities when we are truly willing and desirous to perform our duty by virtue of those inducements he hath already laid before us; for if in such cases the whole was to be done by God immediately, not by way of persuasion only, but by unfrustrable influence, his command to us to do it, could only be to this effect, "do you upon your utmost "peril what I alone can do, or be you gods:" for a command to men to do what divine power can alone effect, doth signify no less; and we by praying he alone would do what he requires us to do, pray in effect to be excused from obeying his commands, and that he would do himself what he expects from us.

First. Then seeing the same God who promiseth to '*circumcise the hearts*'^a of his people, requires them to '*circumcise their own hearts*,'^b and calls upon the men of Judah to '*circumcise themselves, and take away the foreskins of their hearts, lest his fury break forth upon them,*' and threateneth to punish all the house of '*Israel because they were uncircumcised in heart,*' and yet he cannot rationally be supposed to punish and break forth in fury on them, because he had not performed his promise, it is demonstrably certain that promise could not signify that he alone would do that work without their concurrence, or their endeavour to do something towards it; so that it is superfluous to add that this promise was apparently conditional, viz. if they would call to mind the blessings and the cursings which he had pronounced, verse 1, and '*turn to the Lord their God;*' (verse 2;); or that it is a promise made to all that were brought back into the land from their captivity, and to all their seed, and so to many who were not elected; to nations, not to particular persons.

Secondly. Seeing God so frequently requires of the same persons that they should turn themselves from their transgressions, promising life to the penitent '*because he considereth and turneth away from his iniquity,*' and threatening that if they would not turn, '*they should die in their sins;*' seeing he complains so oft of his own people, that '*they would not turn to him that smote them,*' and of that very Ephraim which made this prayer, that '*they would not frame their doings to turn unto the Lord;*' (Hos. v. 4.) it must be absurd to urge this prayer to excuse men from

^a Deuteronomy xxx, 6.

^b Jeremiah iv, 4. ix, 26.

a duty required by God under such dreadful penalties. Add to this, that by comparing this prayer with the preceding chapter, in which God promises so oft to turn their captivity, it appears this is only a prayer that God would bring them out of that thralldom, like that of the Psalmist, ‘*turn our captivity, O Lord.*’ (Psalm cxxvi. 4.)

OBJECTIONS SIXTEENTH and SEVENTEENTH. “God promiseth to ‘*write his law in the hearts of his people, and to put it into their inward parts;*’^c that he will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear him for ever, and will make an everlasting covenant with them; that he will not turn away from them to do them good, but will put his fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from him’.” (Jer xxxii. 39, 40.)

ANSWER. These promises are made expressly to the whole house of Israel, and to ‘*all the children of Israel and Judah,*’ to all with whom the old covenant was made, and whom God ‘*brought out of Egypt,*’ and would bring again ‘*out of captivity;*’ it therefore, by the second general rule, can be no promise made to, or covenant made with, the elect of the house of Israel and Judah. (i.) Because then the whole nation of the Jews must have been elected and converted. (ii.) Because it is made with those who “kept not his former covenant, and therefore he regarded them not;” whereas the elect always persist, say these men, in their covenant with God, and he doth always regard them; they always are his people, and he is still their God; this therefore can be no new covenant with them. And therefore,

ANSWER SECOND. These words, “I will put my law or my fear into their hearts, and write it in their inward parts,” import two things; *First*, that he would clearly make known his will to them, so that they need not be at much pains to find it out, as in these words; “the commandment which I command thee this day is not hidden from thee, neither is it far from thee, the word is near unto thee in thy mouth, *καὶ ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου,* and in thy heart, that thou shouldst do it; see, I have set before thee life and death;”^d and so, saith the apostle, is it with the ‘*word of faith which we preach,*’^e it is nigh to the christian in his mouth to confess, and in his heart to believe it. And the law written “in the hearts of

^c Jeremiah xxxi, 33.

^d Deuteronomy xxx, 11, 14, 15.

^e Romans x, 8, 9.

the Heathens," (Rom. ii. 15,) is the law so plainly taught them, that their own consciences do inwardly condemn them when they do transgress it. Hence the effect of writing this law in their hearts here, and Heb. viii. 11, is this, that "they should all know him from the least to the greatest." So Jerom, Chrysostom, Theodoret, and Cyril of Alexandria. See the note on Heb. viii. 13.

Secondly. An inscribing them on the soul by the Holy Spirit, so as that they may be still fresh upon the memory. So Deut. vi. 6, "these words that I command thee this day shall be in thy heart:" 'that is,' saith B. Unel, 'they shall be written, לִבְכֶם עַל-לוּחַ (al luach libbechem,) UPON THE TABLE OF YOUR HEARTS:' So Prov. iii. 1, 3, "my son, forget not my law, but let thy heart keep my commandments; write them upon the table of thine heart." And again, chapter vii. 1, 3, "my son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee, bind them upon thy finger, write them upon the table of thine heart." Thus the sin of Judah is said to be writ 'upon the table of their hearts,'^f as if their memory of, and affection to, it could scarce be obliterated. And Clemens gives this commendation to the church of Corinth, that "the commandments of the Lord, ἐπὶ τὰ πλάκη τῆς καρδίας αὐτῶν ἐγγέγραπτο, WERE WRITTEN UPON THE TABLES OF THEIR HEARTS."^g And seeing God so expressly required of his people that they should 'lay up his words in their hearts and souls,' (Deut. xi. 18,) that they should "write his commandments upon the table of their hearts," and by this prophet Jeremy, that 'his law should not depart from their hearts,' (2 Macc. ii. 3,) it follows by the rule laid down in answer to the former objection, (1.) that these promises cannot be so understood as if God by them engaged to do that whole work which he hath engaged us so expressly to perform. And therefore,

2. The promise made, Jer. xxxii. 39, 40, is plainly conditional. "I will gather them, &c. verse 37. If they will diligently learn the way of my people. Chap. xii. 16. I will give them one heart, and one way that they may fear me," &c. chap. xxxii, 39, 40, that is, when they shall return to me with their whole heart, chap. xxiv. 7, and not feignedly, as chap. iii. 10. See Gataker there.

Jeremiah xvii, 1.

^g Ep. ad Cor. sec. 2.

‘And then they shall be my people, and I will be their God. Ibid. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them that I will not turn away from them to do them good, verse 40. If they will call him Father, and not turn away from him. Jer. iii. 19. Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you. Isa lv. 3. I will put my fear in their hearts, that they may not depart from me.’ Jer. xxxii. 40. This doubtless was God’s end, as it was also of his punishments; “for,” saith he, “they shall bear the punishment of their iniquity, that the house of Israel may go no more astray from me.” Ezek. xiv. 10, 11. But this was not the event; for God saith in this very prophet “I have caused to cleave to me the whole house of Israel, and the house of Judah; but they would not hear.”^h

3. This text only contains a promise that when the Jewish nation shall be converted at the close of the world, they should never fall off any more from being his people, as they had done before. See Gataker, and the note on Heb. viii. 13.

OBJECTIONS EIGHTEENTH and NINETEENTH. “God saith concerning his people, *‘I will give you one heart, and I will put a new Spirit in you, and take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them an heart of flesh, that they may walk in my statutes and keep my ordinances.’*” And again, *‘I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your filthiness, and I will put up my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments to do them;’*^k where a new heart and spirit are said not only to be given, but put into them by God, and therefore they were to do nothing towards it.”

ANSWER FIRST. The arguments taken from both these places have two of the general faults which render all arguments of this nature null, v. g. (1.) That they speak of all the whole house of Israel, (chap. xi. 15. xxxvi. 21, 22,) to all that were “gathered out of all countries, and brought to their own land.” Verse 24. And then it is certain from the second general rule, that it belongs not to the elect only. It is also certain from the event, if it respect their return from the Babylonish captivity, that it must be conditional; the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, and especially

^h Jeremiah xlii, 11.

ⁱ Ezekiel xi, 19, 20.

^k Chapter xxxvi, 25, 27.

the complaints of the prophet Malachi, shewing, that they were never fulfilled in many of them; and from Ezek. xi. 18, which speaks of those "whose heart would still walk after their detestable things:" or else it relates to the conversion of the Jewish nation yet to come; of the whole house of Israel; and then it can relate to them alone, and all christians may as well expect to be exempted from famine, xxxvi. 30, and to have "increase of corn," verse 29, and their "waste places and fenced cities built," verses 33, 35, as the other blessings promised here. Moreover, according to this exposition, it must follow that not one good man came out of the captivity, not one of them with a new or a clean heart; but all of them with a heart of stone, which was to be taken away.

ANSWER SECOND. This objection is contrary to the other general rule laid down in answer to the fifteenth Objection; for God expressly doth command them by the same prophet "to make themselves a new heart, and a new Spirit," chap. xviii. 30, 31; and elsewhere saith unto them, "wash ye, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes. Isa. i. 16. O Jerusalem, wash thy heart from wickedness that thou mayest be saved." Jer. iv. 14. And St. James speaks to the same people thus, "wash your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double-minded." Chap. iv. 8. All which things do assure us, that something was required on their parts towards the completion of this promise. God therefore may be, and is, in scripture, said to do these things, when by his providential dispensations, his rich mercies, or his judgments, or his miraculous dealings, he doth that which affords a powerful inducement to engage men to cleanse themselves from their defilements, and turn to him with a perfect heart; and doth design these actions for such ends, though through the wickedness of men the event proves often otherwise. Thus God declares that he would purge his people by his judgments; as when he saith, "I will turn my hand upon thee, and (by the calamities I shall inflict upon thee) will purely purge away thy dross." Isa. i. 25. And that he will "wash away the filth of the daughter of Zion, and purge the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the Spirit of judgment, and by the Spirit of burning." Isa. iv. 4.—By his mercies, as when he saith, "I drew them with the cords of a man, the cords of love." Hos. xi. 4.—By his miracles,

as when he upbraids the Jews, that having '*seen the great signs and miracles he had done for them, yet had they not hearts to perceive, nor eyes to see, nor ears to hear.*' Deut. xxix. 3, 4.—Hence when his vineyard brought forth still wild grapes, he enquires, '*What could I have done more (in reason) to my vineyard,*' that she might bring forth good grapes? Isaiah v. 4.—And saith, he had done, by these means, what through the obstinacy of his people was not done: For thus he speaks, '*I have purged Jerusalem, and she was not purged,* Ezek. xxiv. 13. *I have caused the whole house of Israel to cleave to me as a girdle cleaveth to a man's loins, but they would not hear.*' Jer. xiii. 11. Note also, that this is one of those texts the hereticks, who destroyed free-will, and held that men were necessarily good or evil by nature, used to confirm that doctrine, as you may see in Origen, Περὶ Ἀρχ. l. 3. c. 1. F. 138. and Philocal. c. 21. p. 53. and the objection following from Philip. ii. 13, is another, *ibid.*

VI. OBJECTIONS TWENTIETH and TWENTY-FIRST. "The apostle informs us, Phil. ii. 13, that '*it is God that worketh in us both to will and do;*' and prays "he would work in us what is well-pleasing in his sight." Heb. xiii. 21.—Whatsoever therefore we will, or do, that is good, God doth it in us."

ANSWER. That God doth this, is not denied; the question is, whether he doth it by a physical operation, unfrustrable by the will of man, or by internal suasion or inducements to prevail upon us thus to will and do: And that he doth this only in this latter sense, is evident from these very words, "not only in my presence, but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you, &c." For if, beyond his inward suggestions and persuasions, some physical and irresistible operation were required on God's part, which makes it necessary for us to will and do, why are we then commanded to "work out our own salvation?" For can we act where we are purely passive? Or can that be a reason why we ourselves should work, that another will effectually do that very thing without our co-operation? Is it not rather a manifest reason why we should neither will, nor work at all, since both is and will be irresistibly performed without us? Why (ii.) are we bid to work out our salvation with '*fear and trembling?*' For can there be any cause of fear lest that salvation should not be wrought

out, which God works in us irresistibly? Surely if God unfrustrably works in us both to will and do, there can be no possibility of our miscarrying, and so no ground for fear and trembling. Why, (iii.) are the Philippians exhorted to do this, '*much more in St. Paul's absence than in his presence?*' If when he was present God wrought in them irresistibly to will and do, and could do no more in his absence, surely no reason can be given of these words but this,—that whereas he being present stirred them up by his counsels and exhortations to do what was according to the mind of God, they in his absence were immediately excited to those things by the suggestions of the Holy Spirit.

Secondly. That the word ἐνεργεῖν doth not require this sense is evident, because in scripture it occurs very often, where it must be understood not of a physical but only of a moral operation; as when satan is said, ἐνεργεῖν, 'TO WORK IN *the children of disobedience,*' and the mystery of iniquity '*to work.*'^a (ii.) When it is attributed to those causes which produce not their effects by a physical, but only by a moral operation, as when the word is said to be, ἐνεργῆς POWERFUL;^b the word ὁ ἐνεργεῖται, 'WHICH WORKS EFFECTUALLY *in them that believe;*' when it is said that '*faith worketh by love;*'^d that '*charity is, ἐνεργῆς, EFFECTUAL;*'^e and of concupiscence, that, ἐνεργεῖτο, 'IT WORKETH IN *our members.*' (iii.) When it is ascribed to God sending upon men, ἐνεργεῖαν πλάνης, '*the efficacy of deceit;*' for surely God worketh no evil physically.

Thirdly. Both these places speak of men already believing and converted, and therefore, by the third general rule, must be impertinently alleged to prove men must be purely passive in the work of conversion.

VII. OBJECTION TWENTY-SECOND. "If man doth any thing towards his conversion, which another neglecting to do is not converted, he makes himself to differ from that other, which yet seems not consistent with St. Paul's enquiry, '*who made thee to differ from another?*'" (1 Cor. iv. 7.)

ANSWER. The apostle manifestly speaks here of those extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, the gifts of tongues, and prophecy, &c. on the account of which they were puffed up for one against another, counting one a man of better gifts than another. Now these

^a Ephesians ii, 2. ^c Thessalonians ii, 7.

^b Hebrews iv, 12.

^e 1 Thessalonians ii, 13.

^d Galatians v, 6.

^e Philemon 6.

gifts being immediately infused without human industry, and conferred upon christians without any such co-operation of their faculties, as is required to the exercise of any christian duty or moral virtue, it cannot, with like reason, be enquired of these duties, as it may be of those gifts, '*who made thee to differ from another*' in them? Nor can it from them be duly inferred, that no man doth any thing to make himself differ from another in any virtue, or pious dispositions. For to what purpose are men continually exhorted and stirred up by powerful motives to all christian duties, and particularly to excel in virtue, if these exhortations and motives be not proposed to engage them to exercise these christian virtues, to '*chuse the good and refuse the evil*'? And if one man, upon consideration of those motives, doth chuse to live a pious life, whereas another will not be persuaded so to do, doth he not differ from that other by virtue of that choice? And though the grace of God by way of excitation worketh in us thus to will, yet since our faculties do first deliberate upon, and then comply, and chuse to do the thing to which this grace excites us; if *to consider* be to differ from him that doth not consider, and *to comply with* and *to embrace* the call of God be to differ from him that disobeys the same call, it must be certain, that as God's grace preventing and exciting, so my faculties co-operating, tend to make me differ from another. And doth not God himself declare, that men do somewhat to make themselves differ from others, by praising them who did what others neglected to do; as in the case of the Beræans,^f the elder and the younger son; the publicans and harlots compared with the Scribes and Pharisees, the penitent Publican and the proud Pharisee? To the question then, when two are equally called, and one converted, *who is it that puts the difference?* The answer grounded upon God's own righteous judgment will be this, "that man puts the difference, and not God only; because God judgeth not his own acts, but the acts of men, dealing with every many according to his own works; and because every righteous judge finds a difference, and doth not make it, where the sentence is so vastly different."

VIII. OBJECTIONS TWENTY-THIRD AND TWENTY-FOURTH.
 "That by this doctrine we administer occasion of boasting to all

^f Acts xvii. 10, 11.

that are converted and saved, by attributing their conversion and salvation partly to their works; whereas the apostle saith, *'by grace are we saved, NOT OF WORKS, lest any man should boast?'* and moreover, according to the same doctrine, the whole glory of conversion will not be due to God, because man co-operates with him; whereas the divine wisdom hath so contrived the business of our salvation, that *'no flesh should glory in his sight.'*" (1 Cor. i. 29.)

ANSWER. To the first part of the objection taken from Eph. ii. 8, 9, I have already given a full answer, by shewing that these words, *'are we saved by grace through faith,'* bear this sense, that through the saving grace of God appearing to us by the preaching of the gospel, and believed by us, we are put into a state of salvation; and that all this is done to any church or nation, through the free grace and mercy of God, without any thing done by them antecedently to this grace; and more especially by shewing, that though our actual salvation depend upon good works, or on sincere obedience to be performed after faith, yet is all boasting utterly excluded upon several accounts; (i.) because that revelation which contains the matters of our faith, and all the powerful motives to embrace it, and all those miracles which rendered that revelation highly credible, and so engaged us to believe it, is the free gift of God. (ii.) Because the good works we do, proceed not from ourselves, but are the fruits of that faith, which, in the sense now mentioned, is the gift of God, and from that word and Spirit of God which worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. As therefore the apostle saith of the gift of tongues and prophecy, *'what (gift) hast thou which thou hast not received; and if thou hast received it, wherefore dost thou boast as if thou hadst not received it?'* so may we here; What faculty of believing, or willing what is good, hast thou which thou hast not received? What motive thus to will, or to believe, which hath not been vouchsafed by the free grace of God? What good work dost thou when this grace hath made thee willing, but in the strength of God, and by the aid of that good Spirit by whom we are "strengthened with might in the inward man to do his will?" And if thou hast received strength from God for the performance of them, wherefore dost thou boast? this being the apostle's rule, — *that we can boast of nothing but that which we have not received.*

Secondly. Though God is pleased to require of us to be willing, yea to ‘*cease to do evil, and to learn to do well,*’^g to qualify us for his mercy in the pardon of our sins, to make our faith the condition of justification, and our good works the condition of salvation; yet is all boasting utterly excluded, because it is still of grace that any of these things do find acceptance. It is of preventing and exciting grace that we thus will, chuse and refuse; of assisting grace, that we are enabled to perform that will, and persist in this choice, or refusal; and of true mercy, that the pardon of all our crimson sins is annexed to so doing; it is of grace that faith is imputed to justification, it being of faith, *ὅτι κατὰ χάριν*, ‘*THAT IT MIGHT BE OF GRACE;*’ (Rom. iv. 16.) it also is of grace that our imperfect works are accounted good, and are at all rewarded by God. Now upon what account can any of us boast of doing that which in itself deserves condemnation, though through grace it finds acceptance? Boasting, saith the apostle, is not ‘*excluded by the law of works,*’ (Rom. iii. 27.) because ‘*to him that worketh, the reward is not reckoned of grace but of debt;*’ (Rom. iv. 4.) Grace and works that deserve justification and salvation, being perfectly opposite one to another; but it is, saith he, excluded “by the law of faith.” Where therefore the acceptance of the act to such a purpose is of free grace; where the reward is still of grace and not of debt; where it is given on the account of works imperfect, and deserving nothing from God,—there boasting is excluded.

Thirdly. Observe, that the scripture plainly grants that there is *καύχημα*, or ‘*MATTER OF GLORYING,*’ in things done by the assistance of the grace God, and it is for the glory of a man to do them. St. Paul saith, ‘*it were better for him to die, than that any man should make void, τὸ καύχημα, HIS BOASTING,*’ in preaching the gospel without charge. 1 Cor. ix. 15, 16. Yea, he swears that ‘*no man should stop τὴν καύχην αὐτοῦ, HIS BOASTING in that kind.*’ 2 Cor. xi. 10. And in behalf of all his fellow-workers, or apostles, he saith, ‘*this is ἡ καύχους OUR BOASTING, or rejoicing, in the testimony of our conscience.*’ 2 Cor. i. 12. And this advice he gives to all christians, ‘*let every man approve his own work (to his own conscience) and then shall he have τὸ καύ-*

^g Isaiah i, 16, 17, 18.

χρημα, BOASTING, or rejoicing, *in himself; and not in another?* (Gal. vi. 4.) The glorying therefore, or the *τὸ καύχημα*, which the apostle elsewhere doth reject and exclude, is only that of the merit of our works, or their sufficiency to procure the justification of a sinner, (Rom. iii. 27. iv. 2,) or that which doth exclude the help and the assistance of the grace of God in Christ. 1 Cor. i. 29, 31.

To proceed then to the second part of this objection, that “by our doctrine the glory of our conversion will not be wholly due to God, because man co-operates with him;” this will be sufficiently accounted for by observing that the principle by which man co-operates with him in this work is derived from him, and all the motives which excite this principle to act, arise purely from God’s preventing and exciting grace. Now where both the principle of acting, and the sole motives to act, are from God alone, there the whole glory of the action must be due to him alone. Thus though wealth is the fruit of industry, and it is the *‘diligent hand that maketh rich;’* yet because God gives *‘the power to get wealth;’* and it is his blessing on our enterprizes which maketh rich, the glory of it is due to God alone; and we must say with David, “riches and honour come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee; all this store cometh of thy hand, and it is all thine own.”^h After all our industry to find out wisdom, and to search for her as for hid treasure, we must give the Allwise God the glory of all the wisdom we attain to, as knowing that “the Lord giveth wisdom, out of his mouth cometh understanding.” Thus St. Paul saith, *‘I labour more abundantly than they all;’*ⁱ and yet ascribes all to *‘the grace of God that was in him;’* and though *‘Paul did plant, and Apollos water, yet because God gave the increase; neither, saith he, is Paul or Apollos to be deemed any thing, but all must be ascribed to God that giveth the increase.’*^k So when the apostle saith, “it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy;”^l most of the Fathers descant thus upon those words, “*‘it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth only, but of God that sheweth mercy, and crowns the work by his assistance;’* for otherwise,” say they, “it cannot be our duty either to will or run, provided we can neither

^h 1 Chronicles xxix, 12, 14, 16.

ⁱ 1 Corinthians xv, 10.

^k 1 Corinthians iii, 6, 7.

^l Romans ix, 16.

by willing, nor by running, do any thing to incline God to shew mercy: And why then doth God blame us for not willing, (Matt. xxiii. 37. John v. 40,) and require us ‘*so to run that we may obtain?*’ (1 Cor. ix. 24. Heb. xii. 1.) And whereas against this it is objected, that “according to this interpretation it might be said, *it is not of God that sheweth mercy only, but of man who wills and runs;*” Origen, St. Chrysostom, and Theophylact answer, that “this follows not, because man’s willing and running would not avail without the divine aid to enable him to run, and his grace and mercy to accept his running; and therefore, according to the custom of the scripture, the effect is to be ascribed to the chief agent only, as when it is said, *except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it.*” Psalm cxxvii. 1.

Secondly. Our Lord and his apostles often commend the good actions of men, and Christ will at last say to the righteous man, ‘*well done, thou good and faithful servant.*’ Therefore he that turns from his evil ways, and doth that which is right in the sight of God, is commendable, and doth that which is praise-worthy: for God doth not judge of things, or persons, otherwise than they are. If then this be the consequence charged upon our opinion, that “it makes some praise belong to the convert and the believer,” God himself owns the truth of it, by requiring us to do what is *honourable and praise-worthy*, (Philip. iv. 8,) to suffer for conscience towards God, *τὐτο γὰρ χάρις*, ‘FOR THIS IS THANK-WORTHY,’ (1 Peter ii. 19, 20,) and saying, that our faith ‘*will be found to our praise, honour and glory at the revelation of Christ Jesus.*’ (1 Peter i. 7.) The contrary doctrine is liable to this just exception, that it doth consequentially assert, that no thanks are due for any kindness received, if he to whom it is done be not merely passive, and if he that receiveth a kindness be but so much as active in receiving or accepting it, the glory of it redounds to him rather than to the benefactor; so that we must not expect from Christ the praise and glory of feeding his hungry members, unless we put the meat into their mouths; or of ‘*cloathing them when naked,*’ unless we put the clothes upon them; or of receiving them into our houses, though we do invite and open the door for them, unless we force them in: that he who gives a prisoner money sufficient to pay off his debt, is not to have the glory of his release, if he require the prisoner to tell out, and

deliver the money to the creditor; and that the prince who pardons his condemned subject, upon condition that he will plead his pardon, is not to have the sole glory of that pardoning mercy. "And the true consequence from this is," saith Dr. Claget, "that the glory of God's grace wholly depends upon the sullenness and obstinacy of men, and that the only way to advance it, is by a stout opposition and spiteful resistance of it." Part 2. p. 208.

IX. OBJECTION TWENTY-FIFTH. Lastly, it is objected, "that the opinion which makes the grace of God resistible, leaves it uncertain whether any one will be converted by it, or not."

ANSWER FIRST. To this I answer, that it leaves it as uncertain whether any one will be unconverted, or not; and surely, that opinion which affords this encouragement to all, that God, notwithstanding their fall, will afford means sufficient to convert them, if they do not neglect and refuse to use them, is much to be preferred before that which tells them he hath from eternity passed an act of preterition on them, and by that excluded them out of the number of the elect, that is, of them who only shall be saved.

ANSWER SECOND. A man may, notwithstanding this opinion, be infallibly certain, otherwise, that many will be found true converts at the last, because he knows that many have already died in the fear of God, and in the faith of Christ, and because the holy scriptures do assure us that *'some shall arise to everlasting life, and receive the end of their faith in the salvation of their souls.'*

ANSWER THIRD. To say that "it is barely possible in the nature of the thing that none may be converted," hath no inconvenience in it, because it tends not to hinder any man's endeavours after his conversion, any more than the like possibility,—that no man may thrive by his industry, or grow rich by his trading, or have a safe voyage at sea, or a plentiful crop by sowing, or health by taking physick,—hinders men from doing any of these actions. It is no imputation upon divine wisdom, that God himself complains he had given his law to the Jews in vain; nor did St. Paul conceive it any defect in the grace of God, that it might be *received in vain* by the churches of Corinth, (2 Cor. vi. 1,) of Galatia, (chapter iii. 4,) and of Thessalouica, (1 Thess. iii. 5.) and, by parity of reason, by all other churches. It is possible, that no one subject may obey the laws of his superior, because they have free

will, and may do evil under the strongest obligations to do well; but should the world be left therefore without human laws, or be governed by irresistible force, or not at all? Nay, rather, that freedom which includes a bare possibility that all may disobey, proves the wisdom and justice of governing mankind by laws attended with moral inducements to obedience. Whereas if we suppose men to be under a necessity either of doing what is required, or of doing the contrary, it is very hard to understand how governing them by moral means should be wise in the former case, or just in the latter.

Discourse IV.

OF THE FREEDOM OF THE WILL OF MAN.

The State of the Question.

CHAP. I.

FOR the due stating of this question concerning the liberty or freedom of the will of man, let it be noted,

I. That the state of man in this world, is a state of trial or probation; as will be evident,

First. From all those places in which God is said to exercise his dispensations towards his people, to '*prove them whether they would walk in his ways,*' or not; as in those words, '*I will rain bread from heaven, to prove them whether they will walk in my ways, or not.*' (Exodus xvi. 4.) That is, whether the constant provisions I make for them, will induce them to continue stedfast in my service. When they were terrified at the dreadful sights, and the voice they heard at the giving of the law, Moses speaks to them thus, '*fear not, for God is come to prove you,*' (chapter xx. 20,) (that is, to try whether you will be true to the promise made chapter xix. 8, viz. '*all that the Lord hath spoken we will do*') and that his fear may be before your faces that you

sin not. And so in many other places, which will hereafter be considered.

Secondly. From all those places in which God is said to try men. Thus St. Paul speaks of '*the trial of men's works by fire,*' (1 Cor. iii. 13,) of the trial of the Macedonians by afflictions. (2 Cor. viii. 7.)—St. James saith, that '*the trial of our faith, by temptations, worketh patience.*' (Chap. i. 3.)—St. Peter, that '*the trial of our faith (by manifold temptations, if we continue stedfast in it,) will be found to our praise, honour, and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ;*' (1 Peter i. 7,) and speaketh of a '*fiery trial*' which was come to try them. (Chapter iv. 12.) Our Blessed Lord saith to the church of Smyrna, '*behold the devil will cast some of you into prison that he may try you,*' (Rev. ii. 10,) and prophesies of an hour of temptation, '*which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth;*' to omit many places of like nature in the Old Testament, viz. Psalm lxvi. 12. Jer. ix. 7. Dan. xi. 35. xii. 10. Zach. xiii. 9.

Thirdly. From all the promises and threats recorded in the scripture, to engage all men to repent and turn to God; for no such thing is or can reasonably be offered to them who are already in a fixed state either of happiness or misery; and it is contrary even to the nature of those motives to be offered to them, who neither can be induced by the hopes of promises, or fears of sufferings, to change their present state.

Fourthly. From all the exhortations of the holy scripture to men, '*to watch and pray that they enter not into temptation,*' and to pray they may not be led into temptation; from the supposition that men in the time of temptation may fall away, (Luke viii. 13.) and that satan may so tempt good christians, that '*the labour of the apostles may be in vain among them.*' (1 Thess. iii. 5.) For what is temptation but a trial of our faith, sincerity, and constancy? What is it to enter, or be led into it, but to be in danger of falling by it? And must not therefore all who are in a state of temptation, be also in a state of trial or probation? And,

Fifthly. This will be evident from the temptations of satan, who '*goes about continually seeking whom he may devour.*' For to what end should he tempt, that is, endeavour to destroy them, if he knows he never can succeed in his temptations to destroy the elect? And as for others, *quos ad perditionem Deus præscripsit,* and 'who are

left by God infallibly to fail of salvation,' he need not do it, since God himself, according to this doctrine, hath done that work effectually to his hand. To what end should he strive to hinder the progress of the gospel, seeing according to this doctrine, it must have its effect upon the elect infallibly and unfrustrably, and upon others it can only be '*a savour of death unto death,*' and an aggravation of their condemnation? To what end should he go about to hinder the conversion of any man? Must he not know his labour will be certainly in vain, where this is wrought by a divine unfrustrable operation, and is as needless where God hath decreed not to vouchsafe that operation? Now hence it follows,

II. COROLLARY. That the liberty belonging to this question, is only that of a lapsed man in a state of trial, probation, and temptation; whether he hath a freedom to chuse life or death, to answer or reject the calls and invitations of God to do, by the assistance of the grace afforded in the gospel to him, what is spiritually good as well as evil; or whether he be determined to one, having only a freedom from co-action, but not from necessity. This liberty is indeed no perfection of human nature; for it supposes us imperfect, as being subject to fall by temptation, and when we are advanced to '*the spirits of just men made perfect,*' or to a fixed state of happiness, will, with our other imperfections '*be done away;*' but yet it is a freedom absolutely requisite, as we conceive, to render us capable of trial or probation, and to render our actions worthy of praise or dispraise, and our persons of rewards or punishments; nor is this liberty essential to man as man, but only necessary to a man placed in a state of trial, and under the power of temptation. And therefore vain are the ensuing arguments,

(1.) That God is a free agent, and yet can have no freedom to do evil, since he is in no state of trial, nor can he be tempted to do evil. Or, (ii.) that the confirmed angels have not lost their freedom though they cannot sin; for if there was a time when they were not confirmed in goodness as now they are, they have lost that liberty, *ad utrumvis*,* they then had; and being thus confirmed they are not in a state of trial, nor under any temptation to do evil, nor are their actions now rewardable, since they already do enjoy the beatifick vision, and so they cannot act out of

* '*To both,* that is, to good and evil.' ED.

respect to any future recompence, or be induced to action out of hope or fear, as in this state of trial all men are. Or, (iii.) That the devils and the damned spirits lie under no capacity of doing good, or under a necessity of doing evil, and yet do it voluntarily, their state of trial being past, and they having no farther offers of grace, and so no motive to do good; and as for any evil they are now necessitated to do, or any good they do not, they are not subject to any farther punishment, the damned spirits being only to receive at the day of judgement, ‘according to what they have done in the body,’ or in their state of trial, and the damned angels being reserved ‘to the day of judgement to be punished’ for what they did in a like state of trial: and if they are to suffer any thing on the account of their temptations of men to do evil, or to draw them from their obedience to the will of God, they so far lie under no necessity of doing this, but might abstain from those temptations. Excellent to this purpose are these words of Mr. Thorndike,* “we say not that indifference is requisite to all freedom, but to the freedom of man alone in this state of travail and proficience, the ground of which is God’s tender of a treaty, and conditions of peace and reconcilement to fallen man, together with those precepts and prohibitions, those promises and threats, those exhortations and dehortations it is enforced with. So that it is utterly impertinent to alledge here the freedom of God and angels, the freedom of saints in the world to come, the freedom of Christ’s human soul, to prove that this indifference is not requisite to the freedom of man, because it is not found in that freedom which they are arrived to, to whom no covenant is tendered, no precept requisite, no exhortation useful.”

And hence ariseth a necessity of saying,

III. *First.* That the freedom of the will, in this state of trial and temptation, cannot consist with a determination to one, viz. on the one hand in a determination to good only by the efficacy of divine grace, infallibly or unfrustrably inducing to that operation, or engaging men, *respectu divinæ ordinationis certò et infallibiliter agere*, ‘in respect of the divine appointment infallibly and certainly to act,’ so that he cannot fail of acting; seeing this determining operation puts him out of a state of trial, and

* Epil. part 2. p. 187.

makes him equal, when this divine impulse comes upon him, to the state of angels; since he who must certainly, and without fail, do what the divine impulse doth incite him to do, is as much determined to one as they are. And this is farther evident from the general determination of the Schools, and of all that I have read upon this subject, that the general will to be happy, and not to be miserable, though it be voluntary, is not free; because we cannot chuse either not to be happy, or to be miserable; and on the same account, say they, this will is not praise-worthy, or rewardable. There also is no place for election and deliberation about this action; because all election and deliberation is about the means and not about the end. If therefore where I am by the divine influx determined to one, there is equally no place for refusing that one, or for not chusing it; that action, though it may be voluntary upon the same account, it cannot be free, praise-worthy, or rewardable.

Nor can this liberty consist with the contrary determination to one, viz. with an incapacity in men, through the fall, to do good but evil only; for then man, in this state of trial, must be reduced to the condition of the devil, and of damned spirits, who, though they are not determined to evil actions in particular, are yet determined to do evil in the general, and not good. This, indeed, some suppose he is, by being given up to hardness of heart, and a judicial blindness, or by a customary habit of iniquity; but this doth rather prove the contrary, as being not the natural, but the acquired state of fallen man. It is the consequent of a course of sin, to which he never was determined, and which he never can lie under without abusing of that grace which was sufficient to prevent it. For, as Bishop Bramhall^a truly saith, "God never forsakes his creature, by with-holding his grace from him, until his creature hath first forsaken him; he never forsakes his creature so far, but that he may by prayer, and using good endeavours, obtain the aid of God's grace either to prevent or remove hardness of heart." Moreover, though these things do render it exceeding difficult for such men to do good, they do not render it impossible for them to do so; though they do give men a strong bent and powerful inclination to what is evil, yet do they not determine him to do it,

^a Castig. of Mr. Hobs, p. 745.

as is evident (i.) from God's applications to such men to reform and hearken to his exhortations: as when he saith, (Isa. xlii. 18,) '*Hear, ye deaf, and look, ye blind, that ye may see; and to Jerusalem accustomed to do evil, (Jer. xiii. 23,) wilt thou not be made clean, when shall it once be?*' (verse 27.) When he sends his prophet to the '*impudent and hard-hearted house of Israel which would not hearken to him, saying, go and speak unto them, whether they will hear or will forbear.*' (Ezek. iii. 7, 11.) From the calls of Christ to the obdurate Jews who had '*eyes to see, and saw not,*' &c. Mat. xiii. 13. For unto them he saith, '*these things I say unto you that ye might be saved; and again, while ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of the light.*' And, lastly, from St. Paul's '*desire and prayer for Israel when blinded, and lying under a spiritual slumber, that they might be saved,*' (Rom. x. 1.) and his endeavour to save some of them.' xi 14. And if such persons are not by these things determined only to do evil, or incapacitated to do good, much less can this be the sad state of fallen man in general, before he hath contracted these additional indispositions to do good, and inclinations to do evil. This will be farther evident, as to both parts, from this consideration, that it is generally owned that the actions of the understanding or the mind deserve neither praise nor dispraise, reward nor punishment, as they proceed purely from the mind, but only as they result, *ab imperio voluntatis*,* and come under the power of the will; or that they deserve praise or dispraise, not as he understands, but as he wills to understand; of which the reason can be only this, that as they proceed from the understanding they are necessary; for when evidence is propounded and discerned, the mind doth necessarily assent unto it. If therefore in like manner when God unfrustrably moves the will it cannot but consent, why should that action be more praiseworthy than the assent of the mind to what is evident? And as it is not culpable in the mind not to assent where it hath no evidence; nor can it properly be said to do so, because it is only real or seeming evidence which causeth that assent; so if it be only this unfrustrable operation on the will which causeth it to repent and turn to God, and it cannot will to do so without this powerful motion, but must refuse all invitations

* 'From the command of the will.' ED.

or inducements so to do, which do not come attended with that operation, when that is not vouchsafed; why should it not be as unblamable in not chusing to repent and turn to God as the mind is in not assenting without evidence, seeing this operation is as necessary to that choice of the will, as evidence of truth is to the assent of the mind? Why also is it not as unblamable in refusing to repent without that operation, as the mind is in refusing to assent without evidence? For if necessity in the mind, though it be not extrinsical, or that of co-action, (of which both will and mind are equally incapable) takes away from its actions praise or dispraise, and renders them incapable of either of them, why should not an extrinsical necessity laid upon the will do the same? Add to this, that those School-men who assert that the will may be free where the act is necessary, do yet confess that in that case the will cannot be *deliberans*;* whereas, it is certain, that the liberty of man in this state of trial and temptation must be deliberative if it doth chuse, there being no election without deliberation. And hence in order to the performance of his duty, God requires him to ponder and consider, to bring again to mind, and lay to heart his sayings, proposes motives and inducements to him so to do, and promises and threats to excite him to it by his hopes and fears; whereas no promises are made to the confirmed angels, no motives offered to engage them to chuse the good, no evils are threatened to the devils or the damned spirits to deter them from doing evil. I conclude then with that of the judicious Bishop Bramhall, "God may, and doth sometimes, determine the will of man to one; but when it is so determined, the act may be voluntary, but not free."

IV. SECONDLY. This *ἀντιθέσιον*, or 'FREE-WILL' of man, being neither an act, for that is the exercise of the will; nor an habit, for that only doth facilitate and incline to action; but a faculty or power; and the object of that power being in moral actions something morally, in spiritual actions something spiritually, good to be chosen, or spiritually evil to be avoided; that which disables any man from chusing what is spiritually good or refusing what is thus evil, and therefore is destructive to his soul and spirit, must also take away his liberty to chuse what is spiritually good, and to refuse what is spiritually evil.

* 'Deliberating.' ED.

To say here "the man thus disabled hath still a freedom in reference to these actions, because he hath still the power of doing otherwise; that is, the faculty of willing otherwise is not taken from him, even as a man when he sits is free to walk, though he cannot walk while he sits, because he hath still the power or faculty of walking,"—is as if I should say, that "a man blinded by a cataract, or made deaf by an impediment or stoppage in his ear, had still the freedom of his sight and hearing, because the faculty of seeing and of hearing still remained, though the exercise of it was obstructed." For if the exercise of the faculty of the will to what is spiritually good, be as much obstructed by this disability as is the exercise of these faculties obstructed by the disability of these organs to convey the motions of the objects of sight or hearing to the brain, there is no more freedom in the one than in the other to the actions proper to each faculty. Nor is the example of walking at all pertinent; for therefore am I free to walk hereafter, though I now sit, because no obstruction lies upon my faculty of walking afterwards, because I do at present sit. But were I fettered to my chair, or confined to it by an incurable lameness, I could not be said to be free to walk whilst that force or lameness lasted. So neither can a man be said to be free to do what is spiritually good because his faculty of willing still remains, provided he be equally lame and impotent as to spiritual things, and therefore equally disabled from walking in the ways of God. Thus Bishop Bramhall, "to say *a man still retains the faculty or power of willing, though the exercise of it be in this case determined*, is in effect to say, *a bird is free to fly when I hold his wings, because he still hath wings to fly; and a man chained and fettered is still free to walk, because he still retains the faculty of walking.*" Now hence it follows,

First. That the doctrine which teacheth that "man is so utterly disabled by the fall of Adam, that without the efficacious grace which God vouchsafeth only to some few who are the objects of his election to salvation, he hath no power to do what is spiritually good, or to avoid what is spiritually evil," must be destructive of the liberty belonging to man in a state of trial, probation, and proficiency; and so must be sufficiently confuted by all those scriptures in which God declares that he dealt thus and thus with his people, to try whether they would walk in his statutes or not;

of which nature are the passages cited already from Exod. xvi. 4. xx. 20. and these following, Deut. viii. 2, '*he led thee these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble thee, and prove thee, and know (or discover) what was in thy heart, whether thou wouldst keep his commandments or not.* And verse 16, *he fed thee with manna in the wilderness, that he might humble thee, and prove thee, (whether thou wouldst be obedient to his laws) that (so) he might do thee good in thy latter end.*' And xiii. 5, '*the Lord thy God proveth thee (by the false prophet) to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your hearts, and with all your souls.*' And Judges ii. 21, '*the Lord drove not out the nations which Joshua had left, that by them he might prove Israel, whether they would keep the way of the Lord to walk in it, as their Fathers did keep it, or not.*' And iii. 4, '*they were left to prove Israel, to know whether they would hearken to the commandments of the Lord.*' For to what end should God thus prove them who lay under so great a disability that they could not obey his precepts, or avoid the violation of them, without that efficacious grace he was not pleased to vouchsafe to the most of them? Or why does he attempt to move such persons to this obedience by the consideration of his great goodness, and his tremendous majesty, and by the remnant of the nations left among them, who were not to be induced unto it by rational motives, or moral persuasions, but only by an unfrustrable operation? Why, lastly, doth he try whether '*they would hearken to his commandments as their forefathers did,*' provided their forefathers did this only by virtue of that efficacious and special grace he was not pleased to vouchsafe to them? To try men whether they will do what he knows they are disabled from doing, is as unsuitable to the divine wisdom, as to make laws for lapsed man impossible to be performed by him, and then to punish him for not doing what he could not do, or performing what he could not avoid, is unsuitable to the divine justice; and as to excite them to their duties by motives which he knows cannot work upon them, is unsuitable to the sincerity of God. For did ever any wise man go about to try whether he could persuade a blind man to see, or a deaf man to hear, or an impotent man to walk? Or did he ever think it sufficient to require them to do so under the highest penalties; or fit to punish them all their life long for not doing so, because they had contracted

these disabilities by their own personal iniquity? If therefore by the fall of Adam all men are as truly disabled from doing that good which God requires of them afterwards, or from avoiding what he by a following law forbids, can it be suitable either to the divine wisdom or justice to make him to exact these impossibilities under far more durable and heavy penalties from man disabled thus by another's personal fault, before he had a being, or any of these laws were made?

And as this is plainly inconsistent with a state of trial and probation, so is it also inconsistent with the *new covenant of grace*, established in the blood of Jesus, and tendered to all to whom the gospel is vouchsafed. For they who are excluded from the benefits of that covenant,—remission of sins and salvation,—and by a decree of preterition are left under a disability to perform the conditions of that covenant,—faith, repentance and obedience,—before it was made or ratified in the blood of Jesus, can never be admitted to it, or be the better for it. For if you say, “it is tendered to them as well as others on the conditions of faith and repentance,” yet if these conditions were rendered impossible to them by the fall of Adam whilst he was under the first covenant, this is indeed no tender; for what is only tendered on an impossible condition is indeed not tendered, but in effect denied; according to that rule of Logick, *impossibile habet in se vim adverbii universaliter negantis*, ‘an impossible condition hath in it the force of an universal negative.’ Nor is it easy to discern how ‘*God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing to them their sins,*’ if first the sin of Adam was by God’s arbitrary imputation formally their sin, and then the supposed disability contracted by it, was by God so far imputed to the greatest part of mankind, as that he not only decrees to leave them under it without mercy, pity, or compassion, but also punisheth them for ever for not doing what they were utterly disabled by this law to do.

V. To say here that “men thus disabled may deserve punishment for the evil they do, though they cannot do otherwise, because they disobey willingly, and chuse to do so,” is to make the devils and the damned spirits farther punishable, because they also chuse to do evil; and the blessed angels rewardable, because they chuse to do good, and do it willingly. If, indeed, man doth

chuse at all, he must chuse willingly; for that is only to say, "he chuseth by his will." But, yet, if he lies under an utter disability of willing and of doing otherwise, and upon that account doth only what is evil and not spiritually good, no man can reasonably judge he is still left under a state of trial or probation whether he will do good or evil, much less that '*good and evil, life and death is set before him;*' and that it is in his hand or power to chuse either of them. And yet that this was the ancient doctrine of the Jews we learn from these words of the son of Sirach, (chap. xv. 11—17,) '*he himself made man from the beginning, and left him in the hands of his counsel; if thou wilt to keep the commandments, and to perform acceptable faithfulness, he hath set fire and water before thee, stretch forth thy hand to whether thou wilt. Before man is life and death, and whether he liketh shall be given him.*' And this he learnt from those words of Moses, (Deut. xxx. 15,) '*I have set before thee this day life and good, death and evil, in that I command thee to love the Lord thy God, and to walk in his way;* and verse 19, '*I call heaven and earth to record against you that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing, therefore chuse life.*' Where Maimonides saith, that "the wills of men are under no force or co-action, but are free agents; and therefore precepts are imposed upon them with punishments threatened to the disobedient, and with rewards promised to them who keep God's commandments."^b And from the words preceding, it is evident that these commandments were neither so abstruse that they could not know them, nor so difficult to the lapsed Jews that they could not do them: for thus they run, "the commandment which I command thee this day is not hidden from thee, neither is it afar off that ye should say, Who shall go up to heaven, or beyond the sea to bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it? but the word is very nigh to thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart that thou mayst do it;" that is, that thou mayst have nothing more to do than to put it in practice. Now to say to men utterly disabled from chusing life or keeping God's commandments, "He hath left thee in the hands of thy counsel if thou wilt to keep the commandments;" that '*before them is life and death, and whether they will shall be given them,*' is surely

^b Com. on Pirke Avoth. c. 8.

to delude them with vain words; to say, "See I have set before thee life and death, good and evil, in that I command thee to love the Lord thy God, and to walk in his way;" that is, in that I command thee upon pain of my eternal displeasure to do what I know thou canst not do, yea to do this with the solemnity of "calling heaven and earth to record against them" who would not embrace life and bliss; to bid them *chuse life* who could no more chuse it under this disability than they could rend a rock in sunder; to tell them for their encouragement, who were spiritually blind, that '*the word was not hidden from them,*' or difficult to be known by them; and them that were spiritually deaf, and hard of heart, that '*the word was in their heart that they might hear it and do it,*' is that which cannot possibly proceed from a God of truth, uprightness, and sincerity; but is rather like the temptations and allurements of satan, mere delusions, false promises, and pretences of kindness to those souls whose ruin he designs. And then when we consider that St. Paul hath transferred these very expressions '*to the word of faith,*' which the apostles preached; it is also certain that men under the gospel dispensation lie under no such disability of believing unto righteousness now, which the grace tendered with the gospel is not sufficient to remove. And, indeed, to introduce the blessed Jesus declaring that the Jews were given up to the severest judgments, because "he would have gathered them, and they would not be gathered; and that they would die in their sins, because they would not come unto him that they might have life;" when (i.) "by virtue of an act of divine preterition, they were left," saith Bishop Davenant, "infallibly to fail of obtaining life;" and (ii.) they were left by the fall under an utter disability of being willing,—is such an imputation on the blessed Jesus as cannot be thought on without horror.

Secondly. That opinion which saith "man cannot be induced to do any thing which is truly and spiritually good, without that efficacious grace which makes the doing of that good inevitable to him, and the act unfrustrable;" must also destroy the liberty belonging to man in a state of trial and probation. For what is it to say "a thing is to me inevitable or unfrustrable by me," but to say "I have no power to avoid or frustrate it, and so no power

to resist that action?" And if that action be the action of the will, it is to say "I have no power to will otherwise, and so no power to chuse otherwise; since what I chuse I chuse by my will." And then, *First*, I am no more rewardable for chusing as I do, than the blessed angels are for chusing as they do. And it is as vain to excite men to chuse the good, or refuse evil, by arguments or motives from promises and threats, as to move blessed angels by them to chuse or to refuse as they do: for as they being determined to one cannot need these motives, so when this unfrustrable operation comes upon men, they can as little need them as these angels do, because then they are as certainly, infallibly, and unfrustrably determined to one as the angels are; and as they being antecedently determined to one cannot use these motives to induce them or incline them to that good they chuse, so till lapsed man be thus determined to one he cannot use them to incline him to the performance of his duty: and, for the same reason, as long as this action is deferred or withheld, we are as little liable to punishment for not doing what is spiritually good, for not repenting and believing, as are the devils and the damned spirits, because we are as much disabled as they are, it being evidently the same to have no motives so to do, which is their wretched case, and to have none by which we can be moved so to do without that action which will not be vouchsafed. And as the devils are not determined to one *in individuo*,* but in kind only, as being determined to do evil in the general, and that only privatively for want of motive or inducement to do otherwise, so is it upon this supposition with lapsed man left in that state, without provision of this unfrustrable grace.

VI. To say that "men under this unfrustrable operation are still free, because what they are moved thus to do they will to do, and do it with complacency," is only to say "man herein hath the freedom of an elect angel, which is not rewardable;" but not that "he hath the freedom of a proficient, or of one in a state of trial and probation." Again, either this divine action only enables the will to determine itself, or it necessitates it to act; that is, to will. If it only enables it to do so, it renders not the action certain and infallible, for the will even of the regenerate person doth

* 'Individually.' ED.

not always necessarily or certainly chuse what it is able to chuse, for then regenerate persons would be guilty of no sin. If the divine motion doth necessitate the will, then is there no power in the will to do otherwise, and so there is no freedom either in that will, or that complacency which necessarily follows upon that divine impulse.

Thirdly. God thus unfrustrably moves the will either by rational motives and persuasions only, or by some physical influx upon it, which it cannot resist. If he uses the first way only, it is plain that his motion may be frustrated, since the regenerate too often act against the highest motives and the most powerful persuasions. If by a physical influx which the will cannot resist, though it hath contrary motives so to do, what can be further requisite to the compulsion of the will? For if my hand be compelled to act, when it is moved by an external force which I cannot resist, why is not my will compelled also, when it is acted by an extrinsical influx of God which it cannot resist? In fine, if the will and influx of God does thus unfrustrably interpose to determine the will of man before it determines itself, it is no more liable to an account for acting, or not acting, than the earth is for standing still, or the heavens for moving; for this they do only because the will and action of God in putting that motion into the one, and not into the other, makes it necessary for them so to do. If then man can do nothing that is spiritually good till this divine motion determine him so to do, and then he cannot but do what he is thus moved to do; there is the same necessity for that which he doth, or doth not in this kind, as for the heavens to move, and the earth to stand still. To say "there is yet a difference betwixt these two cases, because man hath a remote capacity of doing otherwise," solves not the difficulty; for if that capacity cannot be exerted without this determining impulse, it is as none at all without it; it being, as to our spiritual interests, the same thing to have no capacity of doing good, as to have none that we can exert.

That this is the true state of the question cannot be reasonably doubted, if these things seriously be considered,

(1.) That the contrary doctrines of the determining influx on the one hand, and the supposed disability which renders it necessary on the other, without the special grace of God, to be still

doing evil, have no countenance from, nor firm foundation in, the holy scriptures.

(2.) That these new notions concerning the consistence of a liberty that is rewardable, or penal, with necessity, and a determination to one, and an invincible necessity connate to fallen man, and rendering it impossible for him to do what is commanded, or to avoid what is forbidden under the highest penalties, is evidently repugnant to the common sense and natural reason of mankind, and as such hath been rejected by the christian writers. And,

(3.) That the christian world for four whole centuries condemned it as destructive of true liberty, of the nature of vice and virtue, of rewards and punishments, of the equity of the divine precepts and of a future judgment, and also contrary to the plain declarations of the holy scripture. And,

FIRST. That the doctrine of the determining influx rendering faith, repentance, and conversion in man unfrustrable, and irresistible by man, when the divine influx comes upon him; and by plain consequence impossible to him till it comes upon him, hath no foundation in the holy scriptures, hath been sufficiently demonstrated in the *THIRD DISCOURSE concerning special and effectual grace*; to which I shall only add this one observation, that some of those scriptures, which are now used to prove it, viz. God's promise to 'take away the stony heart, and give us hearts of flesh;' the apostle's words, that 'it is not of him that wills or runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy; and that it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do,' "where the very arguments used," saith Origen,^a "by them who destroy free-will, διὰ τὸ φύσεις εἰσάγειν ἀπολομένας ἀνεπίδεκτους τῆ σωζέσθαι, καὶ ἑτέρας σωζομένας ἀδυνατως ἐχέσας πρὸς τὸ ἀπολέσθαι, 'by introducing natures lost and incapable of being saved, and others saved which could not possibly perish';" which, as we learn from Clemens^b of Alexandria, was the doctrine of the Basilidians and the Marcionites, "and which," saith he, "makes faith involuntary, and unworthy of praise, or incredulity of dispraise, as τὸν θεμέλιον ἔχουσα φυσικὴν ἀνάγκην, 'depending on an antecedent necessity;' and by destroying liberty overthrows, τὸν θεμέλιον τῆς Σωτηρίας, 'the foundation of

^a Philoc. c. 21. p. 43, 44.

^b Strom. 2. p. 303.

salvation,' and renders all retribution unjust, and so destroys the doctrine of us christians, who have received from the scriptures that God hath given *αἴρεσιν καὶ φυγὴν αυτοκρατορικὴν*,^c 'a power from ourselves to chuse one thing, and fly from another;' and puts this plea into the mouths of wicked men, 'I did this unwillingly, and was compelled to do it'."

VII. Again, that the doctrine which teacheth that "man by the fall hath contracted such a disability to what is good; that, without the special grace of God, he can do nothing that is truly good, and is fallen under such a servitude to sin, as renders it necessary for him to be still doing evil," hath no foundation in the holy scriptures, is also easy to demonstrate:—this I shall do, *First*, by laying down the doctrine of those divines who do maintain this opinion, as it is faithfully delivered by Le Blanc; and then producing what they alledge from scripture to confirm it.

Now Le Blanc, in his theses *Of the liberty of man in the state of lapsed nature to what is morally good*, hath given us the doctrine of these Reformers thus,

1. That "there be some moral precepts which man in this lapsed state cannot do at all;^d viz. that which saith negatively, 'thou shalt not covet;' and that which saith positively, 'thou shalt love the Lord thy God' with all thy heart;" whence these things necessarily follow, that God must lay on lapsed man an obligation to impossibilities, and must command him, under the severest penalties, to do what he could never do from his birth, and to avoid what he had never power to avoid; unless he had this power before he had a being, or any faculty at all; and consequently that he can only require these impossibilities to increase his sin and enhance his damnation.

2. That according to the doctrine of the Protestants,^e "those actions of theirs which are materially good, are yet formally sins, because they are neither done out of love to God as the principle, nor for his glory as the end, and so have two essential defects inconsistent with the nature of an action morally good;" whence it must follow, that by endeavouring to obey God's commands as well as they can, they must *formally sin*.

3. That "most Protestants deny that man, in the state of lapsed nature, is free to chuse what is morally good, and so hath

c P. 409.

d Part 2, sec. 2. and 48.

e From sec. 11 to the 20th.

lost the freedom of his will as to those actions;”^f and, consequently, if God damn him for not doing what is morally good, he must damn him for that which he could not have the will to do.

4. That therefore “he is so far become the servant of sin, that whatsoever he doth, *non possit nisi peccare*, ‘he cannot but sin;’” and then St. Austin’s definition of sin, that “it is the will to do that, *a quo liberum fuit abstinere*, ‘from which he could abstain,’” must be false; though he saith, that “the consciences of all men attest the truth of it.”^g

5. “The Protestants,”^h saith he, “teach that the grace without which, *nemo bene operari potest, et vel unicum opus revera bonum efficere, esse ipsam gratiam regenerantem et justificantem*, ‘no man can do what is good, or perform one good action, is regenerating and justifying grace;’ that is, without justifying faith,” as he expounds them: “and this grace,” saith he, “hath its beginning, progress, and completion from that efficacious grace, by which God in us doth abolish the dominion of sin:”ⁱ whence it must follow, that no man can begin to do one good work till God vouchsafe that efficacious grace which will end in his sanctification; and therefore all that hope, fear, grief for sin, love, and imploration of the divine grace, which doth not end in this sanctification must be sin, or at least no good work.

Now to prove things so absurd and contrary to the first principles of reason, it is very reasonable to expect both plain and frequent testimonies of the holy scriptures, saying, that “man is by the fall of Adam become utterly unable to do any thing that is good, or any thing that God requires of him in an acceptable manner:” yea that “by reason of that fall alone, his faculties are so horribly perverted, that he can do only what is evil, and cannot but do evil.” Whereas the whole scripture hath not one saying of this nature: it nowhere any farther charges the wickedness committed in the world upon this fall, than by saying that ‘*by one sin of one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin;*’ but doth still charge it either upon men’s want of consideration, or their unwillingness to do what they know to be their duty, or on the corrupt dispositions they had contracted through a long course of sin. It saith indeed that ‘*no man can bring a clean*

^f Sec. 15.

^g Sec. 10, 11, 59.

^h Sec. 25.

ⁱ Sec. 33.

thing out of an unclean;’^k that is, that from parents obnoxious to sin, will spring forth children, that when they come to ‘discern between good and evil,’ will be obnoxious to sin also; for ‘in many things we offend all,’ and therefore cannot be justified before God, but by an act of grace; for ‘how can man be just before God, or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?’^l And therefore when the Encratites used these words of Job and his friends against marriage, as introducing a polluted seed, Clemens^m of Alexandria, and the Author of the Questions and Answersⁿ ascribed to Justin Martyr, say to them, “these things you can, ἔδενι τρόπῳ ἀρμόζειν τοῖς βρέφεσι, ‘by no means apply to children,’ as if they were sinners.” David saith also, ‘behold I was shapen in wickedness, and in sin did my mother conceive me;’ “that is,” say Clemens^o of Alexandria, Chrysostom, and Theodoret, “he speaks this of his mother Eve, and our first parents, whose posterity was begotten after they had sinned; and saith not as the Encratites, ἀνοήτως ὑπέβαλον, ‘foolishly interpreted these words.’” The Jews^p and Isidore^q interpret this of his mother’s conceiving him in *profluvio*,* “which” say they, “usually produced, σώμα ἐκαθαρόν καὶ ἔυκρατον, ‘a body impure, ill-tempered, and subject to evil passions.’” But (ii.) the usual interpretation, (without that hyperbole which Grotius, and before him Hesychius, noted in these words, comparing them with those of the same Psalmist, ‘the wicked go astray from the womb, as soon as they are born speaking lies;’^r and those of the Prophet Isaiah concerning Israel, ‘thou wast called a transgressor from the womb:’^s “where,” saith the judicious Gataker, “he cannot mean from their natural birth, this passage implying something not common to all, but peculiar to that people,”) doth indeed make him say what Clemens^t of Alexandria absolutely doth gainsay, to wit, that he was born in sin; but doth not in the least say, or hint that he could therefore do nothing that was truly good, or that it was necessary for him to do that, or any other evil that he did.

OBJECTION THIRD. Some urge to this effect the complaint of God against the sinners of the old world, whose ‘imagination

^k Job xiv, 4.^l Job ix, 2. xv, 14. xxv, 4.^m Strom. 3, p. 468. D.ⁿ Qu. et Resp. 88, p. 445, 446.^o Ibid. p. 469.^p Vide Muis in Locum.^q Isidor. Caten. in Mat. c. 8, p. 295.^r * ‘In a flux.’ ED.^s Psalm lviii, 3.^t Isaiah xlvi, 8.[†] He was born when his parents were sinners, ἀλλ’ ἐκ αὐτῶν, ἐν ἀμαρτίᾳ, * Strom. 3, p. 469. A.

* ‘But not he himself in sin.’ ED.

and thoughts of heart," saith he, 'were evil, and only evil continually;' "therefore man in his lapsed state," say they, "can only do evil."

ANSWER. This is almost the continual mistake of these men, that they ascribe that to man's lapsed state which belongs only to the worst of men who had corrupted themselves by a long course of continual impiety: for instance, they make all men '*children of wrath*,' from those words of the apostle to the Ephesians, which plainly relate to their former state when they lived in their abominable idolatries, and under the government of the *prince of darkness*, as the word $\pi\omicron\tau\epsilon$,* and the context plainly shews. See the note there. And so was it here, God himself declaring that the deluge came upon the old world, not for the sin of Adam, but for the wickedness of men grown '*great upon the earth*,' and continued in after the warnings of his prophet, and his long-suffering exercised towards them for 120 years. And whereas, to strengthen this argument, they add, that after the flood the same thing is affirmed more emphatically of mankind in general in the promise made to Noah, viz. '*I will not smite the earth any more for man's sake, for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth*.' Gen. viii. 21.

First. These words will very well bear a quite different sense, viz. I will not thus smite man upon the earth any more, '*though the imagination of his heart be (again) evil from his youth*,' as before the flood it was. That the particle χ (chi) thus often signifies, will appear from several places in which we so translate it, viz. '*God led them not through the land of the Philistines, χ (chi) although it was near*.' Exod. xiii. 17. '*If any man say, I shall have peace χ (chi,) though I walk in the imagination of my heart*.' Deut. xxix. 19. '*Thou shalt drive out the Canaanites, χ (chi,) though they have iron chariots, and χ (chi,) though they are strong*.' Joshua xvii. 18. So the word χ (chi) is used thrice in one verse, '*Though thou clothest thyself with crimson*.' (Jer. iv. 30.) See Noldius de Partic. Heb. p. 399. Or else retaining the common sense of this particle, the words may bear this sense, "I will not any more smite the earth for this, or upon this account, that the imaginations of their hearts are evil."

^u Genesis vi, 5,

^w Ephesians ii, 2, 3.

* 'When' ED.

^x Genesis vi, 3, 11, 12. I Peter iii, 20.

Jude 14, 15.

Secondly. The word מִנְעָרָיו (Minneuraiv) doth not signify *from their birth*, but only *from their youth*; for he speaks of the imaginations of their hearts, and so only of the time when they are able to entertain and prosecute the thoughts of their evil hearts. Nor doth the phrase signify an original, but only a long contracted custom, or an habitual course of doing what is good, evil, or indifferent. Of doing what is evil: thus *‘the enchantments with which the Chaldeans laboured from their youth,’*^w are the enchantments which they had long practised. *‘Our fathers have sinned from their youth,’*^x saith Jeremy, *‘unto this day;’* that is, they have continued in a long course of disobedience. And the *‘whoredoms of Israel from her youth,’* (Ezek. xxiii. 8,) is her long course of idolatry begun in Egypt, and continued in the wilderness, and in the land of Canaan. See also Jer. xxii. 21. xxxii. 30.—Accordingly it signifies, when it hath a good or an indifferent sense; as when Obadiah saith, *‘he had feared the Lord from his youth,’* (1 Kings xviii, 12,) that is, he had lived long in the fear of God; and Job, that he had done offices of charity *‘from his youth,’* (chap. xxxi. 18,) and David, that he had placed his hope and trust in God *‘from his youth.’* (Psalm lxxi. 5.) Thus it is said of Joseph’s brethren, that they were *‘shepherds from their youth,’* (Gen. xlvi. 34,) and of the prophets in Zechary, that *‘men taught them to keep cattle from their youth.’* (xiii. 5.)

OBJECTION FOURTH. They cite to this purpose those words of Christ, *‘that which is born of the flesh is flesh,’* (John iii. 6,) whence they infer, that “man in his natural estate can do nothing but what is carnal, and therefore sinful, and only can begin to do what is good spiritually, when he is *born again of the Spirit;*” whereas,

ANSWER. This exposition renders it impossible for a man to do any thing towards his own conversion, and so renders all God’s commands and exhortations to the wicked to *‘turn themselves from their iniquity,’* all his promises of pardon and reconciliation to them that do so, and all his threats of death if they neglect to do so, all his complaints against them that they would not do so, vain and absurd; and, as Cyril^y of Alexandria saith, *ῥαψώδιμα κενόν*, *‘a vain trifle,’* they being then only commands and incitements to perform what, if it ever be done, he must do himself.

^w Isaiah xlvi, 12.^x Jeremiah iii, 25.^y Orat. 5. contr. Jul. p. 118.

Secondly. This exposition makes the words *flesh*, and *fleshly birth*, to signify one corrupted by his fleshly appetite, and acted by his carnal wisdom, and so led and governed by the motions of the flesh; whereas Tolet hath well observed, that “*to be born of the flesh* here only signifies to have that natural generation by which a man is born into the world of the will of the flesh,”^z this being the only birth Nicodemus spake of as a thing incredible; because then a man must ‘*enter twice into his mother’s womb.*’ This therefore is the plain meaning of our Lord, that besides that natural birth, by which we receive only our flesh and body from our parents, there is need of a spiritual birth to fit us for the kingdom of God; he therefore saith no one word of any necessity lying upon us till we be thus born again to do only evil, or of our incapacity to do any thing which may contribute towards this new birth.

OBJECTION FIFTH. They argue from the words of the apostle, complaining in the person of the natural man thus, ‘*the good that I would do that I do not, but the evil that I would not do, that do I,*’ (Rom. vii. 17, 19,) and that by reason of that ‘*sin that dwelleth in me, verse 20, for I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me in captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.*’ Verse 23. Now he that cannot do the good that he would, can do nothing that is truly good; and he that through the power of sin dwelling in him, and leading him captive to the law of sin, doth the evil that he would not do, is a slave to sin.

ANSWER. It is observable from the Fathers, against these objectors, that they who held that there was in man *a natural principle of evil*, and that the flesh and body of man *laid a necessity upon us* of doing evil, founded their plea upon these words, as we learn from Methodius. And hence Cyril^a of Jerusalem adver-

^z Multum a vero sensu loci hujus aberrant qui carnem hoc loco exponunt de carne peccati, cum nihil hic de peccato agatur; et quamvis nullum esset peccatum, verum est, “*Quod natum est ex carne caro est.*” Comment in locum.

^a Μή μοι κακῶς τινὸς ἀκήσης ἐξηγημένῃ τὸ εἶ δὲ ὃ ἐθέλω τῆτο ποιοῦ. Catech. 4, p. 21. A. Τῆτο εἶρηκεν ἐχὶ τὸ αὐτεξέσιον ἀναιρῶν ἐδὲ ἀναγκην τινὰ εἰσάγων βεβίασμένην, εἰ γὰρ ἐκ ἐκόντες ἀλλ’ ἀναγκαζόμενοι ἀμαρτάνομεν, παλιν τὰ τῶν κολάσεων τῶν ἔμπροσθεν γεγεννημένων ἐκ ἀν’ ἔχοι λόγον.

‘*Thou mayst not listen to that expression of one improvidently declaring to me, ‘But the thing which I will not, that I do.’ Catech.—‘By those words, the apostle did not take away free-will, nor did he introduce an overwhelming necessity. For if we sin by necessity, and not voluntarily, the circumstance of after punishment for deeds formerly committed can have no show of reason.’ ED.*

tiseth us not to attend to this false interpretation of the apostle's words, as being destructive of our liberty, and in the opinion of Methodius and of St. Chrysostom,^b subverting God's future judgment of the world.

Secondly. It is observable, that these men generally interpret these words of a regenerate person; and then, if they prove any thing, they prove that this is also the state of men renewed by the Spirit; and how are they then '*freed from sin, and become servants to righteousness?*' And,

Thirdly. Whereas they make their lapsed man to have lost even the power of willing to do good, and to be totally enslaved both as to will, mind, and action, the man here mentioned hath a will to do the good he doth not, and to avoid the evil that he doth; yea the evil that he doth is hateful to him, and he '*delighteth in the law of God in the inner man, and with his mind serves the law of God.*' And so, as Origen upon the place saith, "*non usquequaque alienus est a bonis, sed proposito quidem et voluntate cæpit bona requirere,* 'he is not wholly alienated from good things, but in his purpose and his will inclined to them,' though not yet sufficient to perform what he thus proposes through the power of custom and of evil habits: *cita enim res est voluntas,* 'for the will is quick in operation, and soon purposeth;' *opus vero tardum est,* 'but we are slow in performance,' that requiring use, and labour, and art, and freedom from impediments." Now I enquire, whether in this will to do good, this delight in the law of God, this hatred of sin, this man doth well or ill. If well, he can, even in the state here mentioned, do something that is good; if evil, it must be evil to hate sin, and be unwilling to commit it, and to be willing to do good, and to delight in the law of God in the inner man, and to serve God with the mind; and then, how doth that differ from '*serving with the flesh the law of sin?*'

Fourthly. Origen, St. Chrysostom, Theodoret, and others, interpret these words of '*men under the thralldom and dominion of sin through a long use and custom;* and this interpretation is cer-

^b Chrys. in locum. Ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡ κρίσις πῶς δὲ ἐπιφέρεισθαι ὡς μέλλουσα προσδοκᾶσθαι ἔτι δύναται, &c. Method. apud Epiphani. Hæc. 63. n. 49.

^c Chrysostom on the passage.—But the judgment also—how can it be brought forwards as an object of expectation? &c, *Methodius.* ED.

tain from the words of this chapter, the apostle speaking of men that were ‘*carnal, sold under sin,*’ which is the character of the greatest sinners, (1 Kings xxi. 20. Isaiah l. 1,) and even of revolters from the true religion; (1 Maccab. i. 15;) and this is represented as the cause of all that follows from verse 14th to the 24th.

Lastly, They conclude this from those words of the apostle, (chap. viii. 6, 7, 8,) “‘*to be carnally minded* (GREEK “the wisdom of the flesh,”) *is death, because the carnal mind* (GREEK “the wisdom of the flesh”) *is enmity to God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; so that they that are in the flesh cannot please God,*’ they therefore can do nothing that is truly good, nothing that is not evil, and displeasing to him.”

I answer, *First,* that this was another of the texts abused by the ancient Heretics, to prove that the flesh was by nature evil, imagining that these words tended, εἰς διαβολήν τῆς σαρκός, to ‘*the condemnation of our flesh,*’ or mortal bodies, we learn from Epiphanius^c and St. Chrysostom upon the place; who therefore well observes, that “by *flesh* here we are not to understand the body, or the substance of the body, ἀλλὰ τὸν σαρκικὸν εἶον καὶ κοσμικὸν καὶ τρυφῆς, καὶ ἀσωτίας γέμοντα τὸν ὅλον σάρκα ποιῶντα τὸν ἄνθρωπον, ‘but a worldly carnal life, full of luxury and riotous living, and turning the whole man into flesh,’” as is evident from the phrase; ‘*the wisdom of the flesh*’ engaging us to mind only the things which belong to the flesh, and to be of the flesh, as the true christian is of the Spirit, being ‘*led by, and walking in the Spirit.*’ And, saith Methodius,^a “were this said of them that are in this body of flesh, that *they cannot please God,* they who commit theft, whoredom, or any other like sin, could not on that account be subject to reprehension by a just Judge, it being impossible for the flesh to be subject to the law of God; πῶς γὰρ ἂν μεμπτέον ἐδύνατο, τὸ σῶμα κατὰ τὴν προσῆσαν αὐτῷ φύσιν βίῃν εἶναι;”^e ‘For how can it be blame-worthy in the body that it lives according to the condition of its nature?’ Nor could then the intemperate person be reduced to chastity and virtue, the body lying under a natural necessity not to be subject to the law of God.”

Secondly. The apostle doth indeed say, that they who thus mind carnal things, while they continue so to do, ‘*cannot please God;*’

^c Hæc. 61, n. 49, 51.

^a Apud Epiphani. ibid. n. 51.

^e Note, that εἶναι seems dislocated.

this being only in effect to say, in the words of St. Chrysostom, ἀδύνατον πονηρὸν μένοντα, that ‘whilst men go on in their sinful courses they cannot please God,’ or live in subjection to his laws; but then,” saith he, “as Christ only saith an evil tree, whilst it continues such, cannot bring forth good fruit; but doth not say, an evil tree cannot be made good;” but on the contrary saith, ‘*Make the tree good that the fruit may be good,*’ so is it here. For this apostle (by his frequent exhortations to these carnal men to ‘*crucify the flesh, and mortify the flesh with its lusts,*’ or the deeds of it, and to ‘*put off the old man with its deeds,*’ by his threats that ‘*if they live after the flesh they shall die,*’ and by his promise, that ‘*if through the Spirit, they do mortify the deeds of the flesh, they shall live,*’) plainly shews that men may cease to live according to the flesh, and may obtain that assistance of the Spirit by which they shall mortify the deeds of the flesh, and live after the Spirit. “God,” saith Chrysostom, “hath put this, ἐν ἐλευθερίᾳ προαιρέσεως, ‘in our free choice,’ so that, ἐν σοὶ λοιπὸν ἐσι καὶ τῆτο γένεσθαι καλκίνο, since the vouchsafement of the gospel, ‘it is in thy own power to be carnally minded or spiritually;’ and now, πολλὴ ἡ ἐπίτασις τῆς φιλοσοφίας, ‘there is greater strength and inducement from the gospel so to be than ever.’”

VIII. To proceed to the SECOND PARTICULAR,

That these new notions of liberty are contrary to the sense, and repugnant to the common reason of mankind, will be evident by the rules laid down by them who were guided only by the light of nature, viz.

1. That “a lawgiver^a must act absurdly in commanding that which it is not in the power of his subjects to perform.”

2. That “*vice and virtue must be, τὰ ἐφ’ ἡμῖν,*^b ‘things which we are free to do,’ or to abstain from, because they are worthy of praise or dispraise, neither of which agree to things done unwill-

^a Ἀτοπος ἂν εἴη τᾶυτα νομοθετῶν ἃ μὴ ἐφ’ ἡμῖν ἐσι πράττειν.

Arist. in Moral. L. 1. c. 9.

^b Ἐπαινοὶ καὶ ψόφοι ἐκ ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀκρίτοις. Arist. ibid. Τὴν γὰρ ἀνάγκη ἀνεύθυνον εἶναι τὸ δὲ παρ’ ἡμῶν ἀδέσποτον ὧ καὶ τὸ μεμπλόν, καὶ τὸ ἐναντίον παρακοληθεῖν πέφυκεν. Epictet. apud Diog. Laert. L. 10. n. 133. Non sunt igitur assensiones, neque actiones in nostra potestate, ex quo efficitur ut neque laudationes iustæ sint, neque vituperationes, nec honores, nec supplicia. Cic. de Fato, n. 30, vid. Sen. Ep. 70. Sicut enim in Epict. p. 27, 29, 185.

ingly, necessity rendering things unblameable, that being only to be blamed which is in our power:" and therefore that "fate or necessity which leaves not our assent or actions in our power, takes away praise or dispraise, honour or reward."

3. That "that only is voluntary^c which we lie under no necessity to do or to forbear; and what we do, being unwilling, we do out of necessity, liberty being a power of acting from ourselves, or doing what we will:" whence they infer that "vice and virtue must be voluntary, and that there can be no necessity of doing evil, and that on this account only is vice worthy of dispraise."^d

4. That "man can be guilty of no crime in doing that which he could not avoid; for what is evil is a fault,"^e saith Cicero, "there can be no fault in not doing that which we have no power to do."

5. That "what is natural to all men, cannot be evil to any man; for no man is angry," saith Seneca,^f "*ubi vitium natura defendit, 'where nature defends the vice';*" "nor can that be evil" saith Cicero, "*quod à naturâ parente omnium constitutum, 'which owes its original to nature;'* seeing that Being which consults the good of mankind, would neither produce nor nourish that, *quod cum exantlavisset omnes labores incideret in mortis malum sempiternum, 'which, when it had done its utmost, must be subject to eternal death.'*"

6. That "there can be no consultations or deliberation about things which are not in our power, nor any rational persuasion to

^c Ἐκείσιον ὁ πράττομεν μὴ ἀναγκαζόμενοι. Aristot. in Moral. l. 1, c. 15. Καὶ ὅσα μὴ ἐκόντες πράττομεν, ἀναγκαζόμενοι πράττομεν. *ibid.* Εἶναι γὰρ ἐλευθερίαν ἐξήσιαν αὐτοπραγίας. Zeno apud Diog. Laert. l. 7, n. 121. Ἐν τοῖς ἐφ' ἡμῶν τὸ ἄγαθόν, καὶ τὸ κακόν. Epictet. c. 50.

^d Τὴν τε κακίαν ἐκείσιον εἶναι, καὶ τὴν ἀρετὴν ἐδεμία γὰρ ἀνάγκη τὰ μοχθηρὰ πράττειν διὰ ταῦτα καὶ ψεῦδος ἢ κακία, καὶ ἢ ἀρετὴ ἐπαίνεσον. Aristot. Eudem. l. 2, c. 11.

^e Tusc. Quest. 3, n. 31.

^f Ep. 94.

^g Τὸ ἀδύνατον προαίρεται δ' ἐδεῖς, ἐδ' ὅλως ὁ δυνατὸν μὲν μὴ ἐφ' αὐτῷ δ' οἶσαι πράττειν, ἢ μὴ πράττειν ἄσε τῆτο μὲν φανερόν ὅτι ἀνάγκη το προαίρετον τῶν ἐφ' αὐτῷ τι εἶναι. Aristot. Eudem. l. 2, c. 10, and M. Moral. l. 1, c. 18. Ἡ δὲ πείδω βία καὶ ἀνάγκη ἀντίθετα. Eud. l. 2, c. 8. Ἡ δὲ προαίρεσις τῶν πρὸς τὸ τέλος. de Morib. l. 2, c. 4.

do them, because these actions can only be performed in order to that end; and therefore when the end cannot be obtained, must be done in vain." And hence it clearly follows, that if this be a doctrine of christianity,—that men not yet converted, or in their lapsed state, can do nothing which is truly good, and also lie under a necessity of doing evil, they ought not to think or deliberate how they may do good, or may avoid the doing evil, or pray for the divine assistance, or be sorry for their sins. Nor ought any man to persuade them so to do; for if they ought not to do evil that good may come, and whatsoever they do, whilst they continue in that state, though it may be *materially* good, is *formally* sin, they ought not to do it to obtain the divine assistance, or any other good.

To this may be added the arguments of the Heathen Philosophers against fate, produced Chapter the Fourth, Section the Third.

Nor ought these arguments to be slighted as being only the sayings of Philosophers guided by the dim light of reason, when they deliver only that in which the common notions of mankind have long agreed; for that would be of dreadful consequence to the whole christian faith. For our belief of it must bottom upon some rational inducements, and common principles of reason, which if they may be false, christianity may be a false *religion*; if they be evident and certain truths, whatsoever contradicts them must be false. If therefore any article of our faith should to the best of our judgments plainly contradict them, it must shock the foundation of our faith by engaging men to believe that false which alone engaged them to believe that faith was true. That this would also render us unable to convert Jew, Heathen, or Mahometan, to confute the Tritheite or such like hereticks, or to reject any interpretation of scripture as absurd and contrary to reason, I have fully proved in the appendix to the Idolatry of Host Worship, Chapter II, from Section First to the Sixth.

As for the THIRD PARTICULAR, that the christian Fathers for four whole centuries condemned these new notions as destructive of true liberty, of the nature of vice and virtue, of rewards and punishments, of the equity of the divine precepts and of a future judgment, and also as contrary to the plain declarations of the holy scriptures, will be fully proved in the Sixth and last chapter of this discourse.

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CHAP. II.

Proposing arguments to prove the freedom of the will, as well from necessity as from co-action.

THE question being thus fully stated, let it be observed that the liberty or freedom of the will we contend for, is,

FIRST. Plainly delivered in the holy scripture, and may abundantly be confirmed by arguments grounded upon scripture.

SECONDLY. That it is demonstrable from reason, and hath been constantly asserted both by Heathens and Christians in their discourses against fate.

THIRDLY. That it hath the constant suffrage of all the ancient writers of the church, by whom it is delivered, as a fundamental article, or as a truth on which all good or evil, piety or virtue, praise or dispraise, rewards or punishments depend. And,

I. FIRST. The scripture affords us express declarations, or plain intimations, that the liberty of the will, even in christian virtues of the highest nature, is opposite not only to co-action, but necessity. Thus in the case of chusing that high state of virginity, that *'they might serve the Lord without distraction,'* the apostle determines that *'he that hath no necessity, but, ἐξουσίαν ἔχει τῆ ἰδίᾳ θελήματος,* HATH POWER OVER HIS OWN WILL, *let him retain his virginity:'*^g Where freedom is declared to be *'a power over our own will,'* to chuse or not to chuse, and stands opposed to necessity. See Œcumenius and Theophylact upon the place. Again, in the case of his working with his own hands, and receiving nothing of the churches of Corinth, and throughout the regions of Achaia, which he thought of so great importance to the promotion of the gospel as to say, *'It was better for him to die than vary from it,'* he yet asserts his liberty by these enquiries, ἔκ εἰμι ἐλεύθερος; *'AM I NOT FREE? Have I not power to eat, and to drink,'*^h (on the church's charge, without labouring thus?) clearly

^g 1 Corinthians vii, 37, Μὴ ἔχων ἀναγκὴν ἀπὸ τῆ αὐτεξέσεως ὦν. Theod.

^h *'Having no necessity being put in opposition to having power over his own will.'* Theodoret. ED

^h 1 Corinthians ix, 1, 5, 4.

proving his freedom in that action, from his power to abstain from it, and to do the contrary. So also in the case of charity, that most excellent grace, he saith, *every man, as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give*, *μη ἐξ ἀναγκῆς*, NOT OF NECESSITY;ⁱ plainly opposing necessity to the free purpose of the heart: “*not of necessity*,” say Chrysostom and Theophylact, “*τὸ γὰρ ἐξ ἀναγκῆς ὑποτέμνει τὸν μισθὸν* ‘for necessity cuts off the reward.’” So he speaks to Philemon in the case of Onesimus, ‘*whom,*’ saith he, ‘*I would have to minister to me in the bonds of the gospel; but without thy mind, I would do nothing, that thy benefit should not be, ὡς κατ’ ἀναγκῆν, ἀλλὰ κατ’ ἐκέσιον*, AS OF NECESSITY BUT WILLINGLY.’^k St. Peter also instructs bishops and elders ‘*to feed the flock of Christ, μη ἀναγκασῶς, ἀλλ’ ἐκβσιῶς*, NOT OF NECESSITY, BUT WILLINGLY;^l—so plain an opposition do these inspired writers put betwixt doing a virtuous action freely and willingly, and doing it out of necessity.

SECONDLY. God and his servants have sufficiently confirmed the liberty we contend for in this state of trial, by setting life and death, good and evil before our eyes, and putting it to our choice which we will have; as in all the instances forementioned, and in those words of Joshua to all Israel, ‘*chuse you this day whom ye will serve, the God that brought you out of the Land of Egypt, or of your fore-fathers, or of the Amorites.*’^m The reason is plain; For whosoever hath a liberty to chuse, hath also a liberty to refuse, and *vice versâ*; according to those words of the prophet, ‘*before the child shall know to chuse the good and refuse the evil.*’ⁿ And were it otherwise, how can we imagine that a gracious God, and lover of his people, should make this the condition of his pardoning mercy, that they should chuse the good and refuse the evil,^o that he should condemn them for ‘*not chusing the fear of the Lord,*’^p or for *chusing the thing that he would not;*^q or represent it as an act of faith in Moses, that he ‘*chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season?*’^r That, lastly, he should promise the greatest blessings to those who chose the things that pleased him, and threaten the severest judgments to those who ‘*chose the things in which he de-*

ⁱ 2 Corinthians ix, 7.^k Verses 13, 14.^l 1. Peter v, 2.^m Joshua xxiv, 15.ⁿ Isaiah vii, 16.^o Isaiah i, 18.^p Proverbs i, 29.^q Isaiah lvi, 1.^r Hebrews xi, 25.

lighted not?^s Seeing choice or election, in the very nature of it, is of more than one, whereas there can be no choice of more than one, where a person is determined to one. If then the elect are so determined by God's absolute decree to conversion, that when the divine impulse comes upon them, they must unfrustrably be converted to God, and chuse the thing that pleaseth him, how are they in a state of trial? Or why are they bid to chuse whether of the two they will have? If, on the other hand, they who from eternity are reprobated are determined so far to one, that though they have a liberty of specification, as the Schools barbarously speak, that is, a liberty to do this or that evil, yet have they no liberty of contrariety, that is of doing good as well as evil, and so are determined to do evil and not good, and so lie under a sad necessity of chusing that which God would not, or in which he delighteth not; because they cannot chuse the fear of the Lord; or the thing that pleaseth him;—they who assert these things must grant, that he who hath sworn “he would not the death of him that dieth, but would rather that he should return from his iniquity and live,” had, before this serious oath, suspended the avoiding the death of him that dies, and his obtaining life, upon impossible conditions, and that he offers to such persons life only on the condition of doing that which under the disability they had contracted before that offer, it is impossible for them without that special grace which they can never have, to perform. Now to pass an act of preterition on creatures under this known disability, and then to offer life unto them only upon impossible conditions; and when, by reason of this act, it is made certain and infallible that they shall fail of obtaining life, to bid them chuse life rather than death; what is it, in effect, but to insult over the dreadful misery of men, and with an hypocritical pretence of kindness, and a desire of their welfare, to condemn them to eternal death without a possibility of having life? Since the known rule of logick, of the civil law, and even of common sense and reason, teacheth, *that a conditional preposition having an impossible condition annexed to it, is equivalent to a negative.*^z

^s Isaiah lxx, 12. lxvi 4.

^z Conditionem si cœlum digito tetigeris impossibilem negativam commentatores appellant. Catv.

^z An impossible condition, such as *touching the heavens with your finger*, commentators call a negative. ED.

II. COROLLARY. Now hence we may easily discern the vanity, the falsehood, and hypocrisy of all these tenders of the gospel to reprobates, as they are expounded by these men, viz. that when God offers to them life and salvation, pardon of sin, deliverance from death, and all other spiritual blessings, he dealeth very sincerely and in good earnest with them, because he will certainly afford them all these blessings, and deliver them from all the dreadful evils he hath threatened, upon performance of the conditions upon which they are tendered, viz. *'if you be willing; if you repent and turn from your iniquities; if you believe, all your iniquities shall be blotted out, you shall live and not die; if you believe not, you shall die in your sins; if you repent not, you shall perish.'* And again, *'whosoever will, let him come and drink of the waters of life freely. Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; whosoever believeth in me shall not perish, but have everlasting life;'* with infinite passages of the like nature: All these, say they, are offers made in good earnest, and with sincerity to all; and therefore to the reprobate, because "God's meaning, when he offers glory to any man if he believe and persevere, is truly to perform it, if he do so."^a And as for Christ's coming into the world to save sinners, it was not to save the elect but under conditions of repentance and perseverant faith; and no decree of reprobation excludeth any man from salvation, provided always that he repent and believe:"^b For hence it plainly follows, that his true will is flatly to deny them these blessings, and to promise them nothing. And "such a promise," saith Puffendorf, "differs only from a downright negative in this, that it is more affronting, by making the promise run affirmatively, and yet clogging it with an impossible condition."^c Seeing then these men teach that "the absolute decree of God not to give faith, repentance, and eternal life to Judas (or to any other reprobate) is that which we understand by the word REPROBATION, and this is never abrogated by any conditional promise;"^d and it is impossible he should have faith and repentance, if God hath absolutely decreed not to give it to him; must not the remission of sins and salvation promised to Judas only upon condition of faith and repentance, be promised upon an impossible condition, and so be equivalent

^a Bishop Davenant against Hoard, p. 355.^b P. 799.^c L. 5, c. 8, sec. 5.^d Bishop Davenant, p. 225.

to this negative,—*Judas shall not be saved?* “Seeing they” say the elect, “by a special mercy of God are so guided and ruled, that they, and they alone, perform the condition, and that the non-elect are always permitted to fail in the performance of the condition;”^e teaching that God hath not prepared for them, and therefore never gives, such grace as finally freeth them from sin;”^f and it is certain, that what he never gives they can never have:—Seeing “they are of opinion that to have sufficient means of salvation administered which shall prove no otherwise effectual than upon this condition,^g *si homines sibi non desint*,* is an argument of non-election;” that is, of reprobation, that is, an argument that they cannot be saved; which one would think is also an argument of an absurdity of the supposition that they had sufficient means of salvation administered:—Seeing, lastly, they say, “the decrees of election and reprobation are, indeed, and in truth, decrees finding all men in a miserable and damnable estate, and out of it determining to bring some, and to fit them for eternal happiness, and not to bring others out of it by fitting them thereunto, but to permit them to the deficient rule of their own will:”^h—And seeing the reprobates “always fail in the performance of the condition,” and must do so because “God hath not prepared for them, and therefore never gives them, such grace as finally frees them from sin,” and without which they cannot be so:—Since to have means effectual to salvation tendered to them only on this condition, “if they be not wanting to themselves,” is an argument that they are reprobates; that is, men that cannot be saved:—Since, lastly, to be found in a miserable and damnable estate, and under a determination not to be brought out of it, or fitted for eternal life, but “permitted to the deficient rule of their own will,” which being so after all that they can do, will be defective and insufficient to attain salvation:—Must it not clearly follow, from all and every one of these assertions, that salvation can only be tendered to them upon conditions impossible to be performed by them, and so by such a seeming and hypocritical tender must be effectually denied them?

III. THIRDLY. This plainly follows from all those scriptures which have been offered in the STATE OF THE QUESTION, Secti-

e P. 257.

f P. 258.

g P. 262.

* ‘If men be not wanting to themselves.’ ED.

h P. 265.

ons first and fourth, to prove that men at present are in a state of trial and probation; it being evidently absurd to make a trial or experiment whether men will repent, believe, or persevere, who are determined by him who makes the trial so to do; or whether they will come out of their miserable estate, and fit themselves for salvation whom God hath determined from all eternity, by his decree of election, “to bring out of that state, and render fit for that happiness;” or whether they will do this whom by his decree of reprobation he hath determined “not to bring out of it;” and this being only in effect to try whether they will null his absolute decrees; whether they will do, or neglect what these decrees have rendered it impossible for them to do or neglect.

Secondly. From all that hath been offered there, Section third, to shew that God calls, and makes his applications even to habitual sinners, to reform and hearken to his exhortations, to turn to him from their evil ways; it being evidently vain and absurd to make these exhortations to men determined to the contrary, and left by God’s decree of reprobation “to the deficient rule of their own wills,” and so under a necessity of being deficient in the performance of what is necessary to their reformation.

Thirdly. From all those scriptures produced there, Section Fifth, to shew that God hath ‘*set before men good and evil, life and death,*’ and left it to their choice, upon the motives and powerful incitements offered to them in the word, to embrace the one or the other; this being in effect a declaration on God’s part, that he hath not, by any action or decree of his, determined some to be good, or to obtain salvation, or left others under a necessity of failing of salvation, or chusing evil, and not good.

Fourthly. From all that hath been said from scripture of God’s serious invitations of all men to repent, believe, and be converted, and his pathetic desires of their reformation and obedience, produced, DISCOURSE THIRD, Argument Second, they being certain demonstrations that he did not conceive they lay under an incapacity of repenting, believing, and turning to him.

Fifthly. From all his commands and exhortations to wicked men ‘*to turn from the evil of their ways, that iniquity may not be their ruin;*’ and all his threats of the most dreadful judgments to them who still continue in them; and all the promises of pardon, life, and salvation made to those who do sincerely turn

to him; of which I have discoursed, ARGUMENT THIRD, Section Third. For as these things plainly shew that what God requires may be done; what he exhorts to, is possible for them to perform, by the assistance of that grace which he is ready to afford them; that the evils which he threateneth may be avoided, and what he promises may be obtained by them; so are all these arguments strongly confirmed by the concurrent suffrage, and the express and frequent declarations of the ancient Fathers, saying,

IV. *First.* In the general, that the scriptures every where assert, and give plain testimonies of the liberty of the will of man to chuse the good and refuse the evil. Thus Justin Martyr having told us, that “man would not be worthy of praise or recompence, ἐκ ἑαυτῆ ἐλόμενος τὸν ἀγαθόν, ‘did he not chuse good of himself,’ nor worthy of punishment for doing evil, if he did not this ἑαυτῆ, ‘of himself;’” saith, “this the Holy and Prophe-tick Spirit hath taught us by Moses in these words, ‘See, I have set before thee good and evil, chuse the good &c.’ and also by Esaias the prophet, speaking thus in the name of God, ‘If you be wil-ling and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the earth; but if you will not hear, you shall be devoured by the sword, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.’” “The prophecy of Isaias,” saith Clemens of Alexandria, “saith, ‘If you be willing, &c. ἐφ’ ἡμῖν κείμενα διαλέγησθα καὶ τὴν αἵρεσιν, καὶ τὴν ἐκτροπήν,’ demon-strating that both the choice and the refusal,’ (viz. of faith and obe-dience, of which he there speaketh) ‘are in our power.’”^k Tertullian pronounces them “unsound in faith, and corrupters of the christian discipline, and excusers of all sin, who so refer all things to the will of God, *dicendo nihil fieri sine ejus nutu, ut non intelligamus aliquid esse in nobis ipsis,* ‘by saying, nothing is done without his appoint-ment, as that we cannot understand that any thing is left to our-selves to do:’ whereas though we learn from his precepts both what he would, and would not have done, *tamen nobis est volun-tas, et arbitrium eligendi alterum, sicut scriptum est, ecce posui ante te bonum et malum,* ‘yet is there in us a liberty of chusing either, according as it is written,’ ‘behold I have set before thee good and evil.’”^l St. Cyprian proves “*credendi, vel non*

† Apol. 2, p. 80, B. C. D.

k Strom. 1, p. 314, B.

l Exhort. ad Castit. cap. 2.

credendi libertatem in arbitrio positam, ‘that to believe or not was left to our own free choice.’”^m From the same texts, (Deut. xxx, 19. Isaiah i. 19,) Epiphanius, against the Pharisaical fate, cites those word of Isaiah, ‘*if ye be willing and obedient;*’ “whence,” saith he, “it is plainly manifest and indubitable, that God hath granted to man free-will, ὥστε περὶ τὸν ἄνθρωπον εἶναι τὸ ἀγαθοεργεῖν, ἢ τῶν φαύλων ἐφίεσθαι πραγμάτων, ‘so that it is in his power to do the good, or to chuse the evil.’”ⁿ Theodoret having cited those words of Christ, ‘*If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink;*’ adds, “Ἀλλὰ δὲ μύρια ἔυροι τις ἂν κἄν τοῖς θεοῖς εὐαγγελίοις κἄν τοῖς τῶν Ἀποστόλων συγγράμμασι δηλῆντα σαφῶς τῆς τῶν ἀνθρώπων φύσεως τὸ ἀνθαίρετον, ‘ten thousand things of this nature may be found both in the gospels and other writings of the apostles, clearly manifesting the liberty or self-election of the nature of man.’”^o St. Chrysostom speaks thus, “God saith, *If you will and if you will not, κυρίως ἡμᾶς ποιῶν τῆς ἀρετῆς καὶ κακίας, καὶ ἐπὶ τῇ γνώμῃ τῇ ἡμετέρῃ τιθεῖς;* ‘giving us power, and putting it in our own option to be virtuous, or vicious.’ The devil saith, *Thou canst not avoid thy fate;* God saith, ‘*I have put before thee fire and water, life and death, stretch forth thy hand to whether thou wilt.*’ The devil saith, *it is not in thee to stretch forth thy hand to them.*”^p And St. Cyril^q establisheth this doctrine from the same texts of scripture. And St. Austin proves from those words of Christ, ‘*either make the tree good and the fruit will be good, or make the tree evil and the fruit will be evil;*’ “*in nostrâ potestate situm esse mutare voluntatem,* ‘that it is put in our own power to change the will.’”^r It would be endless to transcribe all that the Fathers say upon this head.*

Secondly. To the same effect they speak, when they say the scripture testifies that God hath left man in a capacity of doing good or evil. Thus Irenæus^s having laid down this as a rule, “that it is in the power of man to work and retain what is good; and again, not to do, or to lose the good he hath done: for this

^m Test. ad Quirin. 1. 3, c. 52. ⁿ Hær. 16, adv. Pharis. sec. 4. ^o Adv. Gr. Serm. 5, To. 4, p. 543.

^p To. 6, Hom. 2, De Fato. p. 868. ^q L. 1, in Es. p. 21. ^r Contra Adiman. c. 26.

* See in Esa. 1, 19. St. Jerom. and St. Basil. Cyril. Alex. *ibid.* Clemen. Alex. Strom. 1, p. 314, B, Ex verbis Mosis, Deut. xxx, 19. Tertullian de Monog. c. 14. Basil. Hom. in Psal. lxi.

Ex Ecclus. xv, 15, 16, 17. August. de Gratia et Lib. Arb. c. 2.

^s L. 4, c. 72.

cause," saith he, "do the prophets exhort men to work righteousness, and to do good, *ὡς ἐφ' ἡμῶν ὄντος τῆ τοιάυτε*, 'as having it in their power so to do,' as we have shewed by many testimonies, and our Lord doth the same in many places, viz. Matt. v. 16. xxiv. 48—51. Luke vi. 46. xii. 35, 36, 47. xxi. 34. *ταῦτα γὰρ πάντα τὸ αὐτεξέχουσιον ἐπιδείκνυσι τῆ ἀνθρώπου*, 'all which words demonstrate the free-will of man.' And the apostle exhorts men in many places to do good works, which he could have no reason to do, *si in nobis non esset facere hæc, aut non facere*, 'if it were not in our power to do, or not to do what our Lord and his apostles do exhort us to do.'" Then he goes on to prove that "God hath preserved to man, *non tantum in operibus, sed etiam in fide liberum esse et suæ potestatis arbitrium*, 'that man hath free-will, or hath it in his power not only to do, but also to believe,'" from Mat. viii. 13. Matt. ix. 29. Mark ix. 23. And he concludes, that "all these texts shew man to be *suæ potestatis secundum fidem*, 'free as to his faith';" for as Clemens Alexandrinus saith, *τὸ πιστεῦναι τε, καὶ πείθεσθαι ἐφ' ἡμῶν*, 'it is in our power to believe and obey.'^b Tertullian is as express in this, saying, that "God made man at first after his own image, *arbitrii sui libertate et potestate*, 'with liberty of, and power over, his own will;' and that this appears from the law that he gave him, *non enim poneretur lex ei qui non haberet obsequium debitum legi in suâ potestate, nec rursus comminatio transgressori adscriberetur, si non et contemptus legis in arbitrii libertatem hominî deputaretur*; 'for neither would God have given a law to him who had not freedom to obey it, nor have threatened death to the transgressor, if he had not a freedom to contemn it: *sic et in posteris legibus Creatoris invenias*, 'and so was it also in the laws given by God after the fall,' in which he sets before man good and evil, life and death; nor would the order of discipline be disposed by precepts in which God calls us from, and exhorts us to things, and threatens our disobedience, *nisi et ad obsequium et ad contemptum, libero, et voluntario homine*, 'did not man freely and voluntarily obey or contemn them?'"^c Origen is also copious in this assertion, for having cited those words, '*And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee?*' He adds, "Let them blush at these words, who deny that man hath

^b 'Ἐφ' ἡμῶν τὸ πείθεσθαι καὶ τὸ μὴ. Strom. 2, p. 370, Strom. 7, p. 707, Strom. 2, p. 380, 387, 390.

^c Lib. 2, contr. Marcion. c. 5, 6.

free-will; for, *quomodo posceret ab homine Deus, nisi haberet homo in sua potestate quod poscenti Deo deberet offerre*, 'how could God require that of man which he had not in his power to offer to him?'^d And again, "the soul, saith he, "doth not incline to either part out of necessity, for then neither vice nor virtue could be ascribed to it, nor would its choice of virtue deserve reward, nor its declination to vice punishment; *sed servatur ei in omnibus libertas arbitrii, ut in quodcumque voluerit ipsa declinet*, 'but the liberty of its will is preserved in all things that it may incline to what it will;' as it is written, '*behold I have set before thee life and death.*'^e St. Austin^f also, from many passages in which the scripture saith, *do not so, or so; or do this, or that*, lays down this general rule, *ubi dicitur Noli hoc, aut Noli illud, et ubi ad aliquid faciendum, vel non faciendum in divinis monitis opus voluntatis exigitur, SATIS LIBERUM DEMONSTRATUR ARBITRIUM*, that all such places 'SUFFICIENTLY DEMONSTRATE THE LIBERTY OF THE WILL;'^g and this he saith against them, *qui sic gratiam Dei defendunt, ut negent liberum arbitrium*, 'who so asserted the grace of God, as to deny the liberty of the will,' or thought it was so defended by him and his partners as to destroy it."

Thirdly. They add, that all God's commands and prohibitions, exhortations and dehortations, all his threats and reprehensions, all his encouragements and promises, would be vain and unreasonable, and all his punishments unjust and his rewards groundless, if man after the fall had not still the liberty to do what is commanded, and forbear what is forbidden. For, *First*, saith St. Austin, *ipsa divina præcepta homini non prodescent, nisi haberet liberum voluntatis arbitrium, quo ea faciens ad promissa præmia perveniret*; 'the divine precepts would profit none, if they had not free-will, by which they doing them might obtain the promised rewards assigned to the doers of them.' "These precepts," saith he, "cut off men's excuse from ignorance, or saying *I did not this because I did not know it was my duty*; but then because others," saith he, "accuse God of being wanting in giving them power to do good, or inducing them to sin:"^h Against these men he cites that known passage of the Son of Sirach, [*God left man in the hands of his counsel, SI VOLUERIS, SERVABIS MANDATA,*

^d Hom. 12, in Numb. Fol. 113. F.

^f Tom. 7, de Gr. et lib. Arb. c. 2.

^e Lib. 1, in Rom. Fol. 138. E.

^g Cap. 1.

^h Ibid. Cap. 2.

‘if he would, to keep the commandments.’ *He had set before him fire and water, and to which of them he pleased he might stretch forth his hand; he had placed life and death before him, and which he pleased should be given him.*’] And then cries out, *Ecce apertissime videmus expressum liberum humanæ voluntatis arbitrium*, ‘behold here a very plain proof of the liberty of human will,’ or an express in what it consists; “and this,” saith he, “is also evident from all God’s injunctions to do and keep his commandments; for *quomodo jubet si non est liberum arbitrium?* ‘for how (or why) doth he command, if man hath not free-will or power to obey?’” This therefore, if St. Austin answers pertinently, must be the true import of these men’s excuse,—that they wanted free-will, or power to obey God’s precepts; and therefore he enquires “what do all God’s commands shew but the free-will of man?‡ *Neque enim præciperentur nisi homo haberet propriam voluntatem quâ divinis præceptis obediret*; ‘for they would not be commanded, if man had not that freedom of will by which he could obey them.’” And therefore in his book *DE FIDE* against the Manichees, who denied that man had free-will, or that it was, *in potestate hominis facere bene aut male*, ‘in his power to do well or ill;’ he makes this an indication of their blindness, *quis enim non clamet stultum esse præcepta dare ei cui liberum non est quod præcipitur facere, et iniquum esse eum damnare cui non fuit potestas jussa complere? Et has injustitias, et iniquitates miseri non intelligunt Deo se adscribere.*^k ‘For who,’ saith he, ‘will not cry out that it is folly to command him who hath not liberty to do what is commanded, and that it is unjust to condemn him who hath it not in his power to do what is required? And yet these miserable men understand not that they ascribe this wickedness and injustice to God.’ “Whosoever,” saith Eusebius, “doth industriously pursue, or command, or teach any thing, or exhort any man to obey or not, to sin or not; or reproves any for sin, or commends any for doing well, is he not thereby plainly convinced that he only retains the name of fate, τὸ μὲν ἔργον καταλίπων τῷ παρ’ ἡμῶν καὶ τῷ αὐτεξέσει, ‘but leaves the actions to our liberty, and our own power?’”^l Clemens of Alexandria declares, that “neither praises nor reprehensions, rewards nor punishments are

‡ *Ibid.* Cap. 4.

k Cap. 10.

l *Præp. Evang.* l. 6, c. 6, p. 244.

just, *μη τῆς ψυχῆς ἐχέουσης τὴν ἐξουσίαν τῆς ὀρμῆς, καὶ ἀφορμῆς, ἀλλ' ἀκασίβ τῆς κακίας ὄσης*, 'if the soul hath not the power of chusing, or abstaining, but evil is involuntary.'^m Yea he makes this the very "foundation of salvation, without which there could be neither any reasonable baptism, nor divine ordering of our natures, because faith would not be in our own power."ⁿ "*Sui arbitrii est anima, et in quam voluerit partem est ei liberum declinare*, 'the soul,' saith Origen, 'acts by her own choice, and it is free for her to incline to whatever part she will;'^o and therefore God's judgment of her is just, because of her own accord she complies with good or bad monitors. Upon this supposition," saith he, "it is that good men are praised, and that God saith reasonably, '*Well done, good and faithful servant;*' and again, '*O thou wicked and slothful servant;*' that he saith to them of the right hand, '*Come, ye blessed, &c.*' and to them of the left hand, '*depart from me, ye cursed, &c.*'"^p "One of these two things are necessary," saith Epiphanius, "*ἢ γενέσεως ὑπαρχέουσης*, 'either that a necessity arising from our being born,' there should be no judgment, *διὰ τὸ τὸν πρᾶττοντα ἐκ ἀφ' ἑαυτῆ πρᾶττειν*, 'because men act not freely;,' or if laws be justly made by God, and punishments threatened to, and inflicted on, the wicked, and God's judgments be according to truth, there is no fate; for *διὰ τὸν δυνασθαι ἁμαρτάνειν, καὶ μὴ ἁμαρτεῖν, τὸν μὲν διὰ τὰ ἁμαρτήματα δικην ἀπ' αἰτεῖσθαι, τὸν δὲ ἔπαινον ἀπεκδέχεσθαι διὰ τὸ ἔυπεπραγένας*, 'for therefore is one punished for his sins, and another praised for his good works, because he hath it in his power to sin or not.'" "For how," saith Theodoret, "can he justly punish a nature, *ἀγαθὸν τι δράσαι μὴ δυναμένην, ἀλλὰ τοῖς τῆς κακίας πεπεδημένην δεσμοῖς*, 'which had no power to do good, but was bound in the bonds of wickedness?'"^r And again, "God having made the rational nature *αὐτεξέουσαν*, 'with power over its own actions,'^s averts men from evil things, and provokes them to do what is good, by laws and exhortations, *ἐκ ἀναγκάζει δὲ μὴ βηλομένην τῶν ἀμεινόνων μεταλαχεῖν, ἵνα μὴ παρακινήσῃ, τὰς ὀρας τῆς φύσεως*, 'but he doth not necessitate the un-

^m Strom. 1, p. 311, A.

ⁿ Ὡστε ἐδὲ θάπλισμα ἔτι ἔυλογον ἀλλ' ἄθεο ὄμιμα ἢ τῶν φύσεων αὐτοῖς ἐυρίσκειται διανομὴ τον θεμέλιον της σωτηρίας τὴν ἐκείσιν πίσιν ἐκ ἔχμα.

Strom. 2, p. 263, D.

^o In Num. Hom. 20, Fol. 135, H.

^p In Ep. ad Rom. Edit. Huet. Tom. 2, p. 465, 422.

^q Her. 16, p. 53.

^r Tom. 4, 269.

^s Adv. Gent. Serm. 5, p. 542.

willing to embrace what is better, that he may not overturn the bounds of nature.'” Innumerable are the passages of this nature which might be cited from the Fathers; but these at present shall suffice, because some of them may be mentioned hereafter.

CHAP. III.

Propounding arguments from reason to evince this freedom of the will from necessity.

TO proceed, **SECONDLY**, to the rational inducements to evince this freedom of the will from necessity, or a determination to one, that is, either to good or evil only, I argue,

I. ARGUMENT FIRST. From what I have insisted on more largely in the preface to the **THIRD DISCOURSE**, to shew that God acts suitably to our facultiés; to wit, by the illumination of our understanding, and by persuading of the will. For if God work only on the will by moral causes, then lays he no necessity upon it, since moral causes have no necessary influence on the effect, but move only by such persuasions as the will may resist; as when St. Paul persuaded the Corinthians to give alms. And whereas too many divines take this for granted, that though God hath laid no necessity on man to do evil by his own decrees, yet fallen man lies under a necessity of doing evil since the fall, by reason of that disability he hath contracted by it to do any thing which is truly good: I have demonstrated the falsehood of that supposition, in the second part of that discourse, *Section Fifth*, and shewed in *Section Third* of the **STATE OF THE QUESTION** in this discourse, that though the evil habits added to our natural corruption do render it exceeding difficult, they do not render it impossible for them to do what is good and acceptable in the sight of God.

II. ARGUMENT SECOND. I argue from the received notion of the word; for as Le Blanc^a observes, according to the common sense of mankind, and the received use of speaking, that only is said to be free for us to do, (1.) Which it is in our power to do; (2.) which may be done otherwise than it is done;

^a De Lib. Arbit. part. 2, § 20.

and (3.) about which there is ground for consultation and deliberation. Seeing then, (i.) *necessarium est quod non potest aliter se habere*, 'that only is necessary to be done one way which cannot be done otherwise;' and that which is thus necessary cannot be free, because that only is so which may be done otherwise. (ii.) Seeing that is not in our power to omit which we are determined to do, nor is it in our power to do that which we are determined to omit; if that be only free which it is in our power to do, or not to do; that evil which through the fall we are determined to do, or that omission of good we are necessitated to; and that good which by the divine influx we are necessitated or determined to perform, cannot be free; and so can neither be blame-worthy nor rewardable. And (iii.) Seeing there can be no rational consultation or deliberation about those things which antecedently are either necessary or impossible; and so when persons are infrustrably determined to one, that one thing becomes necessary, and any other thing is thereby made to them impossible; they who are only free in matters about which they can reasonably consult and deliberate, cannot act freely in those things which they are thus determined to do, or not do. Moreover all consultation and deliberation is in order to choice and election: Now choice, or election, in the very nature of it, is of more than one; but there can be no choice of more than one in him who is determined to one, and so a consequent election cannot consist with an antecedent determination to one. If therefore the divine grace in man's conversion infrustrably determines him to one; or if the disability contracted by the fall determines men to chuse that which is evil only, and to omit that which is truly good; both these determinations must take away the freedom of men's actions, at least as far as they are worthy of praise or dispraise, of reward or punishment. For,

First. Either the divine influx leaves men room to chuse to turn to God, or it doth not: if it doth not, they do not chuse to turn to God when they are thus converted: if it doth, it cannot infrustrably determine them to turn to him, because it leaves it to their choice whether they will turn or not. *Again*, either this disability determines lapsed man to what is evil only, and so to the omission of what is truly good, or it doth not so: if it doth not so, it leaves him an ability to do good: if it doth not, he

cannot properly be said to *chuse* not to do good. In a word, when God calls, invites, and exhorts him to chuse the thing that is good, and to *learn to do well*; when he attempts by threatenings to affright him from continuance in his evil ways, and by his promises to allure and to incite him to return unto him; are not these things designed to engage him to consider of, and attend to, God's exhortations; to consult and deliberate how he may avoid the evils threatened, and obtain the blessings promised? But if they lie under an utter disability of doing what is spiritually good, and so of obtaining the blessings promised, to what purpose should they deliberate about it? To what purpose should they consider how they may avoid the evil that they do? I conclude therefore this argument with that which Gennadius^a delivers as the doctrine of the church of God, that "though man by the fall hath lost, *vigorem arbitrii*, 'the vigour of his free-will,' *non tamen electionem, ne non esset suum quod evitaret peccatum, nec merito indulgeretur quod non arbitrio diluisset*; 'yet hath he not lost his choice, lest it should not be of his choice that he avoided sin, nor should that be accounted to him for reward which he did not freely put away:' *manet ergo ad quærendam salutem arbitrii libertas, sed admonente prius Deo et invitante*; 'there remains therefore yet to fallen man a freedom of will to seek after his salvation, though God must first admonish and invite him so to do'."

III. ARGUMENT THIRD. Le Blanc adds, (*ibid.*) that all the actions which proceed freely from us may be subject to a command, and by the law of God or man may be enjoined or forbidden; but this cannot agree to those acts, *circa quos voluntas immutabiliter se habet*, 'in which the will is so immutably determined that it never can or could do otherwise.' So that if this be the case of lapsed man, his sin cannot proceed freely from him, and so cannot be reasonably forbidden; for as St. Austin^b saith, *peccati teneri reum quempiam quia non fecit id quod facere non potuit, summæ iniquitatis et insanix est*, 'it is the height of madness and injustice to hold any person guilty because he did not that which he could not do;' as will be farther evident even from the essential condition of a law, viz. that it be just; those laws being certainly unjust which prohibit that under a penalty which a man cannot

^a De Dogm. Eccl. cap. 21.

^b L. de Duabus Anim. c. 12.

possibly shun, or require that which cannot possibly be done by him of whom it is required. And the greater is the penalty, the greater still is the injustice. For, (1.) just laws are the ordinances of wisdom and right reason; whereas that which commands impossibilities can never be required reasonably or wisely. *Quis enim non clamet stultum esse, præcepta ei dare cui liberum non est quod præcipitur facere?*^c ‘For who,’ saith St. Austin, ‘will not pronounce it folly, to command him who is not free to do what is commanded?’ (2.) Just laws are instituted for the publick good, and God hath made this declaration concerning his own precepts, that *he commands them for our good*; but that law which prescribes impossibilities under a penalty upon non-performance, cannot be instituted for the publick good, but rather for the greatest evil to the generality of mankind, who are said to be left to the defect and disability of their own wills. (3.) Good laws do shew to a man what is to be done by him, and what is to be shunned; but those laws which prescribe what cannot be done or avoided, cannot direct a man to what he is to do, or what he is to shun. And, indeed, who feels not the truth of those words of St. Austin,^d *iniquum esse eum damnare cui non fuit potestas jussa complere*, ‘that it is unjust to condemn him as disobedient, who hath no power to obey,’ or to punish men for doing evil, though they lie under a necessity of doing it, only because they do it willingly, seeing they must do it willingly, if they do it at all; because they must first will to do it, and so it is as necessary for them to be willing, as it is to do it?

IV. ARGUMENT FOURTH. If wicked men be not necessitated to do the evil that they do, or to neglect the good they do neglect, then have they freedom from necessity in both these cases; and if they be thus necessitated, then neither their sins of omission or commission could deserve that name; it being essential to the nature of sin, according to St. Austin’s definition of it, that it be an action, *à quo liberum est abstinere*,^e ‘from which the sinner might abstain.’ Three things seem plainly necessary to make an action or omission culpable, (1.) that it be in our power to perform or to forbear it; for as Origen, and all the Fathers, say, *οὐδεὶς ἀδύνατον μὴ ποιήσας ὑεκτός ἐστι*, ‘no man is blame-worthy for

c L. de Fide contr. Man. c. 10.

d Ibid.

e Aquid Euseb. Præp. Ev. L. 6. c. 11. p. 227.

not doing what he could not do.' (2.) That we be obliged to perform, or to forbear it; for where there is no obligation, there can be no transgression. (3.) That we omit that which we ought to have done, or do that which we ought not to have done; now seeing *nemo tenetur ad impossibile*, 'no man can be obliged to what is to him impossible,' it cannot truly be affirmed that any man ought to do what he never had the power to do, or to leave undone that which he could not shun, for then there would be no place for expostulation, for chiding or reprehending men on these accounts, seeing they could not help it. 'O Jerusalem, wilt thou not be made clean?^f When shall it once be?' saith God,—to what purpose, if by the fall they were disabled even from being willing so to be? 'I will destroy,' saith he, 'my people, sith they return not from their evil ways;^g "why," might they answer, "O thou "righteous God, was it ever in our power to turn from them, or "convert ourselves? When, Lord? Was it in our father Adam "before his fall? Then, sure, we did not need to be converted. "Or was it after this fall? Alas! then were we utterly disabled "from doing this without that special grace thou hast not yet "been pleased to vouchsafe." 'O Jerusalem, how oft,' saith Christ, 'would I have gathered thy children, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!^h And again, you will not come unto me that ye might have life.'ⁱ "How could we help it?" might they truly answer, provided they were disabled both from coming, and from being willing so to do.

CHAP. IV.

Shewing the affinity of the opinions of our adversaries concerning liberty, with that of Mr. Hobbes; and with the fate of the philosophers, condemned by the christian Fathers.

THE peculiar notions of Mr. Hobbes, and of those who concur with him in these opinions, (that "our liberty is well consistent with necessity, as being only a power to do what we will, though we lie under a necessity to have that will; and that it is sufficient that we chuse to do what we do, though we lie under a necessity, if we chuse at all, to chuse as we do,")

^f Jeremiah xliii, 27.

^g Jeremiah xv, 7.

^h Luke xliii, 34.

ⁱ John v, 40.

lie under this considerable disadvantage, that they were universally condemned by all christians for the first four centuries, who asserted, that a liberty from necessity was a Fundamental Principle, without which there was no place for vice or virtue, praise or dispraise, rewards or punishments, heaven or hell, but an introduction of Stoical fate; confuting that and Manicheism, and other heresies, on this very account, that they destroyed the liberty of man's will, and left them under a necessity and a determination to one. I therefore shall endeavour to shew,

FIRST. That there is a plain agreement betwixt the doctrine of Mr. Hobbes, and of these men, concerning this matter, as to the great concernments of religion.

SECONDLY. That their opinion differs very little, and in things only of little moment, from the Stoical fate, and lies obnoxious to the same absurdities which the philosophers and christians did object against it.

THIRDLY. That their doctrine hath been condemned by all the primitive christians for the first four centuries. And

FOURTHLY. That St. Austin, who first introduced the contrary doctrine, is forced by it to contradict his former self, to renounce what he had said in confutation of the Manichees; is unable to answer his own arguments; and falleth into manifest absurdities. And,

I. FIRST. That there is a manifest agreement betwixt their opinion and that of Mr. Hobbes will be evident from an exact comparison of their words together. Mr. Hobbes then asserts,

First. That "though the will be necessitated, yet the doing what we will is liberty;" which is perfectly the same with their assertion, that "the liberty of the will consists not in a freedom from necessity, but only in a freedom from co-action or compulsion."^k

Secondly. That "he who takes away the liberty of doing according to our will, taketh away the nature of sin; but he that denies the liberty to will, doth not do so." And do not they say this, who teach that "though fallen man is become so far a slave to sin, that whatever he does he cannot but sin; yet that necessity of

^k Ἐκείσιν, quod est liberum potest consistere cum ἀναγκαίῳ, sed non cum ἀκρεσίῳ. Ursin.

‡ Brainh. Cast. p. 806.

of doing evil takes not away his natural liberty, and therefore not his sin?"^m

Thirdly. That "if liberty cannot stand with necessity, it cannot stand with the decrees of God; of which decrees necessity is a consequent."ⁿ And what do they say less who teach that "them whom God calls according to his purpose, he so moves to believe in God, and to love God and his brother, that faith and love infallibly thence follow; and when that motion comes, it is impossible for man not to believe and love God?"^o

Fourthly. That "a man's will is something; but the liberty of his will is nothing." "And most Protestants," saith Le Blanc, "deny that after man's fall there remained any liberty in him to do what is morally good."^p

Fifthly. That "he is free to do a thing, who may do it if he have the will to do it, and may forbear if he have the will to forbear;^q and yet if it be necessary that he should have the will to do, the action is necessarily to follow; and if there be a necessity that he shall have the will to forbear, the forbearing also will be necessary."^r So that, according to him, he that hath a will to do, lies under a necessity to have that will; and he that hath a will to forbear, lies under a necessity to have the will to forbear; his choice being determined to what he shall chuse by precedent necessary causes. Now is he not under a necessity to have the will to forbear what is morally good, who hath lost his liberty to what is so? And is not he under a like necessity of willing only what is evil, who, whatsoever he doth, and therefore whatsoever he wills to do, can only do evil?

^m Quamvis enim, absente Gratia, homo sit peccati servus, et quicquid agat non possit nisi peccare, ista tamen male agendi necessitas naturalem ejus libertatem non tollit. Le Blanc de Lib. Hom. Arb. circa bonum Morale, Part. 2, § 39. ⁿ Br. p. 828.

^o Deus hominem quem secundum propositum vocat, sic movet ad credendum Deo et ad diligendum Deum et proximum, ut infallibiliter inde sequatur fides et dilectio, et posita tali motione impossibile est hominem non credere atque diligere. Le Blanc. de Lib. Hom. Arb. Par. 3. § 17 & 21.

Utrique in eo conveniunt, necesse esse ut agat ille quem ad agendum movet atque impellit Divinae Gratiae, vel providentiae vis et efficacia, quoniam ab illa actione Dei actio hominis separari non potest.

'Both of them agree in this,—that it is necessary for him to act whom the force and efficacy of divine grace and providence compel to act, because the action of man cannot be separated from that action of God. ED.

^p Negant Protestantium plurimi post peccatum in homine mansisse liberum arbitrium respectu boni moralis. Le Blanc. de Lib. Hom. Arb. circa bonum Morale, Par. 2, § 43.

^q Bramh. p. 651.

^r Bramh. p. 654, 660, 666.

Sixthly. He adds, that “the necessity of an action doth not make the law that prohibits it unjust; for it is not the necessity, but the will to break the law that makes the action unjust; and what necessary cause soever precedes an action, yet if that action be forbidden, he that doeth it willingly may justly be punished.”^a And do not they say the same, who make it necessary for a man in a lapsed state to sin, that is, transgress the law of God; and yet add, that this hinders not that, *quo minus liberè in peccatum feratur, et bonum lege præceptum adversetur et omittat* ‘his sinning and omitting the good required by the law is done freely?’^b

Seventhly. And lastly, he asserts, “things may be necessary and yet praiseworthy, and also necessary and yet dispraised;”^c which plainly is the same with the doctrine of those men who say that, *inevitabile non tollit rationem meriti aut demeriti*, ‘the inevitable necessity of an action hinders not the merit or demerit, reward or punishment of that action.’ And further, to complete the parallel, observe,

1. That sin having no efficient, but only a deficient cause, to lie under an unfrustrable defect of doing that which is after that defect commanded, and under a like disability of avoiding that which is afterwards forbidden, is to be determined to and lie under a necessity of sinning, that is, of transgressing these laws, because it is to lie under a necessity of being thus deficient.

2. That though it seemeth certain, that this necessary defect is *ab extrinseco*, ‘from an external cause,’ it being, saith St. Austin, *pœna peccati*, ‘the punishment of sin,’ and so the action of the judge; “it being,” (ii.) saith Bishop Davenant, “the result of God’s arbitrary imputation when he was free, if he had pleased, to do otherwise; it being, (iii.) a defect immediately resulting from the action of others, the transgression of Adam, that is, of one person, and the birth of all men from him, and without any other requisite than that of being born; yet were it *ab intrinseco*, ‘from an internal cause,’ as blindness, deafness, disability to speak, is in them who are born blind, deaf, or dumb, it must be still as inevitable as the defect is in these instances; and lapsed man thus born must be as much disabled by it as he could be from any extrinsic cause whatsoever: And therefore seeing by it he lies under as great necessity of being thus defective as he is determined by an ex-

^a Bramh. p. 678.^b Le Blanc ib. § 56,^c Br. p. 679.

trinsick cause to be so; and that extrinsick necessity is allowed to render the action of him who lieth under it unculpable, it must be likewise thus with him who lies under the like necessity from an intrinsick cause immediately resulting from his birth.

3. Observe, that it is the same thing as to my obedience or disobedience to have a disability by nature, as to have it from the substance or matter of which I am composed; because by having it from the sin of my nature before I had a being, I come into the world as much disabled as I could be by the other, from the performing due obedience, or the avoiding disobedience, to the laws of God.

4. Observe, that it is the same thing as to my eternal interest to have no free-will at all, as to have none in reference to the conditions on which that interest depends; and therefore it is no great difference betwixt the opinion of these men and that of Mr. Hobbs, that the one destroys the liberty of all our actions, and theirs only destroys our liberty in spiritual and moral actions; seeing both equally destroy our liberty of chusing life eternal, and of avoiding everlasting death.

II. SECONDLY. With these we may compare the fate asserted by the Stoicks, and by many others. For though they talk more than others of the τὸ ἐφ' ἡμῖν and the αὐτεξέσιον, 'the things we have in our power, and the power we have over ourselves;' yet all this at the last amounts only to an αὐτεξέσιον ἐξ ἀναγκῆς, 'a liberty of doing what must be done out of necessity;' for all the liberty they allow to the will of man is this, that he may freely do what if he doth refuse to do fate will compel him to do; or may refuse to do, what if he would do fate will compel him to leave undone. This they explain by the example of a dog tied to a cart's tail;^d he may follow without being drawn, but if he doth not, he must follow by being drawn. Τὸ αὐτὸ δὴ περὶ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ μὴ βεβλόμενοι γὰρ ἀκολουθεῖν ἀναγκασθήσονται πάντως εἰς τὸ πεκρῶμενον εἰσελθεῖν. 'And this also is the case of men, for if they will not follow fate, they shall by all means be necessitated to come under the laws of fate.' "Their wise man," saith Seneca,^e "doth nothing unwillingly; *necessitatem effugit quia vult quod ipsa coactura est,*

^d Liber ineditus apud Menaque illud Stoicorum apud Laert. Καθ' ἕμμαρμένην δε φάσι πάντα γενέσθαι. l. 7. p. 459.

^e Ep. 54.

‘ he avoids necessity by doing willingly what otherwise she would compel him to do;’ and this is the plain import of the prayer of *Epictetus* out of *Cleanthes*, “lead me, O fate, to that to which thou hast ordained, that I may follow willingly; for if I do not follow so, I shall be compelled to do it.”^f

Secondly. This necessity, say they, proceedeth from external and antecedent causes: as either, (i.) the eternal decree of God disposing all things to happen as they do. “*Omnia certâ et in æternum dictâ lege decurrunt*, ‘all things,’ saith *Seneca*, ‘follow by a certain law established from eternity;’^g *Olim constitutum est quid gaudeas quid fleas*, ‘It is of old ordained at what we shall rejoice or weep,’ *fata nos ducunt*, ‘we are led by fate;’^h and the first law of fate is this, *stare decreto*, ‘that God will stand to his decree, ‘and not be moved from it by prayers or sacrifices. If any man doth profitably use them, *id ipsum quoque in fato est*, ‘it is also his fate to use them.’” “Accordingly the concurrence of causes,” saith *Mr. Hobbs*, “whereof every one is determined to be such, may well be called the decree of God in this respect, that they were all set and ordered by the eternal cause of all things, God Almighty.”ⁱ Or, (ii.) being an eternal series of causes upon which all effects depend, “*Ordinem rerum fati æterna series rotat, causa ex causâ pendet*, ‘the eternal course of fate turns about all things,’ saith *Seneca*, ‘one cause depends upon another.’” “It is,” say all, “an immutable series of causes, by virtue of which thus knit to one another, all things are produced; or a fatal necessity, by virtue of which whatsoever happens flows from a continuation of causes.”^j Now here observe with *Bishop Bramhall*,

1. That “it is not much material whether they ascribe this necessity to God’s decrees, or to the stars, or to a connection of causes, so as they establish necessity; for necessity, upon what ground soever it be established, renders the doom of all the same.”^m

^f Ἄγε με——σὺ ἡ πεπωρωμένη ὑποὶ πότῃ ἐμῶν εἰμι διατεταγμένος ὡς ἔψομαι γὰρ ἀόγκος ἢν δὲ γὰρ μὴ θεῶν ἢδὲν ἤτηρον ἔψομαι. *Enchirid.* p. 37.

^g *De provid.* c. 5. ^h *Natural. Qu.* c. 36, 37. ⁱ *Br.* p. 665. ^k *Ubi sup.*

^l *Immutabilis causarum coherentium series, Sen. ad Helvid.* c. 8. *Fatalis quedam necessitas qua, quicquid accidit, id ex causarum continuatione fluxisse dicitur. Cic. de Nat. D. I., l. n. 50, 39. De Div. I. l. n. 106. De Fato, n. 16. Plut. de Pl. Philos. I. 2. c. 27, 28. De Stoic. Repugn.* p. 1056.

^m *P.* 692, 693.

Either they must run into this absurdity, that the effect is determined, the cause remaining undetermined; or else hold such a connection of causes as the Stoicks did.

2. That whereas they say “the Stoicks took away liberty and contingency,” but they allow them; as this is false as to their notion of liberty joined with necessity, so is it little to the purpose, since they allow it only in actions which will do us no good as to our spiritual and eternal interests, depriving men without that grace God hath decreed not to afford to reprobates, of liberty to chuse what is spiritually good. For surely men thus determined to one, that is, to do evil only, have only the liberty to chuse by what actions they will incur damnation.

Now the natural reason of mankind induced the Heathen Philosophers to condemn this doctrine of fatal necessity upon these several accounts,

III. *First.* That it fundamentally destroyed the liberty of human actions, and left nothing in our power; “for no man can be said ἀντεξουσίως ἐνεργεῖν, ‘to act freely,’ who by external cases is necessitated to act, or not to act.”ⁿ “And they,” saith Cicero, “who introduce an eternal series of causes, *ii mentem hominis voluntate liberâ spoliatam necessitate fati devinciunt*, ‘they rob the soul of its liberty, and leave us nothing in our own power;’^o *nam nihil esset in nostrâ potestate si res ita se haberet.*” “It is the most ridiculous of all things,” saith CEnomaus, “to say τῷ καὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις τὶ εἶναι, καὶ εἶρμον ἔδὲν ἤπτον εἶναι, ‘that any thing is in the power of man, and yet that there is a connection of causes;’^p “for this therefore,” say they, “destroys the liberty of our desires, choice, and consequently of our actions, because it introduceth an antecedent and external cause on which they depend, as the effect upon the cause: for a cause being that, *quæ id efficit cujus est causa*, ‘which produceth the effect;’^q a cause which necessitates the action, renders the effect necessary; and when the effect depends upon my appetite, will, desire, and choice, must lay the like necessity on them. And whereas the patrons of fate would sometimes own, that they “did many things willingly, but added, that μετὰ τῆτο αὐτὰ γένεσθαι καθείμαρτο, ‘they were determined by fate to will them,’ and so their very will was, περιειλημένον ὑπὸ τῆς

ⁿ Simpl. in Epict. p. 25.

^o De Fato, n. 16

^p Ibid. n. 7.

^q Ibid n. 26.

εἰμαρμένους ‘involved in or contained under the decree of fate.’ This fate,” say they, “can no more consist with the liberty of the will, than sweet with bitter, white with black, cold with heat; for as those things are said to be done by fate, ὅσα καὶ ἐκόντων καὶ ἀκόντων ἡμῶν πάντως γινεται, ‘which are certainly done whether we will or no;’ so those things are said to be done, παρ’ ἡμᾶς, ‘by our will,’ ὅσα ἐκ τῆ σπουδᾶζεῖν ἡμᾶς καὶ ενεργεῖν ἐπὶ τέλος ἔρχεται, ‘which are brought to pass by our study and labour, and only through our sloth and negligence are left undone.’”

Secondly. That if our actions did proceed from such a fate, no man could deserve praise or dispraise, reward or punishment, for any of his actions: “for hence,” saith Cicero, “it follows that our actions and choice is not in our own power: *ex quo efficitur ut neque laudationes justæ sint, nec vituperationes, nec honores, nec supplicia*; ‘whence it follows, that there is nothing in our actions which justly can deserve praise or dispraise, reward or punishment.’” “If such a fate should be allowed,” saith Alcinoüs, τὸ ἐφ’ ἡμῶν οὐχ ἡστέται, καὶ ἔπαινοι, καὶ ψόγοι καὶ πᾶν τὸ τοιούτοις παραπλήσιον, ‘our liberty is destroyed together with praise and dispraise, and every thing that is like to it.’”^t “They,” saith Simplicius, “who take away, τὸ ἐφ’ ἡμῶν, ‘our liberty,’ ἔτοι καὶ τῆς ἀρετῆς καὶ τῆς κακίας ψυχικὴν διαφορὰν ἀναίρεισι, ‘they take away the natural difference betwixt vice and virtue, and leave no place for praise or dispraise:’”^u “For to praise and honour men,” saith CEnomaüs, “for being good or bad out of necessity, is as absurd, ὡς εἰ τὲς μὲν καλῆς τὰ σώματα ἐπαινοῖη καὶ γεραίρει, τὲς δὲ αἰσχυρῆς ψέγοι καὶ κολάζοι, ‘as if a man should praise and honour them for having handsome bodies, and dispraise and punish them for being deformed.’”^x And lastly, “these very men,” saith Alexander Aphrodisiensis, “by exhorting men to use discipline and study, and by leaving volumes to instruct young men how to live, and condemning others who, ἐ τὰ προσήκοντα δρῶσιν, ‘do not things convenient, or what they ought to do,’ evert the necessity of fate, συνίστασθαι δε κατὰ φύσιν ἡμῶν ὑπάρχειν τὸ αὐτεξέσιον, ‘and establish the natural liberty of the will.’”^y

^r Diog. apud Euseb. Præp. Ev. l. 6, c. 11, p. 266. B. D.

^s Ibid. n. 30.

^t De Phil. Plat. c. 26.

^u P. 29.

^x Apud Euseb. ibid. p. 260. D.

^y Ibid. p. 272.

Thirdly. This doctrine of fate, say they, leaves no place for repentance, or for accusing ourselves, or others; “whereas,” saith Diogenianus, “when we do any thing without deliberation, πολλάκις μετανοῶμεν, ‘we frequently repent,’ and blame ourselves for our rashness; and when we see others act in like manner, we pronounce them offenders, ὡς εἰς ἡμῖν ὄντων τῶν τοιούτων, ‘as believing these things are in our own power.’”^z

Fourthly. They add, that, were this so, God could not justly punish men for their iniquities, they being only the result of unavoidable necessity; for thus they who are punished plead their cause in CEnomaus, with Jupiter and Apollo,^e “ἐ δίκαια ποιεῖς, ὦ Ἀπολλων, ‘thou dealest not with us justly, Apollo;’ thou dost not righteously punish us who have not offended. And why doth Jupiter himself, ἡ της ἡμετέρας ἀνάγκης ἀνάγκη, ‘the impulsive cause of our necessity,’ punish us, rather than himself who hath imposed upon us this necessity. Cease, Jupiter, to be angry, ἔσι γὰρ ὃ πέπρωται καὶ τῆτο προστέτακται ποιεῖν ὁ σὸς εἰρμός ἡμεῖς δὲ πρὸς τῆτον ἄδέν εσμεν, ‘for that is only done which fate, and the series of causes, ordered to be done, and we are not able to resist.’ We justly say to you, Oh ye Gods, that you permitted us not to be good;^b and not only so, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐβιάσασθε εἶναι πονηρῶς, ‘but ye have also laid upon us a necessity to be evil.’” Note,

2. That this fate was brought into the church by the Colobarians,^c the followers of Bardesanes, and the Priscillianists, and before them by the Marcionites,^d who abstained from matrimony on this opinion,—that nature was evil by reason of the evil matter of which we were composed. “And this doctrine,” saith Clemens of Alexandria, “they learned from the philosophers, to all whom it was common *fato adscribere conversationes hominum*, ‘to ascribe the actions of men to fate.’”^e “Now the doctrine of the christians is this,” saith Justin Martyr, “that nothing is done

^z Alex. Aphræd. *ibid.* ^a Apud Euseb. *ibid.* p. 260. B. ^b *Ibid.* D. ^c August. *Har.* 15.

^d ‘Οἱ μὲν ἀπὸ Μαρκεῖων ὅ φύσιν κακὴν ἐκ τῆ ὕλης κακῆς. *Strom.* 3, p. 451, 15. Παρ’ ὧν (φιλοσόφων) τὴν γένεσιν κακὴν εἶναι ἀσεβῶς ἐκμαθόντες οἱ ἀπὸ Μαρκεῖων ὅ καθ’ ἑαυτοὺς ἰδίῳ δόγματι φροῦάττοισι. *Ibid.* D.

^e The followers of Marcion held that nature is evil as proceeding from evil matter. *Strom.* 3. ‘Of whom, (that is, of the philosophers,) the Marcionites having impiously learnt that generation was sinful, insolently boasted in it as their own peculiar dogma.’ ED. *c Har.* 70.

or suffered, καθ' ἑμαρμένην 'according to fate;' ἀλλὰ κατὰ μὲν προαίρεσιν ἑκαστὸν κατορθῶν, ἢ ἁμαρτάνειν, 'but that every man doth good or evil according to his own free choice.'^f And in this they all agree for these reasons,

(i.) Because no man can be worthy of punishment for what he was made, and cannot alter: "no man" saith Justin Martyr, "would be worthy of reward and praise, ἐκ ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ ἐλόμενος τὸ ἀγαθὸν ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆτον γινόμενος, 'who doth not of himself chuse to be good, but is made such;' nor if he be wicked, can he be justly punished, ἐκ ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ τοιῶτος ὢν, ἀλλ' ἐδὲν δυνάμενος εἶναι ἕτερον παρ' ὃ ἐγεγόνει, 'as being not such of himself, and being not able to be otherwise than as he was born.'^g "God made us so that we should be good not by nature, but by our own free-will and purpose; *nihil enim laudis est id esse à quo te mutari natura necessitas non sinat*, 'for it is not praise-worthy to be such as the necessity of nature forceth thee to be.'^h So Pseudo Clemens.

(ii.) That a necessity of sinning would free men from all fault, as doing nothing of their own accord, nor being so much the cause of their actions, as he who laid this necessity upon them. Thus Justin Martyr argues, "If all things flow from fate, ἕτε τὸ ἐφ' ἡμῖν ἐσιν ὄλωσ, 'and we have no freedom of will,' ἢθ' ἕτος ἀποδεκτὸς, ἢδὲ ἐκεῖνος μεμπτέος, neither is one to be approved, nor another blamed.' Again, "if mankind hath not power by his free choice to avoid evil, and to chuse the good ἀναίτιον ἐσι τῶν ὅπως δήποτε πραττόμενων, 'he is unblameable whatsoever he doth.'^a Origen, in his dissertation against fate,^b declares that "the assertors of it do, ἀπολύειν πάντος ἐγκλήματος, 'free men from all fault,'^c and cast the blame of all the evil that is done upon God; and that this is a doctrine, ἀναιρῶν τὸ ἐφ' ἡμῖν, 'which subverts our liberty,' καὶ διὰ τῆτο, 'and by that' all vice and virtue, all praise and dispraise.' Eusebius declares that "this opinion, τὴς μὲν πλημιμελλῶντας ἀπολύει, ὡς μηδὲν τῶν ἀτόπων ἐξ οἰκείας γνώμης διαπεπραγμένως, 'absolves sinners, as doing nothing on their own accords which was evil,' and would cast all the blame of all the wickedness committed in the world upon God, and upon his providence; if that were admitted by the assertors of this fate, whether he himself did

^f Apol. 1, p. 45.^g Apol. 2, p. 81. B.^h Recogn. 1. 9, § 4.^a Apol. 2, p. 80.^b Apud Euseb. Præp. Ev. l. 6, c. 11, p. 282. B.^c P. 287. A.

necessitate them to do these things, or ordered matters so that they should be constrained to do it by some other cause'.^d See the like arguments in Epiphanius's Hær. 16. p. 35.

(iii.) They add, that "this opinion renders all commands, admonitions, and exhortations not to do evil, or to do good, useless; he who is thus admonished, being instructed by it, to reply after this manner, *τι μὲν ὦ ἄνθρωπέ νοθεῖς, 'to what end dost thou admonish me, O man,'* when fate hath forestalled me, and not left it in my power to change my mind? *Τὶ ἔν δει συντάττεσθαι πρὸς ἃ εἶδε προθυμεῖσθαι δυνήσομαι, 'to what purpose therefore is it to strive after that which I have not the power to desire or will,'* unless also it be my fate thus to will?"^e "That men lie under no necessity from God's fore-knowledge, [which was of old the chief argument of the Fatalists, espoused of late by Mr. Hobbs, and is still made the refuge of the Predestinarians] may thus be proved," saith Origen,^f "because the prophets are exhorted in the holy scriptures to call men to repentance, and to do this in such words, as if it were unknown whether they would turn to God, or would continue in their sins; as in those words of Jeremiah, *'perhaps they will hear and turn every man from his evil way, &c.'*^g and this is said, not that God understood not whether they would do this or not, *ἀλλ' ὁμοῦ τὸ ἰσοῦσιον τῶν δυνάμεων γίνεσθαι δεικνύς; 'but to demonstrate the almost equal balance of their power so to do,'* and that they might not despond or remit of their endeavours by an imagination that God's fore-knowledge laid a necessity upon them; *ὡς ἐκ ὄντος ἐπ' αὐτοῖς τῆ ἐπιστρέψαι, καὶ αὐτὴ αἰτία γένηται τῶν ἁμαρτημάτων,* 'as not leaving it in their power to turn to him, and so was the cause of their sin'."

(iv.) They argue from the deportment of men towards them who offend out of necessity, allowing this as a sufficient excuse that they could not do otherwise. "You would not," saith Athenagoras to the Roman Emperors, "honour the good, or punish bad men, *εἰ μὴ ἐπ' αὐτοῖς ἦν καὶ ἡ κακία καὶ ἡ ἀρετή,* 'if vice and virtue were not in their power?'"^h "And if men," saith Chrysostom, "do thus pardon their fellow men when they are necessitated to do a thing *τῷ δὲ ὑπὸ ἐίμαρμένης πολλῶ μᾶλλον συγνώσκειν*

^d Præp. Ev. l. 6, c. 6, p. 251, per Tot. et p. 252.

^e Euseb. ibid. p. 245.

^f Apud Euseb. ibid. c. 11, p. 289. B. C.

^g Chapter xxvi, §. xxxvi, §.

^h Legat. pro Christ. p. 27.

ἐχρῆν, 'much more should this be done to men compelled by fate to do what they do;' for if it be absurd to punish them who by the force of Barbarians are compelled to any action, it must be more so, *τον ὑπο δυνατωτέρας δυνάμεως καταναγκάζομενον δίκην δίδοναι*, 'to punish him who is compelled by a stronger power.'ⁱ

V. They add, that "if fate obtain, then the divine judgment must be overthrown; for they," saith Origen, "who take away, τὸ ἐφ' ἡμῖν, 'this liberty,' take away with it praise and dispraise, and good and evil actions, with them a future judgment, and all threats against and punishment of offenders, and all the promises made, and the rewards annexed to a life of holiness; ἔδεν γὰρ ἔτι τῶν ἐυλόγως ἔσσι γινόμενον, 'for upon this supposition, none of these things will rationally be done.'^k "If fate be established," saith Eusebius, "οἰκῆσθαι φιλοσοφία, οἰκῆσθαι καὶ Ἐυσέβεια, 'philosophy and piety are overthrown;' there can be no religion, no praise for persons studious of virtue, no blame of men addicted to the greatest impiety, all these things depending, ἐκ αὐτοπροαιρετῆ μελέτης καὶ ἀσκήσεως, ἀλλ' ἐκ τῆς τῶν ἄστρον ἀνάγκης, 'upon the necessity introduced by the stars, and not upon meditation and exercise proceeding from our own free choice.'^l

CHAP. V.

Shewing that these late notions, concerning the liberty or rather servitude of the will of lapsed man, were generally condemned by the primitive christians.

THIRDLY. THIS will be evident from these following considerations:

I. That they place the freedom of the will from necessity amongst the doctrines, *quæ per prædicationem apostolicam manifeste traduntur*, 'which were manifestly delivered to the church by the preaching of the apostles,' and by ecclesiastical tradition. "Ἡμεῖς, 'WE' christians," saith Justin Martyr,

ⁱ De Fato Orat. 3.

^k Orig. apud Euseb. Præp. Ev. l. 6, c. 11, p. 231. C. D.

^l Ibid. c. 6, p. 242. D. p. 245. A.

“do not think, as do the Stoicks, that all things are done according to fate; ἀλλὰ κατὰ μὲν προαίρεσιν ἕκαστον κατορθῶν, ἢ ἀμαρτάνειν ‘but that every man doth well or ill according to the freedom of his will or choice.’”^a Origen speaks thus, “*est et illud definitum in ecclesiasticâ prædicatione omnem animum esse rationabilem liberi arbitrii, et voluntatis*, ‘this also is defined by ecclesiastical tradition, that all souls are rational, and have free-will and choice.’”^b Whence we may gather, that they are not subject to necessity, so as to be compelled to do good or evil; for we are under no necessity to do well or ill. And though there is in the rational soul a power to do evil, “it is not evil upon that account,” saith Didymus Alexandrinus; “but because she will freely use that power; καὶ ἐκ ἡμῶν μόνον ἡ δόξα αὐτῆ, ἀλλὰ καὶ πάντων ὀρθῶς περὶ τῶν λογικῶν ζώων φιλοσοφησάντων, ‘and this is not only ours, but the opinion of all who speak orthodoxly of rational beings.’”^c Theodoret having established this doctrine of the liberty of man’s will from necessity, and his power to chuse good or evil, by reason, and by the suffrage of the holy scriptures, concludes thus; τὰυτὰ καὶ ἐδιδάχθημεν, καὶ διδάσκομεν, ‘thus have we (christians) been taught by our ancestors, and thus we teach.’^d St. Austin lays down this as the true definition of sin, *peccatum est voluntas retinendi, vel consequendi id quod justitia vetat, et unde liberum est abstinere*, ‘sin is the will to obtain or retain that which justice forbids, and from which it is free for us to abstain.’^e Whence he concludes, that “no man is worthy of dispraise or punishment, *qui id non faciat quod facere non potest*, ‘for not doing that which he hath no power to do;’ and that if sin be worthy of dispraise and punishment, it is not to be doubted, *tunc esse peccatum cum et liberum est nolle*.* These things,” saith he, “the shepherds sing upon the mountains, and the poets in the theatres, and the unlearned in their assemblies, and the learned in the libraries, and the doctors in the schools, *et anlistites, in sacris locis, et in orbe terrarum genus humanum*, ‘and the bishops in the churches, and mankind throughout the whole earth.’^f Yea this” saith he, “is so manifest, *nulla hinc doctorum paucitas, nulla indoctorum turba dissentiat*, ‘that it hath the universal consent of the learned and

^a Apol. 1, p. 45.^b De princp. in Proem.^c Ed. Combes. p. 28.^d Ad. Græcos, Serm.^e p. 542, 543, 548.^f Lib. de Duab. Animab. 11, 12.

* ‘That then it is a sin when a

man is at liberty not to will it.’ ED.

^f De Vera Rel. c. 14.

unlearned'." Gennadius, in his account of *ecclesiastical doctrines*, lays down this for one, that "no man perisheth by the will of God; *sed per seipsum electione arbitrii, ne ingenuitatis libertas atque potestas semel homini attributa, ad servilem cogatur necessitatem*, 'but only by himself, and his own free choice, lest the free choice, liberty, and power once granted to man, should be reduced to a servile necessity'."^g

II. This will be still more evident from what St. Austin, with the concurrence of all the ancient Fathers, have said in confutation of the Manichees who taught these three things,

First. That "there were two principles, the one good and the author of good, the other evil and the author of evil."

Secondly. That "the God of the law was not the true God, and that therefore the Old Testament was to be rejected."

Thirdly. That "sin arose not from the free-will of man, but from the substance of matter; and so some souls were wicked not by choice, but by nature."

Now against this wicked heresy St. Austin urgeth many arguments, in which he hath the suffrage of the ancient Fathers.

And (1.) he lays down these as certain and indisputable rules, viz. *de quo resistere non valente quisquam quidpiam mali fecit justè damnari nullo modo potest*, 'that no man can be justly condemned for doing that evil which he was not able to resist;' "for all men," saith he, "will pronounce without any hesitation, *nihil istos omnino peccasse*, 'that these men have done no evil.' For if souls be so compelled to act, *ut resistendi potestas nulla sit, non peccant*, 'that they have no power to resist, they sin not'."^h If therefore, as Le Blanc saith, "the Reformed teach men are so depraved by the fall, *ut non possint nisi male agere*, 'that they cannot but do evil';" they offend not in so doing.

2. This he propounds as a thing manifest, *non peccare animas ex eo quod non sunt tales quales esse non possunt*, 'that no souls offend in not being such as they cannot be.'ⁱ Seeing then they who cannot do what is truly good, cannot be good; it must be also manifest that if the souls of lapsed men cannot do what is truly good, they offend not in not being good.

^g Cap. 56.

^h Lib. de Duab. Anim. c. 10.

ⁱ Ibid. c. 12.

3. He asserts, "that no man is worthy of dispraise or punishment, *qui id non faciat, quod facere non potest*, 'for not doing that which he cannot do;' and this," saith he, "will be owing by every man who consults, *secreta conscientiæ suæ, legesque divinas penitus naturæ insitas apud animam*, 'the secrets of his conscience, and the divine laws written in his heart'." ^k Whence also it most clearly follows, that lapsed men cannot be worthy of dispraise or punishment, for not doing that good they cannot do.

4. His fourth rule is this, *ex eo quod non accepit nullus reus est*, 'no man is guilty for not having that which he hath not received;' and his inference this, "that no man can duly blame another for being deficient, *quia non ultra esse accepit*, 'where he hath no power to go farther;' since he owes only what he hath received, and cannot exceed the bounds set him." If then man by the fall hath lost all power of doing good, and hath not since received strength to do it, this deficiency cannot be his guilt.

Now in these rules the ancient Fathers exactly accord with him; for we have heard already from Justin Martyr, Pseudo Clemens, Origen, Eusebius, and Epiphanius, that a necessity of sinning frees men from all fault, for that which he cannot avoid, or for being that which he could not cease to be. Origen lays it down as a most certain rule, "that no man can be blame-worthy for not doing what he cannot do; and that as for Judas himself, *ἐκ ἂν δὲ ψόφῳ αὐτῷ προσήπτετο εἰ ἐπαναγκῆς περιόχτης ἦν* 'he could not have been blamed had he been a traitor out of necessity,' and could not have been like the rest of the apostles."^b Methodius, in answer to Origen, saying that the flesh makes the soul to sin, replies, "*εἰ αὐτὴν τὴν σάρκα ἔλεγε μὴ δύνασθαι ὑποτάσσεσθαι τῷ νόμῳ τῆ Θεῆ,* 'that if he said this flesh could not be subject to the law of God,' no man could be blamed for theft or adultery, &c. by a just judge, *ἀδυνάτως ἐχέσης τῆς σαρκὸς ὑποτάσσεσθαι τῷ νόμῳ τῆ Θεῆ,* 'the flesh not being able to be subject to the law of God'."^c And Pseudo Justin to that question, 'How God requiring us to fulfil the law, and not sin, which is beyond our strength, could punish men for transgressing it; it being manifest, that *ὁ τὰ ὑπερ δύναμιν μὴ ποιήσας ἐπεὶ εἰσιν ἀδύνατα ὑπαρχει ἀνευθύνῳ* 'that no man is criminal for not doing that which is beyond his power, and therefore is to him

^k Ibid.

^l De lib. Arb. l. 3, c. 15, 16.

^b Apud Euseb. Præp. Ev. l. 6, c. 11, p. 288.

^c Apud Epiph. Har. 61, n. 51, p. 577.

impossible,'^d answers, that "God condemns us not for not doing what is impossible, but for not willing to do what is possible; τοῖς γὰρ δυνατοῖς, καὶ ἐφ' ἡμῖν ἔσιν ἢ ἔπαινε, ἢ ὁ ψόλει γίνεται, 'for praise or dispraise belongs only to things possible, and which are in our power to do or not;' and that we all offend, διὰ τὸ μὴ μίρεσθαι, καὶ ἔ δια τὸ μὴ δύνασθαι, 'not because we cannot, but because we will not do what we ought to do.'" Add to this what hath been before cited from Irenæus, declaring, that "our Lord and his apostles could have no reason to require us to do good, if it were not in our power to do what they exhort us to:" From Tertullian, saying, that "God would not have given a law to him who had it not in his power to obey it:" From Origen, enquiring, "How could God require that of man which he had not in his power to offer to him?" And that of Theodoret, that "God cannot justly punish a nature which hath it not in his power to do good, but is bound in the bonds of wickedness."

5. (Secondly.) St. Austin lays down this as the true definition of sin, "that it is the will to do that from which we have the liberty to abstain;^e for," saith he, "if men, *libero ad faciendum, et non faciendum, motu animi careant, si denique his abstinendi al opere suo potestas nulla conceditur, peccato teneri non possunt*, 'want the free motion of the will to do, or not to do, or if they have not the power to abstain from what they do, they cannot be guilty of sin;^f for if a man cannot do otherwise, he sinneth not. Acknowledge," saith he, "that sin must be free from necessity, *non quia homines non possunt, sed quia nolunt servare legem*, 'and must be done, not because men cannot, but because they will not, observe the law;^g and hence thou wilt discern the rise of all sin, and the distribution of punishments." Accordingly we have learned from Origen, that the soul doth not incline to either part out of necessity, because then neither vice nor virtue could be ascribed to it. "God," saith Hilary, "hath permitted to every man, *libertatem vitæ sensusque*, 'the liberty of life and judgment,' *non necessitatem in alterutrum affigens*, 'laying them under no necessity of doing good or evil,' *ut præmium sibi voluntatis bonitatis acquireret*, 'that he might be rewarded for the goodness of his will.'^h And again, "God," saith he,ⁱ "hath permitted to every man the liberty

^d Qu. 105, et Resp. p. 458.

^e L. cont. Fortun. Man. p. 165.

^f L. de fide contr. Man. c. 44.

^g De Actis cum Felice Man. l. 2, c. 5.

^h In Ps. 21, p. 662.

ⁱ In Ps. 119, p. 968.

of chusing and doing what he will, *et ob id uniuscujusque aut paná aut premiis afficietur electio*, ‘and for this reason shall every man be punished, or rewarded for his choice.’” “God,” saith St. Basil, “loves them who do what is right, not from necessity but virtue. Now virtue,” saith he, “ariseth *εκ προαιρέσεως, και εκ εξ ανάγκης*, ‘from choice, and not from necessity.’”^k “For this cause,” saith Chrysostom, “hath God given thee free-will, *ινα μη υσερον εγκαλης τῷ θεῷ ως ανάγκη δεῖς*, ‘that men may not accuse God as being bound under a necessity of doing evil.’”^l “Man,” saith St. Cyril Alex. “hath a free inclination to what he will chuse to do, *και ανάγκης ελευθερον την εφ’ εκάσῳ ῥόπην*, ‘and a freedom from necessity in what he will turn himself unto;’ that so, and not otherwise, the good may be worthy of praise and reward, and the wicked may be justly punished.”^m “The devil,” saith Cyril of Jerusalem, “suggests to thee a thought of fornication; if thou wilt, thou admittest of it; if thou wilt, thou rejectest it; *ει γαρ και’ ανάγκην επορνούεις, και τίν’ ενεκα την γεεναν ετοιμαζεν ὁ θεος*; ‘for if thou didst lie under a necessity of whoring, why hath God prepared hell?’”ⁿ “If,” saith Macarius, “the bodies of christians should have been made immortal, the world beholding *τὸ παράδοξον τῆ πράξιμαί*, ‘the strangeness of the thing,’ would have been converted to good, *ανάγκη τινι, ἀλλ’ εκ ενασίζ γνώμη*, ‘not by their own free-will, but by a kind of necessity,’ and therefore God, to preserve the liberty of man’s will, suffered their bodies to die, that it might be in their choice to turn to good or evil; for man is not bound to do evil, *ανάγκη τινι*, ‘by any necessity, but hath a liberty, *τῆ γένεσθαι σκεύ’ εκλογῆς*, ‘to become a vessel of election’ and life, and they who are acted by the Holy Spirit, *εκ ανάγκη τινι κεκράτηνται*, ‘are not held under any necessity,’ but have a liberty to turn themselves, and do what they will in this life.”^o

Thirdly. St. Austin offers to prove to Felix the Manichee, *e divinis scripturis*, ‘from the divine scriptures,’ that man hath the freedom of his will; *atque inde peccare quemque si velit, non peccare si nolit*, ‘and therefore that every man sins if he will, and sins not if he will not.’ Now that all the Fathers accord with him in this, that the holy scriptures do ascribe to man this freedom

^k Tom. 1, Quod Deus non est Auth. mali, p. 562. D.

^l Hom. 14, in Cor. p. 330.

^m Contr. Jul. l. 8, p. 285.

ⁿ Catech. 4, p. 51. D.

^o Hom. 15, p. 96. B. C. D.

of the will, hath been largely proved; and to the passages already cited from them, may be added a large discourse of Origen, in his *Philocalia*, where he confirms this from variety of demonstrative arguments from the holy scriptures. St. Basil saith, “there is a manifest demonstration of the free-will of man in those words of Isaiah, ‘if you will, and if you will not, &c.’ whence it is manifest that all his happiness and punishment, ἐκ τῆ ἐφ’ ἡμῶν ἤρτηται, ‘depends on our free-will.’” “Hearken not to them,” saith Cyril of Jerusalem, “who falsely interpret that of the apostle, ‘If what I would not that I do;’ but remember him who said, ‘If ye be willing and obedient, and if you will not, &c.’ There is not an order of souls, κατὰ φύσιν ἀμαρτανωσῶν, ‘who sin (or do good) by nature,’ ἀλλ’ ἐκ προαιρέσεως ἀμφοτέρα, ‘but both proceed from our own free-will.’ Sin,” saith he, “is an evil proceeding from our own free-will; ὅτι γὰρ ἐκ προαιρέσεως ἀμαρτάνομεν, ‘for that we sin by our own free choice’ the prophet teacheth, Jer. ii. 21. Eccl. vii. 30.”^r As for the second part of this assertion, that “the freedom of the will is, εἰς ὁπότερα, ‘to good or evil,’ to sin if we will, or not to sin if we will not,” they perfectly accord with him, declaring that there is no true liberty where there is not, *potestas ad utrumlibet*, ‘a power to do both;’ where we are not, *actionum nostrarum domini*, ‘masters of our own actions;’ that “God hath given us in respect of what is good or evil, αὐτόνομον διανοίαν, ‘a mind, that is a law unto itself,’ αὐτοκρατορικὴν κίνησιν, ‘a self-commanding motion,’ αὐτεξέσιον γνώμην, αὐτοδέσποτον τὴν πρόθεσιν, ‘a free council, a self-commanding purpose,’ ἐδελέσιον ῥόπην, ‘a free turn,’ προαίρεσιν εἰς ἄμφω μερίζουσαν, τὸ ἐπ’ ἄμφω βαδίζον, ‘a power to go or turn both ways;’ with many other expressions of a like nature, which will occur under their proper heads, and leave no room for doubting in this case; especially if we consider,

(i.) That they make this power necessary both to vice and virtue; thus Justin declares, that “no actions of men would be praise-worthy, if he had not the power, ἐπ’ ἀμφοτέρα τρέπεσθαι, ‘to turn to either of them.’”^w Macarius saith, that “if we were δετῆς φύσεως, ‘of a nature bound,’^x we should neither be capable

^p Tom. 2, p. 259.^q Catech. 4, p. 311, A. B.^r Catech. 2, p. 5. B. C.^w Apol. 2, p. 46, A.^x Hom. 27, p. 166.

of honour and glory, nor of hell and punishment, both these being prepared, τῇ τρεπίῳ φύσει τῇ δυναμένῃ ἀποφύγειν τὸ κακὸν καὶ τρέψαι εἰς τὸ ἀγαθόν, καὶ δεξιὸν μέρος, ‘for a mutable nature which can fly from evil, and turn to what is good and right.’” Athanasius proves that “man hath free-will, δύναται γὰρ ὡς πρὸς τὰ καλὰ νεύειν ἔτω καὶ τὰ καλὰ ἀποστρέφεται, ‘because he can incline to what is good, or decline from it.’”^y And this is so agreeable to the light of nature, that Cyril of Alexandria introduceth Porphyry, placing the freedom of man in this, that he hath εἰς ἀρετὴν ἐλευθεριότητα ἢ κακίας τὴν ἐκείσιν ἄρξαι, ‘the freedom to chuse vice or virtue;’ this being,^z saith he, “necessary, that he may be capable of praise or reprehension, honour or dishonour, rewards or punishments.”

(ii.) They add, that “by reason of this free-will which God hath given him, he hath it in his power to believe, or not,” as we have heard from Irenæus, and Clemens of Alexandria, “to be, or make himself a vessel of election, or of wrath,” saith Macarius; and, *ipse sibi causa est*, ‘he of himself is the cause,’” saith Irenæus, “why he becomes good corn or chaff.”^a Ἐκάστῃ ἡμῶν ἑαυτὸν δικαιοῦντος, ἢ ἐμπαλιν ἑαυτὸν ἀπειθεῖ κατὰ σκευάζοντος, ‘every one rendering himself righteous or disobedient,’^a saith Clemens of Alexandria.^b St. Basil saith, that “every man may, ἐκ τῆς ἑαυτοῦ προαιρέσεως ἢ σπέρμα ἁγιον εἶναι, ἢ τὸ ἐναντίον, ‘of his own free-will be either a holy seed, or be the contrary.’”^c “God,” saith Pseudo-Justin, “is not the cause that we are good, or wicked, ἀλλ’ ἡ προαίρεσις, ‘but our own choice,’ by which, κατέστησεν ἡμᾶς κυρίως, καὶ τὴν ἀγαθὴν ἡμᾶς εἶναι ἢ κακὴν, ‘he hath put it into our own power to be good or bad.’”^d And in his answer to the Ninth Question, “we have received,” saith he, “from God the power of acting, or not acting; πράττειν μὲν τὰ δίκαια ἢ πράττειν μὲν τὰ ἄδικα, ‘to do things righteous, and to forbear what is unrighteous;’ when therefore we act thus, δικαίως μὲν σεφανόμεθα, ‘we are duly crowned;’ but when we transfer this power to what is evil, or neglect to do what is good, δικαίως πολαζόμεθα, ‘we are duly punished:’ we are therefore justly crowned or punished, διὰ τὸ ἐφ’ ἡμῶν, ‘for what we freely chuse.’” “Christ,” saith Chrysostom, “spake many things of the kingdom, and of hell, καὶ τὴν ἐφ’ ἑκάτερα δύναμιν ἐπεδείξατο ἐν τῷ κολάζειν τὴν ἀμαρ-

^y Orat. contra. Gent. p. 5.

^z Contra Jul. l. 3, p. 79.

^a L. 4, C. 9.

^b Strom. 3, p. 453.

^c In 14, Esai. To. 2, p. 259.

^d Resp. ad Qu. 8.

^e P. 397.

τάνωνίαις, και ἐν τῷ τιμᾶν τὰς καθορθήντας, ‘and shewed that we had power to chuse either of them, by punishing sinners, and honouring them that do well:’ for,”^f saith he, “κύριοι ἡμεῖς ἐσμεν και τῆς κακείνης, και τῆ εἰς γέενναν ἐμπεσεῖν, και τῆ βασιλείας ἐπιτυχεῖν, ‘we have it in our power to chuse this, or that, to fall into hell or enjoy the kingdom.’”^g And sure these things must be sufficient to convince us, that these Fathers believed nothing of the doctrine of Absolute Election and Reprobation, or of that miserable servitude of the human will by reason of the fall of man, which these men do so much insist upon.

6. (*Thirdly.*) St. Austin argues against the doctrine of the Manichæans from the reasonableness of the divine precepts, “it being folly to command him who hath not power to obey;” and in this I have shewed that Irenæus, Clemens of Alexandria, Origen, Eusebius, Epiphanius and Theodoret accord fully with him: to which add that full passage of Cyril of Alexandria, “If men were good or evil in their manners, ἔτε τὰ βελίω φρονεῖν τε και δρᾶν, ἡγῶν τὰ αἰσχίω μετὸν ἀυλοῖς, ‘when they could neither think, nor do better, or worse,’ we must abstain from praising the good, or reprehending the wicked; all the admonitions of fathers to their sons will be, εἰκαῖον τι χρῆμα, ‘a vain thing;’ all the instructions of youth will be superfluous, και βραψώδημα κενόν, ‘a vain trifle;’ and we must take away all laws, εἰ μὴ γαρ ἐκάσω μέτετεσεν ἦν ἄν βέλοιοτο τῆ βίβι διὰ τῆν ὁδὸν, ‘for if every man hath it not in his power, to chuse what way of life he would,’ but hath δυσδιαφευκτὸν, και ἀνεξίτητον ἐπὶ τῆλω δεσμὸν, ‘an indissoluble and inevitable tie to this or that,’ farewell all laws, or whatsoever else is profitable.”^h Macarius adds, that “a law is given, τῷ δυναμένῳ τραπήναι εἰς ἀμφότερα τὰ μέρη, ‘to him that can turn to both parts;’ (that is, obey or transgress it;) δέη γαρ φύσει νόμος ἐ κείῳ, ‘but no law can lie against him who is bound by nature.’”ⁱ

Fourthly. St. Austin disputes against the doctrine of the Manichees from the equity of the divine judgment, declaring that “if men did not sin voluntarily they would be judged unjustly; for, if God,” saith he, “had not given free-will, *judicium puniendi nullum justum esse posset, nec meritum recte faciendi, nec præceptum divinum ut ageretur pœnitentia de peccatis,* ‘there could be no

^f To. 5, p. 554, l. 27.

^g To. 3, Hom. 14, in 1 Cor. p. 329, l. 40.

^h Contra Julian. l. 4, p. 118,

ⁱ Hom. 26, p. 165, D. 156, A. B.

justice in punishing the offender, nor any reward for well doing, nor any divine precept requiring men to repent of their sins;’ for neither the wages of good or evil can be duly given to him, *qui aut bonus aut malus necessitate fuerit inventus, non voluntate*, ‘who was good or evil, not out of freedom but necessity;’ nor is any man to be blamed at all who doth not freely do evil.”^k And in this we have seen the agreement of Origen and Eusebius, and the words now cited from Tertullian,^l Irenæus,^l Clemens of Alexandria, and others who are of the same judgment. “God hath given to man,” saith Tatian, “freedom of will, ὅπως ὁ μὲν φαῦλος δικαίως κολάζεται δι’ ἑαυτὸν γεγωνὺς μοχθηρὸς, ‘that bad men may be justly punished, as being wicked from themselves;’ and that good men may be praised, κατ’ αὐτεξέχουσιον, ‘who freely’ do comply with the will of God.”^m “God always preserved the liberty of the will in man,” saith Irenæus, *ut juste damnentur qui non obediunt ei, quoniam non obediunt; et qui obediunt, et crediderunt ei, honorentur incorruptibilitate*; ‘that they might justly be damned for their disobedience who did not obey him; and that they who believed and obeyed, might be honoured with incorruptibility.’ⁿ And Athenogaras proves to the Emperors Antoninus and Commodus, that “man is ἀυθαίρετος, ‘free of himself’ to chuse virtue or vice; for, neither,” saith he, “would you honour the good, nor punish the wicked, εἰ μὴ ἐπ’ αὐτοῖς ἦν καὶ ἡ κακία καὶ ἡ ἀρετὴ, ‘if it were not in their power to chuse either.’” “God,” saith St. Jerom, “hath framed us with free-will, *nec ad virtutes, nec ad vitia necessitate trahimur; alioquin ubi necessitas est, nec damnatio, nec corona est*; ‘nor are we necessarily drawn to vice or virtue; for where there is necessity, there is neither condemnation nor crown.’”^o And again, “God,” saith he, “hath given us freedom of mind, *ut viveret unusquisque non ex necessitate, sed ex voluntate, ut virtus haberet locum*, ‘that every man might act from freedom, not from necessity, that so there might be place for virtue.’”

7. (*Fifthly.*) St. Austin argues against the doctrine of the Manichees from the duty of repentance; “for,” saith he, “it is manifest to all that it is profitable to repent of our sins: now I desire

^k L. De Fid. cont. Man. c. 8, L. Contr. Fortun. Man. p. 167. Vide eundem de Lib. Arb. l. 1, c. 1, l. 2, c. 1, 19, l. 3, c. 17, L. De vera Rel. c. 14.

^l Tertul. contr. Marcion. l. 2, c. 6.

^m Contra Gent. p. 146. C.

ⁿ L. 4, c. 29.

^o To. 2, L. 2, Ad Jovin. F. 26, 1.

to know what persons must repent, seeing I know it can be the duty, *neque illius qui male facere, neque illius qui bene facere non potest*, ‘neither of him who cannot do evil, nor of him who cannot do good;’ for that repentance which profits, *male fecisse pœnitentem, et bene facere potuisse testatur*, ‘testifies that the penitent hath done ill, when he might have done well.’^p And with this argument Alexander Aphrodisiensis accords, and Clemens of Alexandria adds, that “if there be no free-will, πῶς τῆ πότε ἀπίστε μετάνοια δι’ ἣν ἄφροισ ἀμαρτιῶν; ‘where is that repentance of the unbeliever by which he obtains remission of his sins?’”^q

8. (*Sixthly.*) St. Austin saith, the Manichees held that “the nation of darkness waged war with God before the foundation of the world, and that in this war, *nos, hoc est, animas quas modo indigere liberatore manifestum est commixtas esse omni malo, et mori implicita*, ‘we, that is, the souls which now want a deliverer, were blended with all evil, and entangled or detained in death.’”^r Now against this absurd imagination St. Austin argues, that “this renders God cruel, in being willing to send the soul into such miseries;”^s and therefore he enquires of Fortunatus, *Quare hanc animam ad miserias, ad errorem, ad ista quæ patimur misisti?* ‘why did he send the soul into the world to be subject to those miseries, that error, and those evils which we suffer?’ He also introduces the soul thus expostulating the case with God, and pleading in its own excuse, *Quid feci? quid commisi? apud te fui, integer fui, nullâ labe contaminatus fui, tu me huc misisti*, ‘what have I done, or committed? I was with thee, I was upright, and undefiled by any stain, thou sentest me thither.’^t *Cum ergo noveris necessitatem quâ his oppressus sum, quâ respirare non potui, cui resistere non potui, quid me accusas quasi peccantem?* ‘Since then thou knewest the necessity with which I am oppressed, from which I can have no respite, and which I am not able to resist, why dost thou accuse for sin?’ Some small resemblance of this mad doctrine of Manes was found in that opinion of Origen, that “the souls of men had sinned in heaven,” said he, (“in Adam,” say others,) “and therefore were united to such bodies as were the clog and prison of the soul, and that the flesh laid upon it a necessity of sinning;”^u which he endeavoured to prove from the

^p L. 2, De actis in Fel. Man. p. 515.
^s P. 172, 173.

^q Strom. 2, p. 565.
^t P. 168, 169.

^r L. contr. Fortun. Man. c. 1, p. 162.
^u Sec. 3.

same scriptures which these men use to prove that man, since the fall, lies under a necessity of doing evil only. Now there be three advantageous differences betwixt this opinion of Origen, and that of these Decretalists,

(1.) That he made these souls to suffer for their personal sin alone; they make them suffer for another's sin, or for a thing impossible, viz. a personal sin committed by them when they were no persons.

(2.) His punishments were medicinal and purgative, and so designed for their eternal good; whereas the punishment inflicted on the posterity of Adam for his fall, are in most persons, according to their doctrine, only a sad preface to eternal punishments.

(3.) He was so merciful as to assert and believe that after these souls had suffered in these bodies for some time, they should at last be saved and admitted to the enjoyment of God, whilst these men leave the generality of them infallibly to fail of salvation, and obnoxious to eternal misery.

III. And yet against this and other doctrines of Origen allied to it, the Fathers argue from those grounds which do as manifestly destroy the necessity of sinning they assert, and the foundation of it, viz. the imputation of the sin of Adam to all his posterity.

For, *First*, Methodius speaks thus, "If, as Origen saith, the soul for sin was united to the body, πῶς διὰ τῆτο ἡμαρτανὸν ὃ μὴ ἦν μηδέπω, 'how did they sin by that which yet was not?'" (ANSWER. Even as the wills of all men sinned in Adam when as yet they were not.)"^w And because Origen attempted to prove his doctrine from those words of the apostle, '*I am carnal, sold under sin;*' he asks him how he could reconcile his sense of these words "with the liberty of the will? 'Ἐφ' ἡμῶν γὰρ καὶ τὸ πισεῦσαι κείται, καὶ τὸ μὴ πισεῦσαι, 'for it lies in our power to believe or not;'"^x Ἐφ' ἡμῶν, 'it is in our power' to amend our actions or to sin; Ἐφ' ἡμῶν, 'we are free' to do good or evil; for that which hath not ἐξουσίαν αὐτοδέσποτον, 'a self-commanding power of chusing'^y what course of life it would lead, ἵνα ἰδίως τιμηθῆ ἢ ψεχθῆ, 'so that it may be honoured or blamed for what is properly its own,' must necessarily be exempted from all fault. (iii.) He adds, "that according to the doctrine of Origen, neither soul nor

^v Apud Epiph. Har. 64, n. 4.

^w N. 46.

^x Ibid.

^y N. 55.

body could be judged; for if the soul," saith he, "be placed before the judgment-seat, it will plead that sin proceedeth not from me, ἀλλ' ἀπ' ἐκείνου τῆ φθαρτῆ καὶ γήινου σώματος, 'but from that corruptible and earthly body to which thou didst unite me;' and since I quitted it, I neither whored, nor had any carnal lustings; and the body might say, ὅτι ἐκ ἐγὼ ἡμαρτόν, ἀλλὰ ἡ ψυχῆ, 'I sinned not, but the soul,' for since that was separated from me, I have done no evil;" and he concludes that "both these pleas were made, ἐύλόγως 'rationally,'" and yet it is manifest that all souls united to bodies since the fall of Adam, might plead thus.

Secondly. Their second argument against this doctrine of Origen, is this, that "whereas God blessed man, created male and female, and said unto them, *increase and multiply, &c.* this doctrine turns God's blessing into a curse:" *Jam enim non erit benedictio sed maledictio secundum Origenem*; 'for according to Origen's doctrine, it will not be a blessing, but a curse,' saith Epiphanius. "For how," saith Theophilus of Alexandria, "is the marriage-bed undefiled, *si anima vitiis circumdatur*, 'if by it the soul is surrounded with vice?' Then Moses sinned in praying that God would multiply the seed of Israel, and make them a thousand times more; seeing this was to pray, *ut animarum ceteræ in cælo peccantes Israelitici populi gentem conderent*, 'that the nation of the Jews should be made up of souls that had sinned in heaven,' and that they might increase, *animarum ruinis*, 'by the ruin of souls;' whereas he ought rather to have prayed, *ne propter vitia melioris substantiæ, vilior natura conderetur*, 'out of regard to the corruption ensuing to the better part that the viler body might not be produced.' Yea why," saith he, "doth David pray thus, 'The Lord bless thee out of Zion, that thou mayst see thy children's children,' *si animarum jacturâ justi civi augetur genus*, 'if the offspring of the just were to be increased by the loss of souls?' Or why doth God say by his prophet, 'If thou hadst hearkened to my precepts, thy seed should have been as the sand, and as the dust of the earth?' For they who observe God's precepts, *non debent accipere præmium animarum ruinas de cælo quæ alligata corporibus sobolis eorum incrementum multiplicent*,

‘ought not to receive, as their reward, the ruin of souls to increase their offspring.’ And again, “were this so, ‘*Increase and multiply*’ would be no blessing to Adam and Eve, *cum causa peccati maledictionem potius mereretur*, ‘since that which is the cause of sin ought rather to be deemed a curse.’ And if these things be so, why doth St. Paul say, ‘*I will that the young women marry and breed children?*’ For then they must do this, not for the order of generation, *sed propter penas animarum*, ‘but for the punishment of souls;’ which far be it from us to believe. *Si enim propter peccata in cælis præcedentia, ad terras missæ sunt animæ, ut corporibus ligarentur*, ‘for if souls were sent from heaven to be united to bodies for their preceding sins,’ Paul lied when he said ‘*Marriage is honourable, and the bed undefiled;*’ nor can the same thing be a benediction and a punishment.” Now the sin of Adam being the cause of all the sins of his posterity, and they having all souls sent pure from heaven into those bodies, by the sole union to which they instantly become sinful and corrupted, and mostly lie under a necessity of doing evil to their inevitable ruin, it may with much more truth and certainty be said, that “such a generation turns God’s blessing into a curse, endangers souls, and increaseth posterity by the loss and ruin of them.” Cyril, the successor of Theophilus, in his see, and also in his attempts against this doctrine of Origen, declares, in his commentary on those words of St. John, ‘*this is the true light,*’^z

1. That according to his opinion, it would be unjust in God to require of the soul thus united to the body, that it should not sin, it being thereby placed, *ἐν θολώσει ἁμαρτίας*, ‘in the defilement of sin;’ which is more sadly the case of the posterity of Adam, lying under a necessity to do evil.

2. That “then God promising to Abraham that his seed should be multiplied as the stars of heaven, promised him only an ignoble rout of damned persons, and alien from all virtue (*as by these men the generality of the seed of Adam are supposed to be*) καὶ ἔχῃ μᾶλλον εὐλογίας μέτοχον σπέρμα, ‘and not rather a seed partaking of a blessing.’”^a

3. That “according to St. Paul, we are only to be punished or rewarded for what we have done, *διὰ τῷ σώματος*, ‘by the

^z P. 79.

^a P. 82.

body,' *αλλ' ἔδὲ πρῆσβύτερον τῆς γενέσεως ἔγκλημα ζητηθήσεται*, 'nor will any fault antecedent to the body, be charged upon it;' and therefore not the sin of Adam."^b

4. That "St. Paul teacheth that 'death reigned over them who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression;' which," saith he, "cannot be according to the opinion of Origen (*much less according to them who say that "we all personally sinned in Adam;"*) for then where will they be found who have not thus sinned?"^c

5. That "Christ by saying concerning the blind man, 'Neither hath this man sinned, nor his fathers,' said what is to be interpreted of the time preceding their nativity, *καθ' ὃν ἔπω γεγονότες ἔδὲ ἡμάρτανον*, 'when being not yet born, they had not sinned:' *πῶς γὰρ ἢ μὴ ὑφ' ἑσῶσα καὶ ἁμαρτεῖν ἠδύνατο;* 'for how can the soul sin that did not exist?'^d (Add, or that soul which had no being when Adam sinned?)

Moreover they condemn Origen's opinion concerning "the resurrection, not of the same body," on this score, that "it was unjust that one body sinning another should be punished;"^e and must it not be more unjust that one Adam sinning all mankind should be punished? Against his other opinion, St. Jerome thus disputes; "if it be an offence to be born of human bodies, *quomodo Isaac, Sampson, et Johannes Baptista de repromissione nascuntur*, 'how were Isaac, Sampson, and John the Baptist, born by promise?'^f And if it be no offence to be thus born, it can be no offence to be born of lapsed Adam; if "the cause of vice and virtue be not," as he saith, "in the seed, but in the will of him that is born."^g If he could not sin by the body, as Methodius saith, who yet was not; neither could men sin by the soul which yet was not. If, as he saith, they who act intemperately cannot be worthy of reprehension by a just judge, *ἀδυνατός ἐστιν ἡ σὰρξ τῆς σαρκὸς ὑποτάσσεσθαι τῷ νόμῳ τῆς θεῆς*, 'if the flesh could not be subject to the divine law,' neither can the sons of Adam, lying under the disability by reason of the flesh, be subject to reprehension. In a word, Epiphanius truly blames Origen and John of Jerusalem, for saying that "the image and similitude of God was lost in man after the expulsion of Adam out of Paradise;"^h and

^b P. 83.^c P. 84.^d Ibid.^e Hieron. ad Pam. Tom. 2, f. 62, E.

Hieron. ad Pam. Tom. 2, f. 61, K.

^f Ibid.^h Apud Hieron. Tom. 2, f. 57, 58, 59.

yet, according to the doctrine of these men, this must be a most certain article of faith.

IV. FOURTHLY. Now be it so that St. Austin, to defend himself against himself, renounced, in his discourses against the Pelagians, most of those things which he had said in confutation of the Manichees; yet seeing the things he had then said were evidently the voice of nature, and by his own confession, "the voice of every man's conscience, and that which learned and unlearned, poets and orators, and civilians, heathens and christians, did unanimously own;" seeing the christian Fathers who lived before him, in his time, and after him, and equalled or much excelled him in learning and judgment, said constantly the same things, and never thought fit to renounce one tittle of any thing they had thus said, nor ever excepted, as he did afterwards, the case of infants, or original sin: It is manifest that his innovations and discord from his former and better self in this manner, ought not to be regarded in opposition to the constant sense and the concurring judgment of all these Fathers of the church; especially if we consider

First. That he hath been able to say nothing in answer to some of the arguments produced by him in confutation of the Manichees, viz. (i.) to the arguments taken from the divine precepts;—the Mosaical precepts, *do this*, and *do not that*, being given to fallen man, and therefore if it be, as he saith, "folly and injustice" to lay them upon him who hath no power to do what is commanded or omit what is forbidden, it cannot consist with divine equity to lay these precepts upon fallen man had he no power of himself, and no assurance of divine assistance to enable him to do them. Such (ii.) is his argument taken from the duty of repentance;—for if that testifies that *the penitent hath done ill when he might have done well*, when was it that the posterity of Adam might have done well before they were his posterity? But then they were not; if after, then if they contracted the guilt of Original Sin, they had done ill when they were not able to do well.

Secondly. That the exceptions which he makes to some of his own rules, and the answers he attempts to make to some of his own arguments, are vain, false, and absurd.

Thus when in defence of his definition of sin, that "it is the will to do that from which we have the power to abstain;" he saith,

that he “defined that which was only sin, and not that which is also, *pœna peccati*, ‘the punishment of sin;’” he speaks a contradiction to himself, and to the plainest reason, it being evident that what is properly sin, can never be the punishment of sin; “for all punishment,” saith he, “being from God, must be just, *et bonum est omne quod est justum, peccatum ergo quod est pœna peccati erit peccatum et bonum et justum*, ‘and whatsoever is just is good; that sin therefore which is the punishment of sin, must be a good and a just sin.’” Moreover, all punishment inflicted by God, is the action of a Just Judge, proceeding from his holy will; whereas sin can never be the action of God, or issue from his holy will. By sin all men are worthy of punishment; but no man can deserve punishment for being punished. By punishment some satisfaction is made for sin; but no man can make satisfaction for a past sin by another sin.—(2.) Whereas he adds, that “this penal necessity of sinning consists well with the nature of Original Sin;” this may be sufficiently confuted from his own words, that “the defect which is called sin, if it seized on a man against his will, *recte injusta pœna videretur quæ peccantem consequitur, et quæ damnatio nuncupatur*, ‘the punishment which follows the sinner, and is styled DAMNATION, might rightly be esteemed unjust;’”^k seeing therefore Original Sin is a disease necessary, and more inevitable than a fever, and comes upon us before we can will any thing; the punishment and damnation inflicted for it cannot, according to this principle, be just. (*Lastly.*) Whereas, he says, “it is natural and well appointed, *ut malum meritum prioris nature sequentis sit*, ‘that the ill desert of a former sin, should be the nature of the following;’”^l this is very absurd from his own principles. “For if,” as he says, “no man is wise, valiant, or temperate with the wisdom, valour, or temperance of another, *aut justus justitiâ alterius quisquam efficitur*, ‘or righteous with the righteousness of another;’” how comes he to be made willing with the will of another, or sinful with the sin of another? Especially when he not only adds, that “no nature can be corrupted by the vice of another, *nullo adjuncto vitio suo*, ‘without an addition of a sin of its own;’ and if it could be so, *injuste vituperaretur*, ‘it would unjustly be blamed on that account.’”^m But proveth this; (i.)

ⁱ L. 1, Retract. c. 26.

^k De vera Rel. c. 14.

^l De Lih. Arb. L. 2, c. 19.

^m L. 5, c. 15, 14.

Because *nemo debet quod non accepit, ex eo igitur quod non accepit nemo reus est*, ‘no man owes what he hath not received, and so no person can be guilty for the want of that original righteousness he never did or could receive.’ (ii.) Because, *si homo ita factus est, ut necessario peccet, hoc debet ut peccet*, ‘if man be so made that he necessarily sins, he owes sin as a debt to nature;’ and then when he sins, *quod debet facit*, ‘he does only what he ought to do,’ which yet it is wickedness to say.” In a word he saith; “since no man is compelled to sin by his own nature, or by the nature of another, *restat ut propriâ voluntate peccetur*, ‘it remains that every one sins by his own proper will,’” ὅπερ ἔδει δείξαι.*

Discourse V.

CONCERNING THE PERSEVERANCE OF SAINTS.

The State of the Question.

CHAP. I.

FOR the better stating of this question, it will be useful to premise that which is granted on both sides; for by that it will be easy to discern,

1. That many of those scriptures, which are produced to prove the doctrine of the saints’ perseverance, do not reach the point; they proving only that they who do thus persevere are preserved by divine assistance, and not that God hath absolutely engaged to afford them that assistance which will unfrustrably preserve them.

2. That many of the arguments produced to confirm this doctrine, are inconsistent with the foundations on which alone they ground that doctrine.

I. *First.* Then we own that they who are preserved to salvation, are so preserved ‘*by the power of God through faith;*’^a and

²² Ibid. d. 16.

* ‘Which it was necessary to demonstrate.’ ED.

^a 1 Peter i. 5.

that they who are thus kept are '*kept by Christ,*'^b he alone being able '*to keep them unblameable;*'^c but then we deny that God hath absolutely promised to keep them by his power from making shipwreck of this faith; or that '*the just man who lives by faith, shall never draw back to perdition.*'^p

Secondly. We own that God hath engaged his faithfulness, that all who do not wickedly depart from him, shall never be forced from him by the power of any adversaries; for '*none shall ever be able to pluck them out of his hands,*'^e not death itself; for '*the gates of Hades shall not prevail against them;*'^f not persecutions, or the most fiery trials. He who requires us to be faithful to the death, being obliged in equity and honour to enable us with christian patience to bear them; for '*he is so faithful that he will not suffer us to be tempted above that we (in this fallen state) are able, but will with the temptation (so far) make a way to escape that we may be able to bear it:*'^g So that we may triumphantly cry out, *Who shall separate us from the love of God which is (shewed to us) in, that is, through Christ Jesus? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay in all these things we (who continue in his love) are more than conquerors, through (the assistance vouchsafed by) him that loved us.*^h And after such happy experience of the divine assistance, '*I am persuaded,*' saith the apostle, '*that neither (fear of) death, nor (hope of) life, nor (evil) angels, nor principalities, nor powers (persecuting us for Christ's sake,) nor the things (we endure at) present, nor (the) things (we may suffer for the time) to come, nor height (of honour,) nor depth (of ignominy,) nor any other creature (or thing) shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is (vouchsafed to us) in and through Christ Jesus our Lord.*' But then the same God requiring them who were come to '*the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the general assembly, and church of the first-born who are written in heaven, to look diligently, μὴ τῖς, LEST ANY of them fall from the grace of God, and to hold fast that grace by which alone they can serve God acceptably, because our God is (to them who do fall from it) a consuming fire, (Heb. xii. 15, 29.) and to take heed lest there should*

^b Jud. i. 24.^c i Tim. 1, 19.^d Heb. x. 38, 39.^e John, x, 28, 29.^f Matt. xvi, 18.^g 1 Cor. x, 15.^h Rom. viii. 35. 59.

be in any of them an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; and that for this reason—that they could be made partakers of the blessings of Christ only on this condition, that they ‘held fast the beginning of their confidence (or expectation) stedfast to the end; (Heb. iii. 12, 14.) that they continue rooted and grounded in the faith, and be not removed away from the hope of the gospel;’ (Col. i. 23.) seeing he bids them who were already in grace, and had “received like precious faithⁱ with them, to beware lest being led away by the error of the wicked, they fall from their own stedfastness.” 2 Pet. iii. 17. Hence we conceive we have just reason to deny that God hath from eternity decreed, or absolutely promised to preserve them from falling into those sins which he thus cautions them to avoid, or to perform himself what he requires, as their duty.

Thirdly. We grant that God hath promised perseverance in the ways of righteousness to the end, to those who constantly and conscientiously use the means by him prescribed for that end; he will “present us holy and unblameable, and unrepovable in his sight, if we continue in the faith rooted and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel.” Coloss. i. 22, 23. He hath assured us, that “if we cast not away our confidence, but patiently continue to do the will of God, we shall inherit the promises; (Heb. x. 35, 36.) That if we give all diligence to add to our faith virtue, knowledge, godliness, patience, temperance, brotherly kindness and charity, we shall never fall; (2 Pet. i. 5, 10.) That if we build ourselves up in our holy faith, and pray fervently in the Holy Ghost, we shall keep ourselves in the love of God; (Jude 20. 21.) That if we hold fast till he come, and keep his works to the end, we shall reign with Christ.” Rev. ii. 25 26, 27. But then we deny that God hath absolutely promised to interpose his power infrustrably to engage all true believers to use these means, and judge these very texts to be so many evidences to the contrary. The assertors of this doctrine hold,

II. *First.* That the foundation of this perseverance is the absolute election of those that persevere unto salvation, and consequently to the means which shall unfrustrably conclude in their salvation. And this shews the inconsistency of two of their argu-

ⁱ 2 Pet. i. 1.

ments for perseverance, taken from the prayers of the saints that they may persevere, and from the supposed intercession of Christ to the same effect. For, as it cannot be proved, that either Christ intercedes or the saints pray more for perseverance to the end, than for their preservation from those sins to which experience and scripture shews they are obnoxious; so is it as absurd to pray or intercede for that which God hath absolutely decreed from all eternity shall come to pass, as to pray and intercede that the world may not be drowned again; or that Christ may come to judgment, or be the Judge of the quick and dead; or that the bodies of the saints may arise; or for any other thing which shall infallibly come to pass by virtue of God's absolute decree from all eternity: it being, upon this supposition, as certain that this absolute decree concerning their perseverance shall come to pass, though Christ did never intercede, or the saints pray it might do so; as that the other decrees now mentioned shall certainly have their effect, with his or our intercession that it may be so.

Secondly. They also grant that it is not from the strength of the new nature in them, from the steadiness of the renewed mind, the immutability of the renewed will or affections, that true believers cannot fall away; but purely from the promise of God that, though they are obnoxious in themselves to fall away, he will keep them by his power from falling finally. And hence it is obvious to discern that all the arguments produced in this cause from the nature of true faith, conversion, or the new birth, are insufficient to prove this doctrine: because it is granted that it is not from the nature of this faith, the strength of this conversion, or the immutability of this new birth that they thus persevere; but from the power of God, by virtue of his promise, preserving them from that fall to which they in themselves are still obnoxious.

When therefore they argue for the perseverance of the saints to the end, from the words of the Psalmist, *'he whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates in it day and night,—his leaf shall not wither.'*^k That *he who hears Christ's sayings and doth them, shall be like to a wise man who built his house upon a rock; and so, when the wind and the floods came, it fell not.'*^l From the good

^k Psalm i, 2, 3.

^l Matt. vii. 24, 25.

ground which *brought forth fruit with patience.*^m From St. Paul's question, *how shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?*ⁿ And from the words of St. John, *this is the victory over the world, even our faith.*^o As all these places are manifestly impertinent, because they only shew the effect of good dispositions remaining with us, or how it will be with the man who always delights in the law of God, who still doth Christ's commandments, hears the word and keepeth it, as the good ground did; is still dead to sin, and still lives by faith; but not that these good dispositions must be always in us.

Thirdly. They grant that though true believers cannot fall totally and finally, yet may they fall into drunkenness and incest, as Noah; so into murder and adultery, as David; into gross idolatry, as Solomon; into denials of our Lord, with oaths and imprecations, as St. Peter did; and into such horrid sins as render them at present unfit to enter into the kingdom of heaven, and which require a renewal of their faith and their repentance; and that by the guilt of those sins they stand condemned, till they are renewed by faith and repentance. And this demonstratively shews the falsehood of their arguments from such texts as these; "He that is born of God sinneth not, neither can sin; he keepeth himself so that the wicked one toucheth him not."^p The Lord is faithful, who shall establish you, and keep you from evil."

CHAP. II.

Containing arguments from scripture against the doctrine of the perseverance of saints to the end.

THE scriptures which do expressly assert the possibility that true believers, true penitents, men truly just and righteous, may fall away from their righteousness, and die in their iniquity, are, among many others, these following.

I. "When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness and committeth iniquity, and doth according to all the abomina-

^m Luke vii. 8, 15.

ⁿ Rom. vi. 2.

^o 1 John v. 4.

^p 1 John iii. 9. v. 18.

^q 2 Thess. iii. 3.

tions which the wicked man doth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned; in the trespass that he hath trespassed, and in the sin that he hath sinned,—in them shall he die. When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committed iniquity and dieth in them, for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die.^a When I shall say to the righteous he shall surely live, if he trust to his righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered, but for his iniquity that he hath committed he shall die.^b When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall die thereby.”^c Where,

Observe (*First*) that God is here asserting the righteousness of his ways against the murmurings and the repinings of the Jews, that they died for their fathers’ sins. For that this was the import of their proverb, “the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge,” is evident from God’s answer to this proverb, ‘*that every one should die for his own iniquity,*’ (Jer. xxxi. 29,) and to these murmurers that ‘*the soul that sinneth it shall die.*’ (Ezek. xviii. 3.) This sense of these murmurers the prophet represents more plainly in these words, ‘*if our iniquities and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how shall we then live?*’ (Chap. xxxiii. 10.) And this shews the vanity of that answer, which some return to this argument, that “the prophet here speaks of afflictions and not death;” to which may be added,

^a Ezek. xviii. 24, 26.

^b Chap. xxxiii. 15, 18.

^c Sicut justum antea peccatorem non pręgravant antiqua delicta, sic peccatorem qui prius justus fuerit non juvant veteres justitię. Hieron. in Ezek. 18, F. 196. L. Quibus omnibus demonstratur nec peccatorem salutem desperare debere si agat pœnitentiam, nec justum in sua justitia confidere si perdidit negligenter quod magno labore quasierat. In C. 33, F. 221, K. ἜΤΕ ΤΟΝ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΝ ὀνήσει ἢ παρ’ ἐμῆ γινομένη τῶν ἀγαθῶν ὑπόσχεσις εἰ μὴ ἐπιμείνη ἐν τῇ τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἐργασίᾳ ἀλλὰ δώσει δικὰς τῶν βεβιωμένων ἀζίας. Theodoret. in locum.

‘As his former iniquities do not oppress the just man who had before been a sinner, so neither does his former righteousness profit the sinner who has till now been a just person.’ Jerom on Ezek. xviii.

‘By which it is demonstrated, that a sinner ought not to despair of salvation if he truly repent, and that a just person ought not to trust in his righteousness if he have negligently lost that which he had acquired by great labour.’ Jerom on Ezek. xxxiii.

‘Neither shall my promise of good things profit the righteous man, unless he continue in the practice of that which is good; but shall rather inflict on him the punishment due to those who have been once alive.’ Theodoret on the passage. ED.

that this answer contradicts the express words of the prophet about twenty times.

Secondly. Observe, that the righteous man here spoken of is one truly righteous; for he is one who "sinneth not, committeth not iniquity, and turneth not away from his righteousness;"^d one who walketh in God's statutes and keeps his judgments; yea, "who walketh in the statutes of life without committing iniquity;"^e and therefore assuredly is one who is truly and inwardly righteous, and not in outward profession only. "For," saith Dr. Prideaux, "should he only turn away from his counterfeit and hypocritical righteousness; should he not rather live than die, inasmuch as he would put off the wolf to put on the lamb?" "To affirm," saith Mr. Thorndyke, "that the prophet of God, speaking in God's name, and of the esteem and reward which God hath for the righteous and unrighteous, speaks only of that which seemeth righteousness and unrighteousness to the world, or which a hypocrite himself thinks such, is such an open scorn to God's word, as cannot be maintained but by taking *righteousness* to signify *unrighteousness*, and *turning* for *not turning* but continuing in the wickedness which was at the heart when he professed otherwise."^f

Thirdly. The man who is here said to die, is said to die not only for, but '*in his iniquity*, and to be *taken away in his iniquity*;'^g and so must die not only temporally but eternally. The way which God directs him to, that he may escape this death, is '*to walk in the statutes of life without committing iniquity*;^h *to repent and turn himself from all his iniquity, and make him a new heart, and a new spirit*, and then the promise is, that *all his transgressions shall not be mentioned*;ⁱ that is, imputed to him; and therefore the life promised to him that doth so, must be life eternal; and consequently the death following on the neglect to do so, must be death eternal. And lastly, the righteous man who turneth away from his righteousness is one who "committeth iniquity, and doth according to all the abominations which the wicked man doth;"^k and therefore must be one to whom belongs the portion of the wicked, which is death eternal: that therefore must be the punishment here threatened to him for '*turning away from his righteousness*.'

^d Ezekiel xxxiii, 12, 13.

^e Chapter xviii, 9, 17, 19.

^f Epilog. Part 2, c. 51, p. 272.

^g Ezekiel xxxiii, 8, 9.

^h Verse 15.

ⁱ Chapter xviii, 30, 31.

^k Chapter xviii, 24.

And (*Fourthly*) whereas some take refuge in the supposed conditional proposal of the words, “which,” say they, “assert nothing,” (i.) they fly for refuge to a mere mistake, the words in the original being not *if*, but בִּשְׁבֻב (beshub) ἐν ᾗ ἂν ἠμεῖρα ἐπιστρέψῃ, ‘IN THE DAY THAT HE TURNS AWAY *from his righteousness.*’ And again, when ‘*I say to the righteous he shall live,* רַחֵם (tehu,) AND HE *trust in his righteousness.*’ (ii.) The same form of words is used concerning the wicked turning away from his wickedness; and yet none doubts but the prophet then speaks of what is very possible. And (iii.) even Dr. Prideaux confutes this answer thus, “though such hypotheticals, as are only made use of for the amplification or the aggravation of matters, (as ‘*if I climb up into heaven, thou art there,*’) infer not the possibility of the thing; yet such conditional sayings, upon which admonitions, promises, and threatenings are built, do at least suppose something in possibility, though by their tenor and form they suppose nothing in being; besides, in the case in hand, he that had a mind to deride the prophet, might readily come upon him thus, ‘But a righteous man according to the truth, cannot turn away from his righteousness, therefore your threatening is in vain.’” Nor can it reasonably be supposed that an All-wise God should go about to justify the equity of his ways only by supposing things impossible by virtue of his own decree and promise.

II. ARGUMENT SECOND. This doctrine of the possibility of the final departure of true believers and penitents from the faith, is as fully contained in these words, “it is impossible for them who were once enlightened, (N.B.) and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come καὶ παραπέσοντας, AND YET FALL AWAY, to renew them again to repentance, &c.” (Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6.) For,

First. That this is spoken of them who were once true believers, is evident, (i.) from the word φωτισθέντες, ENLIGHTENED; for the same apostle, in the same epistle, and in a place of the same import, speaking to the same persons, saith, that “after they were enlightened they endured a great fight of afflictions, and took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing they had in heaven a

better and a more enduring substance."^m They therefore who were so enlightened as to know they had an inheritance in heaven, and a great recompence of reward, and that '*they should inherit the promises,*' if they did not cast away their confidence, but with patience continue to do the will of God, were doubtless sincere christians and true believers. (ii.) From the words following, "it is impossible to renew them to repentance" from dead works, verse 1; they therefore had once truly repented; for I suppose the apostle did not speak of "laying again the foundation" of a hypocritical repentance, nor did he judge it a thing impossible to produce that in them. The phrase, "it is impossible to renew them again to repentance," seems plainly to imply that they were once truly in that state to which they were to be renewed, and also their loss of it. And to shew how opposite their interpretations are to the sentiments of the ancients, who say "all these things may be said of hypocritical professors," the Greek Fathers, by "the heavenly gift," understand ἄφεσις τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν, 'THE REMISSION OF SINS conferred in baptism;' by the "participation of the Holy Ghost," τὴν χάριν καὶ μέτοχὴν τοῦ θείου πνεύματος, 'THE GRACE AND THE PARTICIPATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT,' conferred by imposition of hands; and by '*the powers of the world to come,*' either ἀγγελικὴν διαγωγὴν, 'AN ANGELICAL LIFE,' or τὸν ἀρραβῶνα τοῦ πνεύματος, 'THE EARNEST OF THE SPIRIT,' by which they may obtain the blessings promised, or that faith is the earnest of the world to come. So Chrysostom, Theodoret, Photius, Œcumenius, Haymo, and Theophylact in locum.*

Secondly. That the persons here mentioned must fall totally and finally, is also evident, because the apostle doth pronounce it a thing '*impossible to renew them to repentance.*' And (ii.) he declares their repentance impossible on this account, that they "crucified to themselves afresh the Son of God, and put him to an open shame;" that is, they again declared him worthy of that punishment they had inflicted on him; and so to them there '*remained no more sacrifice for sin, but a fearful looking for of judgment,*' x. 26, 27.

III. ARGUMENT THIRD. This also seemeth evident from the place parallel to this, "If we sin wilfully (by falling off from

^m Hebrews x.

* 'On the passage.' ED.

Christianity) after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains (to us) no more sacrifice for sin, but a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy, &c. Of how much sorer punishment suppose ye then shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath accounted the blood of the (new) covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite to the Spirit of grace?"ⁿ For,

First. That the apostle speaks of them who had received the remission of their past sins by faith in the blood of the New Testament shed for the remission of sins, and so of them who had true justifying faith, is evident from these words, that they were '*sanctified by his blood.*' For *to be sanctified*, throughout this whole epistle, and more assuredly to be '*sanctified with the blood of Christ,*' hath still relation to our justification, or the remission of our sins procured by the blood of Christ, and not to the inward sanctification of our nature by the Spirit of Christ; so, v. g. that Christ was consecrated to his office of a priest, to make atonement for our sins by his sufferings, the apostle proves, ii. 11, because ὁ ἀγιάζων, *he that purgeth away* the guilt contracted by our nature, and οἱ ἀγιάζόμενοι, *they who are cleansed* from it, are one in nature: See the note there. So ix. 13, '*the blood of bulls and goats, ἀγιάζει, SANCTIFIES to the purifying of the flesh,* that is, to the cleansing from legal defilements. So x. 10, ἡγιάζομενοι ἑσμεν, '*WE ARE SANCTIFIED* or purged from the guilt of sin by *the body*, or, as some copies read, by the *blood of Christ offered once for all;* and verse 14, '*by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified;*' that is, hath entirely purged them from the guilt of sin; and xiii. 12, '*wherefore Jesus, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the camp:*' where both the blood sanctifying, and τὸ περὶ ἁμαρτίας, '*THE SACRIFICE FOR SIN*' to which it answers, verse 11, shew that Christ sanctified the people by the oblation of himself as a sin-offering to cleanse them from the guilt of sin.

Secondly. That they who so sinned that there remained '*no more sacrifice for their sin, but only a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation,*' and so as to do '*despight to the Spirit of*

ⁿ Heb. x. 26,—29,

grace,' by rejecting him as a lying Spirit, and his gifts and miracles as illusions, and so were guilty of the sin against the Holy Ghost, fell totally and finally, is so exceeding evident, that I know none who ever ventured to deny it.

IV. ARGUMENT FOURTH. This is still farther evident from the following words of the same chapter, verse 38, '*now the just shall live by faith, καὶ ἐάν ὑποσείληται, but IF HE DRAW BACK, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.*' Where observe,

First. That the word ὑποσέλλειν signifies *to draw back, refuse, and fly from a thing*; and so the object of it being here faith, must signify the drawing back of the person spoken of from the faith, or refusing still to profess it, and so, as it here follows, must be his '*drawing back unto perdition.*' And because this is done usually as here, verses 33, 34, out of fear of persecutions, and want of patience to bear them, verse 36, hence it is joined with fear; as '*Peter ὑπέσθλην ἑαυτὸν, WITHDREW HIMSELF fearing the circumcision, Gal. ii. 12, and often signifies fear, as μὴ ὑποσείλη, 'thou shalt not be afraid of the face of man.'* Deut. i. 17. And because men's cowardly fears make them to hide and conceal their profession, to dissemble and play the hypocrite; hence it also signifies to conceal and hide;^o and by Hesychius and Suidas is rendered ὑποκρίνεται, δολιεύεται, *he plays the hypocrite, and deals deceitfully*; all which, in things which do respect our God and our religion, are pernicious to the soul; especially if we consider that he that draweth back stands opposed to him that '*believeth,*' verse 39, and here to him that '*liveth by faith,*' and therefore can have none, or only a dead faith: and lastly that God here solemnly declares his '*soul shall have no pleasure in him,*' and then he must still lie under his sad displeasure. Note,

Secondly. That ἐάν ὑποσείληται, '*if he draws back,*' refers plainly to the '*just man who lives by his faith,*' and in the prophet, to him who is with faith and patience to wait for the accomplishment of the vision; and verse 39, ὁ ὑποσειλάμενος, '*THE DRAWER-BACK*' stands opposed to him that '*believes to the salvation of his soul.*' The words do therefore plainly suppose, that '*the just man who liveth by that faith,*' in which if he persisted he would save his soul, may '*draw back to perdition;*' and this is also evi-

^o See Suicerus in Verbo.

dent from the ensuing words, ‘*my soul shall have no pleasure in him;*’ for they do plainly intimate that God took pleasure in him before his drawing back; for otherwise this threat would signify nothing, the Lord taking pleasure only in just men, and such as live by faith. Note,

Thirdly. That καὶ ἐάν, may be rendered not hypothetically, ‘*and if;*’ but, ‘*AND WHEN the just man draweth back;*’ for that this is a very common sense of the particle, ἐάν, see note on Heb. iii. 15. But if we read the words hypothetically, the supposition cannot be of a thing impossible, for then God must be supposed to speak thus, “If the just man do that which I know it is impossible for him to do, and which I am obliged by promise to preserve him from doing, my soul shall have no pleasure in him;” which is to make God seriously to threaten men for such a sin of which they are not capable, and of which they are obliged to believe they are not capable, if they be obliged to believe the doctrine of perseverance, and so to make his threatenings of none effect.

V. ARGUMENT FIFTH. This may be strongly argued from these words of the apostle Peter, “they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, (or to lasciviousness) those who were clean escaped from them that live in error: For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning: For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. But it is happened to them according to the true proverb,—the dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.”^a Where note,

First. That the apostle speaks in the beginning of this chapter of some who should ‘*bring in damnable heresies;*’ that is, heresies, which they who embraced should receive damnation; and these men saith he, ἐμπορεύονται, ‘*shall make merchandise of;*’^b or gain over to these damnable heresies *some of you,* who have received *like precious faith*^c with us. And here he proceeds to shew how

^a 2 Peter ii, 18, 20, 21, 22. ^b Verse 3. ^c Chapter i, 1.

they should do it, viz. by tempting them to filthy lusts: they therefore who were thus allured, must have once had *'like precious faith'* with the apostles, and therefore must have been good christians. Note,

Secondly. That these persons whom they thus allured to uncleanness, had once, ὄντως, *'truly and really,'* escaped from those who lived, ἐν πλάνῃ, *'in error,'* not of judgment, but of deceitful lusts; for so this, πλάνη, *'error,'* is expounded in this epistle by St. Peter, when he saith, *'beware lest being led away, τῇ τῶν ἀθέσμων πλάνῃ, by the deceit of men, practising these unnatural lusts, ye fall from your own steadfastness;'*^d plainly supposing that even steadfast christians might thus fall. Now they who had thus escaped, were not any longer in bondage to sin, or overcome by it, verse 19, which yet, saith St. Paul, Rom. vii. 19, 23, is the state of every unregenerate person. See the note there.

Thirdly. The apostle adds, that *'they had escaped the pollutions which are in the world through lust, ἐν ἐπιγνώσει, by the acknowledgment of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;'*^e that is, by the acknowledgment of *'that truth which is after godliness,'*^f which they who are laden with sins cannot attain to; which is the consequence of true repentance, and which recovers them, *'from the snare of Satan, who were led captive by him at his will;'*^g and so by such an acknowledgment of Christ, as only true christians have, and which is joined with *'the faith of the elect.'* Tit. i. 1. Moreover, by virtue of this acknowledgement, they had so far escaped the pollutions of the world through lust as to be disentangled from them, not overcome by them; as is plain from those words, "if after they have thus escaped, they be again entangled and overcome:" they also had turned to, that is, obeyed "the holy commandment delivered to them;" for otherwise they could not afterwards have turned from it. Now evident it is, that neither all, nor any of these things can truly be affirmed of hypocritical professors, who only are in outward show, but never in sincerity of heart, turned from the service of sin, or obedient to the holy commandment.

Secondly. That these men after fell away totally and finally, we learn from these words, "that they were again allured to

^d Chapter iii, 17.

^e Titus i, 1.

^f 2 Timothy iii, 7.

^g 2 Timothy ii, 25, 26.

wantonness; again entangled and overcome by their polluting lusts; and so again in bondage to them, verse 19; that they turned from the holy commandment delivered to them to their former vomit and wallowing in the mire; and that so fatally, that it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness."

VI. ARGUMENT SIXTH. All the fore-mentioned texts seem directly to assert this may be done. I proceed secondly to those scriptures which seem as plainly to assert it hath been done, and therefore may be done again. Now of this we have an instance

First. In Hymenæus and Alexander, and their associates; which St. Paul introduceth with a charge to Timothy, 'to hold (that is, retain) *faith and a good conscience, which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck; of whom is Hymenæus and Philetus.*' Now 'to put away a good conscience,' belongs to them alone who once had and ought to have retained it, and 'to make shipwreck of the faith,' so as to blaspheme that doctrine which they once professed, is surely to fall off from the profession of it. *Lastly,* the faith and that good conscience he charges Timothy to retain, is doubtless a sincere faith, and a good conscience, that *unfeigned faith^h* and that good conscience he then had. By saying therefore that others had laid aside both these, he, in effect, declares that they were totally fallen away, which is sufficient confutation of all their arguments produced from scripture for the doctrine of perseverance; which if they prove any thing, they prove that true saints cannot fall totally, nor can it reasonably be thought that when so many do thus fall away, all of them should return by a sincere repentance.

A *second* instance is that of Hymenæus and Philetus, who, saith the apostle, 'have erred from the truth (*περὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἐσόχνησαν*, HAVE FALLEN OFF FROM THE TRUTH,) and overthrown the faith of some.'ⁱ So, *περὶ πίστιν ἀσοχεῖν*, (1 Tim. vi. 21,) is TO FALL AWAY FROM THE FAITH,^k and is another instance of this nature: for seeing christians believe to the *salvation of their souls*, (Heb. x. 39,) and the end of their faith is the *salvation of their souls*, (1 Peter i. 9,) they who do overthrow their faith, must

^h 2 Timothy i, 5.

ⁱ 2 Timothy ii, 18.

^k So, *μὴ ἀσόχει γυναικὸς σοφῆς καὶ ἀγαθῆς*, 'depart not from a wise and good wife,' and *ἀσοχεῖν ἐλπιδῶν καὶ τῆ προσδεκθέντων*, is 'to fall from our hopes and expectations.' Ecum. in locum.

overthrow that in them which, had it continued, would have ended in their salvation.

Thirdly. We have reason to suspect this of many Judaizers in the church of Galatia; for as the apostle declares, that they had “received the Spirit through the hearing of faith;”^l that they were all made “the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus,”^m and by baptism had “put on Christ,” and that “because they were sons, God had sent the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father;”ⁿ that they once ‘*ran well:*’^o so doth he marvel that they were *so soon removed from him that called them in the grace of Christ to another gospel;*^p by which Christ’s gospel was perverted. He enquires, “who had bewitched them that they should not obey the truth:”^q And how it was that after they had known, or rather were known of God, they returned again to the beggarly elements of the world to which they desired to be in bondage;^r declaring that he was afraid of them lest he had bestowed upon them labour in vain;^s and that he travailed in birth with them to renew in them that faith^t from which they were fallen, and to form Christ^u in them; that they now did not obey the truth.” And seeing they now desired to be circumcised, and to be under the law, he plainly tells them that “if they were circumcised Christ should profit them nothing; that he was become of none effect to as many of them as sought for justification by the works of the law, they being fallen from grace,”^w and therefore must have been formerly in a state of grace. It is therefore evident that the apostle believed that they who had ‘*begun in the Spirit might end in the flesh;*’ that they who were made *the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus*, might be so changed that *Christ should profit them nothing, and be of none effect to them*, and that they who were once *known of God*, might fall from his *grace and favour.*’

To this head also are to be referred the predictions of the scripture concerning persons who should fall away; for being divine predictions they must come to pass, and being predictions of things which were to happen long before our times, they must be also instances of what hath come to pass. Now such are,

^l Chapter iii, 2, 5.

^m Verses 26, 27.

ⁿ Chapter iv. 6.

^o Chapter v, 7.

^p Chapter i, 6, 7.

^q Chapter iii, 1.

^r Chapter iv, 9.

^s Verse 11.

^t Verse 19.

^u Chapter v, 7.

^w Verse 2.

First. Christ's declaration that by reason of the extreme affliction of the times, in which Jerusalem was to be destroyed, many should be offended, that is, should fall off from the faith: and that "because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold; but he that endures to the end shall be saved." Matt. xxiv. 12, 13. Where that Christ speaks not of a hypocritical, outward profession of affection to him, may be gathered from his styling it not *pretence*, but *love*; his supposition that it was fervent love; (for what was never hot cannot *wax cold*;) yea such love in which had they continued they would certainly have been saved; and yet he doth not only intimate that some would not continue in that love to the end, but plainly doth foretel that it in many would wax cold.

Secondly. As our Lord here foretold that there should be then an apostasy of the believers of the Jewish nation, so also did St. Paul speak of the same apostasy, as a thing that was to happen before the coming of the '*man of sin*, (2 Thess. ii. 3,) adding, that *the Spirit said expressly that in the latter times*, (the times then instant, verse 6,) *some should depart from the faith.*' Now to prevent this apostasy of the believing Jews, the epistle to the Hebrews was manifestly written. And as the excellent Dr. Barrow used to say, "that it was written against the doctrine of perseverance;" so is it certain that it containeth many cogent arguments against that doctrine, besides those three produced already from it. As will be evident,

1. From the manifold exhortations, "to hold fast their hope, which gave them ground of rejoicing. Chap. iii. 16. To hold fast their confidence stedfast the end. Verse 14. To hold fast their profession. Chap. iv. 14. To hold fast the profession of their faith without wavering. Chap. x. 23. To retain grace whereby to serve God acceptably. Chap. xii. 28. To labour to enter into the rest prepared for the people of God, lest any of them (who believing had a present right to it, chap iv. 3, as the Jews had to enter into the land of Canaan, whilst they believed in God, and believed his servant Moses, Exod. xiv. 31,) should fall from it after the same example of unbelief," chap. iv. 11, they being excluded from entering into that land by their following unbelief, Num. xiv. 11. Chap. iii. 19.—"To shew the same diligence to

the full assurance of hope to the end, and to be followers of them who through faith and patience did inherit the promises. Chap. vi. 11, 12. To consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners, lest they be wearied, and faint in their minds; to lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees, and to make straight paths for their feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way." Verses 12, 13.—Where we have four Agonistical terms, all importing fainting in our christian warfare or race, and giving over the fight as being able to hold out no longer; for *κἀμνεν* is 'to give over the fight as being weary;' *ἐκλύειν* is 'to faint and be dispirited, so that we can run or fight no longer;' to have *τὰς παρεμμένας χεῖρας*, 'hands hanging down,' is 'to give over the combat, they stretching out their hands;' and to have, *γόνατα τὰ παραλελυμένα*, 'knees languishing,' or paralytic knees, imports the same thing; they fighting in the Olympic games, *ὀρθοστάθην*, 'standing upright,' and 'to make straight paths,' is 'not to turn out of the way of christianity for fear of persecution, and by our example to teach the infirm christian so to do.' See the notes there.

2. From his frequent cautions to them who believed, to beware, "lest there should be in them an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; or lest any of them should be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. Chap. iii, 12, 13. To look diligently to it lest any of them should fall from the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness should spring up among them by which many should be defiled; lest there should be among them any fornicator or profane person as Esau, who for one mess of pottage sold his birth-right; and, to see to it, that they did not, *ἀποστρέφειν*, TURN AWAY from him that spake from heaven."

3. From his promises to them that persevered, as in these words, "cast not away your confidence which hath great recompence of reward, for you have need of patience, that having done the will of God, you may inherit the promises." Chap. x. 35, 36.

4. From his declarations that they only belonged to the household of Christ, "If they hold fast their confidence and rejoicing of hope firm to the end," chap. iii. 6, and could be only made partakers of the blessings Christ had purchased for them, by "holding the beginning of their confidence stedfast to the end." Verse 14.

5. From the dreadful threats he pronounces against those who fell away, and drew back to perdition, after they had “repented, lived by faith, and been justified through faith in the blood of the new covenant,” viz. that it was “impossible to renew them to repentance;” that there remained “no more sacrifice for their sin,” and that God would have no farther pleasure in them. Now, for confirmation of this argument, observe,

(i.) That the apostle here speaks of true believers, even of such who had a present right to ‘*enter into rest,*’ (iv. 3,) who at present ‘*rejoiced in hope,*’ (iii. 6,) and had such an expectation of future blessings, which if they held fast they would be ‘*partakers of Christ.*’ Verse 14. That they had ‘*freedom of access into the holy of holies through the blood of Jesus,*’ (x. 19,) *had their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and their bodies washed with pure water,* (verses 22, 23,) and a *christian hope,* (verse 24,) and *knew they had in heaven a better, and a more enduring substance* than that which they had lost on earth, (verse 34,) and would *receive the promise, and a great recompence of reward,* if they did not *cast away their confidence, but patiently continued in well-doing.* Verses 35, 36. That they were ‘*come to that Jerusalem which is above, and to the assembly of the first-born, whose names were written in heaven,*’ (xii. 22, 23,) and so undoubtedly were once true converts and sound believers. And yet,

(ii.) It is also evident that the apostle supposes that they might not retain this hope, or hold this expectation ‘*steadfast to the end,*’ (iii. 6, 14,) that they might *fail of the rest prepared for the people of God,* as the Jews did through unbelief, (iv. 11,) that they might *depart from the living God,* (iii. 12,) that they might *decline from their hope,* (x. 23,) and *cast away their confidence,* (verse 35,) that they might *faint under and give over the christian combat,* (xii. 3,) might *let their hands hang down, and their knees be feeble,* (verse 11,) that they might be *defiled, and fall from grace;* that they might become *fornicators, and profane persons, as Esau was,* and so might lose their *spiritual birth-right.* (Verses 16, 17.) And, lastly, that they might ‘*turn away from him who spake from heaven to them,*’ (verse 25,) and so unquestionably might fall away both totally and finally.

VII. A THIRD head of ARGUMENTS against this doctrine is to this effect, that all the commands and exhortations directed

by God to the faithful to persevere in well-doing, and to continue faithful to the end, and to fear lest they should fall away; all cautions directed to them to take heed they do not do so; all places which contain a supposition that they may do so, and which suspend our future happiness on this condition that '*we continue stedfast to the end,*' and promise salvation upon so doing, and which pronounce the most dreadful and abiding threats to them who do not so,—are so many pregnant evidences of the possibility of doing so, and are plain indications that God hath made no absolute decree, or promise, that good men shall not do so. For, as when these motives are used to induce men to embrace christianity, or perform any other christian duty, they contain an evidence that it is possible for men to do otherwise; so also when they are used to induce men to persevere in that profession which they have undertaken, they must necessarily, for the same reason, contain an evidence that it is possible for any man who is induced by them to persevere in the course of a christian, not to persevere. For whereas some think fit to answer that "these commands, and exhortations, these cautions, promises and threats, directed to true believers, are well consistent with God's absolute decree and promise of their perseverance, as being the means appointed for the accomplishment of that which he hath made necessary by his decree and promise;" the falsehood of this answer shall be fully detected under all these heads. At present let it only be observed;

First. That this is the sentiment of all mankind; for how much soever they vary in other things, they all agree in this, not to exhort men to what they know they never can refuse to do; not to fear they should neglect such things; not to terrify them by threats from neglecting, or allure them by promises to perform them. On the contrary they generally agree, that as a promise, so a threat of what I know to be impossible, is as none at all; that there is no need of exhortations to incite men to what they certainly will do.^a That a promise must be of something which at present is uncertain, and suspended on a condition which may not be performed; and that a command or law obliging us to will and do, must suppose in us a freedom not to will, or to consent to that

^a *Supervacuaneum est enim, in quod inus, impelli; nemo in amorem sui cohortandus est, quem, dum pascitur, trahit. Sen. de Ben. l. 4, 16, 17.*

which is required; for "he only wills," say the Civilians, "and consents, who hath it in his power to be unwilling and dissent."^b

Secondly. Observe that God himself approves of this deportment; for though the elect angels are yet under the law of love and obedience, yet are they not exhorted to that obedience, they have no promises to move them to it, nor are they threatened with God's displeasure if they neglect to do it, because, being confirmed in their blessed state, they cannot fail of doing it. Again, our Blessed Lord, as he was a prophet, spake '*as his Father gave him commandment,*' for so all legates must do; as he was a priest, he became obedient to the death; but I know of no exhortations directed to him to perform faithfully the office of a Priest or Prophet; no threats, should he neglect to do so; no promises to encourage him to do that duty of which he could not fail, but only a declaration of that glory which would succeed his sufferings. Lastly, we find no exhortations directed to the evil angels not to tempt God's servants, not to be adversaries to Christ's kingdom; no threats denounced upon their doing so, but only a declaration of their present state, and of their future doom. Now seeing the elect on earth, according to this doctrine, can no more fail of perseverance to the end, than the elect angels, seeing they can no more finally neglect, or be unfaithful in the use of the means which will infustrably produce that perseverance, than Christ could fail of faithfully discharging his Prophetick and his Priestly office, how is it the Divine Wisdom sees it meet to ply us on earth continually with those exhortations, threats, and promises which he saw needless in the case, and inconsistent with the state of the elect angels and our blessed Lord? Have we not reason to conceive it is because we have a liberty *ad utrumque*,* which they had not, and are at present in a state of trial, whether we will stand or fall, whereas they both were under no such possibility of failing in their duty? And

Thirdly. This is evident from the nature of these things; for whatsoever is a means for the producing an effect, or the bringing it to pass, must contain in it nothing repugnant to, but only subordinate to that end. But such exhortations as these, '*hold fast your profession without wavering;*'^c *hold till I come, that no man take away*

^b Ejus est velle qui potest nolle. Ulpian de Reg. Jur. Leg. 3. Consentire non potest cum neo dissentire possit. Tryphon. l. in Bello S. Medio D. de Captivis.

* 'To both' ED.

^c Hebrews x, 23.

away thy crown;^d look diligently that you fall not from the grace of God,^e lest being led away by the error of the wicked, you fall from your own stedfastness, &c.^f do in their proper nature and tendency import a danger, and tend to raise a fear in men, lest what they are cautioned to beware of, should happen to them. Whereas an infrustrable decree and absolute promise made known to all believers that they shall persevere to the end, tends to exclude all dangers, and prevent all fear of falling from the grace of God, and therefore must be contrary to the purpose of these exhortations; and so these exhortations can be no means to beget perseverance in them. And since threats are more naturally designed to beget in us a sense of the same danger, and an impression of the same fear, which these decrees and promises entirely exclude, these decrees and promises must be repugnant to those threats. Since, lastly, promises tend to excite hope, inflame endeavours, and render us solicitous, lest we should fail of the blessing promised; and where we know such absolute decrees are made, and promises engaged to confer the promised blessing, there can be no ground for this solicitude, no need of hoping for that which faith makes certain to us, or of quickening our endeavours after that in which it is impossible we should miscarry. Hence also it must follow, that these absolute decrees and promises must be repugnant to these conditions of perseverance laid down by way of promise in the holy scripture, *'we shall reap if we faint not:'*^g *'if ye continue in the faith, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, ye are made partakers of Christ: if ye hold fast your rejoicing in hope, and the beginning of your confidence firm to the end;'*^h and so I come to a particular consideration of these respective heads. And,

VIII. *First.* All commands to persevere and to *'stand fast in the faith,'* shew that they to whom they are directed may not stand fast, or persevere unto the end; for, as Suarez well argues, "all laws, that is, commands of our superiours, are made concerning actions to be done, or left undone by man as a free agent, who hath *potestatem ad utrumlibet*, 'a power to obey or not;'ⁱ but in commands respecting what it is not possible to leave undone, there can be no such liberty to leave undone what is commanded,

^d Revelations ii, 25.

^e Hebrews xii, 15.

^f 2 Peter iii, 17.

^g Galatians vi, 9.

^h Colossians i, 25.

ⁱ Hebrews iii, 14.

and therefore in such things there can be no law properly commanding that. (ii.) Laws are attended with the sanctions of a penalty to the transgressor of them, and a reward to the obedient; but where there is no power of obeying, it cannot be our fault that we do not obey, and so our disobedience can deserve no punishment, nor can it be rewardable to do that which is simply necessary for us to do." Now such commands are these, *'watch ye, praying at all times, that ye may be worthy to escape all these things, and to stand before the Son of man.'*^k *'Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit yourselves like men.'*^l *'Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Take to yourselves the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand.'*^m *'Cast not away your confidence which hath great recompence of reward.'*ⁿ *'But ye, beloved, building up yourselves in your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God.'*^o To the church of Thyatira, Christ speaks thus, *'what thou hast attained to hold fast till I come.'*^p to that of Philadelphia, *'hold fast till I come, that no man take away thy crown.'* Now do not these things plainly seem to intimate that their salvation depended on their watching, their using the whole armour of God, their stedfastness in the faith, without casting away their confidence, and that they might lose their crown by neglecting so to do, and be unable to withstand temptations, or to stand before the Son of man?

IX. *Secondly.* All exhortations to perseverance, or to continue in the faith, the knowledge, or the love of God, must be so many evidences, that they to whom they are directed may not do so; and that he who tenders them to true believers hath not obliged himself by promise absolute, to preserve them in the faith or in the love of God. For either they need these exhortations, or they do not. To say "they do not need them," is in effect to say that "they are needless exhortations, and therefore are unworthy of the wisdom of the Holy Ghost." To say "they need them in order to their perseverance," is in effect to grant that they are instrumental to their perseverance, and that without them they might fail of it; for that cannot be needful to that end, without

^k Luke xxi, 36.

^l 1 Corinthians xvi, 15.

^m Ephesians vi, 11, 15.

ⁿ Hebrews x, 35.

^o Jude 20.

^p Revelations ii, 25.

which they shall as assuredly persevere, as if no such exhortations had been offered to them. And seeing exhortations are only moral motives, which we may resist or frustrate, if they be means toward the production of perseverance, it must depend upon such means as we may frustrate and resist, and so it is possible it may not happen. If it be answered, that "these exhortations therefore become effectual, because God's Spirit infrustrably persuades the saints to obey them;" this is a plain acknowledgment the exhortation is no means of the saints' perseverance; because an action which I can always resist and frustrate, can be no means of an infrustrable or irresistible effect, and therefore it must be the operation of the Holy Spirit, alone, which doth infrustrably perform it; and yet the scripture aboundeth with these exhortations. To them whom he acknowledges to be the "temples of the living God," by virtue of "his Spirit dwelling in them," St. Paul directs this exhortation, "not to receive the grace of God in vain."^q He exhorts the saints at Ephesus, and "the faithful in Christ Jesus," who were "blessed with all spiritual blessings, and chosen before the foundation of the world through Christ, that they should be holy and unblameable in love;" to put on the whole armour of God, that they may be able to stand in the evil day, and having done all to stand."^r He exhorts the saints at Philippi, in whom God had "begun the good work, ἐπέχειν, TO HOLD FAST the word of life, and to stand fast in the Lord."^t To the saints and faithful brethren who were at Colosse, and had "a hope laid up for them in heaven, a fruitful conversation and love in the Spirit,"^u he speaks thus "as ye have received Jesus Christ, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith."^w Having told the converted Jews that he "hoped of them things which accompanied salvation, God being not "unrighteous to forget their work and labour of love which they had shewed to him;"^x he desires them to "shew the same diligence to the end, to the full assurance of hope, and not to be slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience did inherit the promises; and to retain grace, by which they might serve God acceptably in reverence and godly fear," because he is to the wicked "a consuming fire."^y To the "elect, according to the fore-

^q 2 Corinthians vi, 1. ^r Ephesians i, 1, 3, 4, 5. ^s Chapter vi, 13. ^t Philippians i, 1. ii, 16.

^{lv}, 1.

^u Colossians i, 1, 4, 5, 7.

^w Chapter ii, 6, 7.

^x Hebrews vi, 9—12.

^y Chapter xii, 28, 29.

knowledge of God,"^z St. Peter writes thus, "be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour; whom resist stedfast in the faith."^a To them who had "obtained like precious faith" with the apostles,^b he saith, "add to your faith, virtue, knowledge, godliness, &c. for he that lacketh these things is blind, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore, brethren, be diligent to make your calling and election sure; for if you do these things you shall never fall."^c To them "whose sins were forgiven, and who had overcome the wicked one," St. John writes thus, "love not the world, neither the things of the world; for he that loveth the world, the love of the Father is not in him; and the world passeth away, and the lusts thereof, but he that doth the will of God abideth for ever."^d Now do not these exhortations plainly intimate, that christians may '*receive the grace of God in vain;*' that they may render the labours of the ministers of the gospel vain, by not '*holding fast the word of life;*' that satan may devour them if they be not sober, vigilant, and stedfast in the faith; and that their assurance of not falling, depends upon their diligence in the performance of their duty?

X. And, *Thirdly*, this will be still more evident from all the exhortations directed to churches and persons to fear lest they should fall away, and finally miscarry. For fear^e is that passion which raises in us an apprehension of some approaching evil, which may possibly befall us, which is not easily resistible by our strength, and which, when it befalls us, will either be very burdensome or destructive to us. Now it is impossible to fear that evil should be irresistible by our strength, which God hath engaged to support us under, or be conceived destructive to^e us, from which he stands engaged to exempt us; since it is impossible to fear that his decree should be frustrated, or his promise fail. Even the nature of a religious fear tends to engage us to use our greatest diligence that we do nothing which may forfeit the divine favour, or render us obnoxious to his just displeasure; and if we are obliged to, '*serve God always in reverence and godly fear; if happy is the man that feareth always:*^f if it be our wisdom to be thus *in the fear of the Lord all the day long,*'^g then

^z 1 Peter i, 2.^a Chapter v, 8, 9.^b 2 Peter i, 1.^c Verse 5—10.^d 1 John ii, 12, 15, 16, 17.^e See Dr. Reynolds of the Passions, chapter 25.^f Hebrews xii, 28.^g Proverbs xxiii, 17.

must there be just ground or reason for this fear; and the more inconsistent are these fears with an absolute decree or promise of exemption from the evil feared, the stronger evidences do these exhortations thus to fear, administer against the pretensions of any such decree or promise. Now exhortations and directions of this nature are very frequent in the scripture: Thus, to those who were *'grafted in and partook of the root and fatness of the olive-tree,* St. Paul speaks thus, *be not high minded, but fear lest thou also shouldst be broken off,* as the unbelieving Jews now are. For if thou dost not *continue in his goodness, thou also shalt be broken off;* and *if God spared not the natural branches,* thou hast cause to fear *lest he also spare not thee.'*^r To them who were at present in a state of favour with God, and in whom God had *"begun the good work,"* the apostle directs this exhortation, to *"work out their salvation with fear and trembling."*^s Now what ground of fear can there be, where God hath absolutely decreed to confer this salvation, and stands obliged, by promise, to afford these means which will infallibly produce it? Let us, *"who have believed, fear,"* saith the apostle, *"lest a promise being made us of entering into rest, any of us should fall short of it."*^t Now seeing no man can fall short of it but by neglect of the means to which God hath annexed this promise; if all true believers have a sure promise from God both of the end, and of the means infallibly conducing to it, and it is absurd to fear lest God should be unfaithful to his promise, what ground can any such person have to fear lest he should fall short of the promised rest? To them who had *"sanctified their souls through the Spirit to obey the truth,"* St. Peter saith, *"if ye call on him who without respect of persons judgeth every man, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear;"*^z (viz of condemnation from this righteous judge;) which fear is surely inconsistent with a promise that they shall never be condemned. Now is it not hence evident that these apostles believed, or at the least knew nothing to the contrary, but that they who at present stood by faith, might afterwards be broken off and not continue in God's goodness? Or that believers who had a conditional promise of entering into rest might yet fall short of it? And hence must it be also evident that they

^r Romans xii. 20, 21, 23.

^s Philippians i. 6. ii. 12.

^t Hebrews iv. 1, 3.

^z 1 Peter i. 17, 22.

believed and knew nothing of the doctrine of the saints' perseverance to the end.

XI. But, *Fourthly*, the fears of the apostles assisted by the Spirit of God, lest pious persons should miscarry, add yet a farther strength to this argument. For, if they, by the dictate of the Holy Spirit, had declared that God had absolutely promised that men once truly pious should persevere to the end, how could they reasonably express their fears lest it should be otherwise; that is, lest God should fail of the performance of his word of promise? And yet the apostle speaks to his Corinthians thus, "I am jealous of you with a godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband, Christ; but I fear lest as the serpent beguiled Eve by his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."^a In the epistle to the Galatians he declares, that he was "afraid of them lest he should have bestowed among them labour in vain."^b He declares concerning the Thessalonians, that they had "received the word with much affliction, and yet with joy of the Holy Ghost, and much assurance, not in word only, but in power; that they had shewed the work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in Christ Jesus,^c and were the elect of God in whom the word wrought effectually;^d and yet he doth express his fears, lest satan should have tempted them so far as to render all his labours among them vain."^e He therefore thought them not secure by the election mentioned (i. 4,) from falling so as that his labour among them might have been spent in vain.

Fifthly. All cautions directed to good christians not to fall away, not to fall from grace, from their own stedfastness, so as to lose their reward, are also evidences, and even suppositions that they may do so; and it cannot reasonably be conceived that the same Spirit of wisdom should absolutely declare they could not fall away, and yet be thus concerned to caution them against what he had told them was as impossible as that God should fail of performing his promise. For what we have just reason to caution any man against, must be something which may come to pass, and, without his care and diligence to prevent it, will in likelihood come to pass, and when it comes to pass will be very dangerous

^a 2 Corinthians xi, 2, 3.

^b Chapter iv, 11.

^c 1 Thessalonians i, 3, 5, 6.

^d Chapter ii, 13.

^e Chapter iii, 5.

and hurtful to us. Now such caution Christ gives all his disciples in these words, "take heed to yourselves lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and the cares of this life, and that day ('of judgment,' say most interpreters) come upon you unawares; watch and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things, and to stand before the Son of man."^f Now sure this care, vigilance, and constant prayer required for this end, shews that without it they were not likely to escape these judgments, and also that they might be subject to those miscarriages which would render them unprovided for that day, and unable to stand before the Son of man.

To the Corinthians, whom the apostle had represented as the temple of God by virtue of his Spirit dwelling in them, St. Paul speaks thus, '*our fathers were once as dear to God as you christians are, yet many of them fell under the displeasure of God, and were overthrown in the wilderness;*'^g adding that these examples should make them careful that they '*lusted not after evil things*' as they did. Then he proceeds to shew the judgments of God upon them for their '*idolatry, fornication, unbelief, and murmuring;*' adding that '*these things were written for our admonition,*' that we be not guilty of the like sins, and so fall under the like judgments; and then concludes, '*let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.*' Where it is observable, (i.) that *fornication, idolatry, and unbelief*, are by the apostle pronounced things inconsistent with a state of grace; for he that "doth these things," saith he, "hath no inheritance in the kingdom of God, or of Christ." And yet these are the sins he admonishes them to avoid, and to be careful that they be not overtaken with them. (ii.) Observe, that '*he that thinketh he stands*' must comprehend him that truly thinketh so, as well as him who mistakes in judging so; for the apostle speaks to the whole church of Corinth, among whom there were many truly pious. And therefore the apostle plainly supposes that he who truly stood might fall, and would do so if he used not great diligence to keep his standing. For had not this *taking heed* been the condition of their standing, had they been of the number of those who by God's decree or promise in-

^f Luke xxi, 34, 36.

^g 1 Corinthians x, 11, 15.

fallibly were assured of standing, this exhortation to take heed must have been superfluous, since men can need no admonitions to do that which God's decree and promise secures them they cannot omit, much less to do it to prevent what cannot possibly befall them.

To them who '*holding the beginning of their confidence stedfast to the end,*' would have been made partakers of salvation by Christ, St. Paul speaks thus, '*take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, causing you to depart from the living God,*^h and to fall from the rest promised to you; *look diligently to it lest any man fall from the grace of God.*'ⁱ So that according to St. Paul's doctrine, they who were in a condition of salvation may apostatize from the living God, miss of the rest prepared for them, and fall off from the grace and favour of God.

The same apostle declares to his Colossians, that they were "translated from the power of satan into the kingdom of the Son of God;" and yet he bids them '*beware lest any man should beguile them* (that is, seduce them from Christ) *with enticing words,*'^k and saith to them whose stedfastness in the faith he then beheld with joy, "beware lest any man make a prey of you through philosophy and vain deceit, seducing you to walk after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ: let no man beguile you of your reward by seducing you to the worshipping of angels,"^l and so seducing you from Christ your head. So that, in his apprehension, they were still liable to be seduced from Christ, and so to fail of their reward.

To them who had "like precious faith" with the apostles, St. Peter saith, "beware lest, being led away by the error of the wicked, you fall from your own stedfastness."^m He therefore did not look upon this as a thing impossible.

Lastly. St. John saith to the children of the "elect lady walking in the truth, and having the truth dwelling in them, look to yourselves that we lose not the things that we have wrought; but that we may receive a full reward."^a Whence it doth plainly seem to follow that they who once walked "in the truth as they

^h Hebrews iii, 12, 13, 14.

ⁱ Chapter xii, 15.

^k Colossians ii, 4, 6.

^l Verse 18.

^m 2 Peter iii, 17.

^a 2 Epistle versee 2, 8.

had received a commandment," verse 4, and had christian charity verse 5, might lose those things which they had wrought.

XII. *Sixthly.* It seems incongruous to imagine that God should make an absolute promise, that true believers should persevere to the end, and be unfustrably saved, and yet suspend their happiness and reward on this condition, that they do persevere unto the end. For a conditional promise must have these two requisites, that it hath in it a power of suspending the obligations, and that the event expressed in it be yet dubious or uncertain till the condition be performed. Moreover, this is to make his own promise to be performed on his part, or by himself, the condition to be performed on their part in order to the obtaining the same end, and to suspend the end upon his own engagement. And yet this, according to this hypothesis, must be done by Christ himself, when after he had said, that *'because tribulations do abound, the love of many shall wax cold;'*^b he adds, "but he that endures to the end shall be saved:" and when he said to the church of Smyrna, "be thou faithful to the death, and I will give thee a crown of life."^c

This also must be done by the Spirit of God, or by St. Paul, assisted by him, when he saith to the Colossians, "Christ will present you holy and unblameable before him, if you continue in the faith rooted and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel:"^d and to the believing Jews, "you are Christ's house, if ye hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of hope to the end;"^e you are made partakers of Christ, if you continue the beginning of your confidence stedfast to the end."^f These words were plainly directed to the Colossians and Jews to deter them from wavering in, and departing from the christian faith. And is it credible that the apostle should use this argument to deter them from those sins, and yet declare and require them to believe it was impossible they should do these things, and thereby render his own motive wholly ineffectual? Sure it is impossible to believe that the same divine wisdom should say that God hath absolutely engaged to preserve you from departing from him, or being moved from the hope of the gospel; and yet it highly concerneth you to fear, and to take heed lest you depart from him, or should be

^b Matthew xxiv, 12, 15.

^c Revelations ii, 10.

^d Colossians i, 22, 25.

^e Hebrews iii, 6.

^f Verse 14.

moved from this hope: that is, it highly doth concern you to fear lest the God of truth should be unfaithful to his promise.

XIII. *Lastly.* This is apparent from those many threats God hath denounced against those who shall fall away, and not continue stedfast in their faith, and their obedience to the end. For as “a promise made on a condition impossible to be performed,” say the Civilians, “is as none at all, so is a threat of that which cannot possibly befall us, because it cannot rationally excite me to dread, and therefore to decline the threatened evil.” All rational threats suppose the evil to which the punishment is threatened may be done, and declare such punishments shall follow when it is done. Now of these threatenings, the most dreadful are those which we have already mentioned, that *‘it is impossible to renew them to repentance; that there remains no more sacrifice for their sin; that they draw back to perdition; and that it had been better for them not to have known the way of life, than afterward to depart from the holy commandment.’* Our Lord tells his disciples, that *‘if any one abide not in him, he is to be cast out as a withered branch, gathered up and burnt;’*^a where it is observable, that he speaks of that abiding in him, in which if they continued, *he would abide in them,* verse 4, and they would *bring forth much fruit.* Verse 5. He saith to the church of Ephesus, “remember whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do thy first works; else I will come unto thee quickly, and remove thy candlestick out of its place, if thou repent not.”^b Now would Christ exhort them to return to those works which were not the works of a true christian? Or could this punishment be inflicted, and no soul perish by it that otherwise might have been saved? To the church of Pergamos he saith “repent, or I will come unto thee quickly, and fight against thee with the sword of my mouth.”^c To the church of Sardis, “remember how thou hast received and heard; and hold fast and repent, or I will come unto thee as a thief.”^d Now that he himself should threaten what his own decree and promise had rendered impossible, is very difficult to believe.

To strengthen these arguments, let it be seriously considered how unlikely it is that all these exhortations and commands, these cautious, threats, and conditional provisions should proceed from

^a John xv, 6.

^b Revelations ii, 5.

^c Verse 16.

^d Chapter iii, 3.

the same God who had before made known to the same persons his absolute decree and promise that they should certainly be preserved to the end; and made it one article of that faith, which *'is the expectation of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen,'* that they shall be infallibly thus preserved: seeing according to this doctrine, God must be supposed to speak thus to them,

'I lay upon you strict commands *'to hold fast till I come, that no man take your reward from you, and to keep yourselves in the love of God.'* But know that I have absolutely engaged for your *'steadfastness and perseverance in my love, and so have rendered it impossible that your reward should be taken from you.'*

'I frequently, and with some seeming earnestness, exhort you *'not to receive the grace of God in vain, to take to yourselves the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand in the evil day; and having done all, to stand;'* to stability in the faith, and diligence in order *"to the full assurance of hope,"* that you may *"make your calling and election sure."* But then know it is as *'sure, and hath been so from all eternity, as my decree can make it. You have of this stability and diligence as full assurance of hope, as the promise of that God, who cannot lie, can minister.'*

'I indeed require you to *'work out your salvation with fear and trembling, and to pass the time of your sojourning here in fear;'* and though you do at present stand by faith, and in my *'favour, to fear lest you should not continue in my goodness, and I should not spare you; yea, to fear lest you should fall short of that rest which I have promised to believers.'* But then know *'that all this is fear where no fear is, and in effect to fear lest my absolute decrees should be made frustrate, or my promise fail.'*

'My apostles indeed, out of their great affection to you, seem *'jealous lest you should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ, or that their labour should be in vain among you.'* But *'since they write thus to you, knowing your election of God,'* you may be sure their fears proceeded not from their judgment, *'but affection only.'*

'I also give you many cautions, lest the tremendous day should *'come upon you unawares, to take heed lest you fall from my grace and favour, and fail of your reward.'* But *"who shall separate you from the love of God, which hath chosen you to salvation from all eternity, and hath engaged infrustrably to confer it on you, since he is faithful that hath promised?"*

‘ I do indeed, in words, suspend your salvation and your crown of life, ‘ *on being faithful to the death, and enduring to the end, and on holding your confidence and hope of rejoicing steadfast to the end.*’ But be not troubled or concerned for that; for ‘ I require nothing of you but what I stand myself engaged to perform for, and work in you; and so you are as sure of this salvation, as if I had engaged for it without these conditions.

‘ I, *Lastly*, have threatened that if true penitents, and men who live by faith, and have obtained remission of their sins, ‘ *do fall away, there remains no more sacrifice for their sin, nor shall my soul have pleasure in them.*’ But then I stand engaged by my decree ‘ and promise that they shall not thus fall away, and so I have ‘ secured them from those fears.’

XIV. *Lastly*. This follows from many places, which plainly do suppose, that saints, or true believers, or men once truly good, may cease to be so. And.

First. This is supposed in that metaphor in which our Lord compareth his disciples to salt, saying, “ ye are the salt of the world; but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out, and trodden under foot of men;”^e for sure good salt must signify good men, the salt of the earth, such men as by the purity of their doctrine and by the savour of their good conversation, are to purify the world from that corruption in which it lies. Nor can this salt lose its savour, and become good for nothing, but by ceasing to be good salt, and unfit for these uses any longer.

Secondly. Such also is the similitude in which our Lord saith, that ‘ *as a piece of new cloth is not to be put to an old garment, lest the rent be made worse; nor new wine into old bottles, lest the bottles burst;*’^f so his young disciples must not presently be put upon severe duties, lest they should be discouraged, and fall off from him. Such,

Thirdly. Is that commination against them, who shall “ offend one of Christ’s little ones believing in him, viz. that it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the midst of the sea;”^g where that ‘ *to offend one of those little ones,*’ is to occasion his ruin and falling off from the faith, by the

^e Matthew v, 13. Mark ix, 50. Luke xiv, 34.

^f Matthew ix, 16, 17.

^g Matthew xviii, 6.

scandal which we lay before him, hath been proved in the note there, from the import of the word *σκανδαλιζεσθαι*, and is also evident from the words “it is not the will of my Heavenly Father, that one of these little ones should perish.”^h False therefore is it, that they who truly do believe in Christ, and are of the number of those whom God would not have to perish, cannot be so offended as to fall off from the faith to their ruin; and were this so, wherein lies the force of this pathetic discourse? And why are such dreadful woes and punishments denounced to deter men from doing not only what is in itself impossible, but that which they also who are thus threatened, must believe to be so?

Fourthly. Suitable to this are these expressions, ‘*for meats destroy not the work of God,*’ Rom. xiv. 20, that is, the christian convert; 1 Cor. iii. 9; and ‘*so through thy knowledge shall thy weak brother perish for whom Christ died,*’ 1 Cor. viii. 9, 11. For if Christ died only for the elect, and God hath promised they shall never perish, and if he that hath ‘*begun a good work in christians will always perfect it;*’ if the apostle knew and taught this doctrine to them, why doth he go about to fright them from this destructive scandal, by telling them it might have that effect which he before had told them was impossible? For he that saith “such persons cannot actually perish,” saith in effect, “there can be no reason to abstain from scandalizing them; lest they should perish.”

Fifthly. Such, *Lastly,* are those words of the Psalmist, ‘*the rod of the wicked shall not always rest upon the back of the righteous, lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity.*’ⁱ For these words seem plainly to insinuate, that great and long oppressions might have this effect upon them; and surely that which God is thus careful to prevent, might possibly befall the righteous, there being no need of care to prevent that which he absolutely hath engaged to preserve them from.

^h Verse 14.

ⁱ Psalm cxxv, 5.



 CHAP. III.

Containing an answer to those texts of scripture which are produced to prove, that true saints cannot fall finally from grace, but will assuredly persevere to the end.

HAVING thus proved the possibility, that persons truly regenerate may fall from grace, and so eternally miscarry; I proceed to answer the objections offered to the contrary, from scripture, and from reason.

Some of the arguments produced from scripture need very little answer, as being wholly alien from the purpose. As, v. g.

First. That passage of St. John, "Christ having loved his own, which were in the world, he loved them to the end."^k For these words only signify, that he loved them to the close of his life, and shewed this affection to them by washing their feet when he was to leave them. This passage therefore can afford no argument to prove that the regenerate cannot fall away, because Christ speaks not of them whom he had chosen to eternal life, but of them only whom he had chosen to be his apostles, xv. 19; not of his love of them to the end of their lives, but of his own life on earth.

Secondly. Of like impertinency is that other passage, '*those whom thou hast given me have I kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition.*'^l For (i.) that this was spoken only of the twelve apostles, is evident from the whole context, and so there is no reason to extend it to all true believers. (ii.) The very next chapter shews that this was spoken of their preservation from temporal death; Christ requesting that his disciples might be permitted to go away when he was apprehended, "that this saying of his might be fulfilled." John xviii. 8. And (iii.) this passage taken in the sense of the objectors, is rather an argument that some of them who were given by God to Christ may perish, because it is affirmed that one of them who were thus given to Christ did so. Such,

^k John xiii, 1.

^l John xvii, 12.

Thirdly. Is that passage cited from Rom. xi, 29, that “the gifts and callings of God are without repentance;” this being evidently spoken of those Jews who were then hardened, given up to a spiritual slumber, “broken off from their own olive-tree,” and in that state of infidelity in which they have continued almost 1700 years; and only intimates that God will in his good time receive them again into his favour.

The arguments which seem to have a greater force in them, are taken either from those scriptures which seem plainly, or by just consequence, to assert this doctrine, or else to promise this perseverance of the saints.

I. ARGUMENT FIRST. And, *First*, “If the elect cannot be seduced or deceived, they cannot fall away; but that they cannot be thus deceived Christ plainly seems to intimate in these words, “false christs and false prophets shall arise, who shall deceive, if it were possible, the very elect.”^m—But that this text proves not that the elect can never fall away, is evident,

ANSWER FIRST. (*First.*) Because Christ so solemnly exhorts them to use the greatest caution, that they be not seduced by these men, saying, verses 4, 5, “Let no man deceive you; for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many; and verse 23, if they say, Here and there is Christ, believe them not; for many false christs and false prophets shall arise to deceive the elect; look ye therefore to it, behold I have foretold you all things.” Mark xiii, 22, 23. Now is it suitable to the wisdom of our Lord to exhort his disciples to use so great diligence and caution, lest they should be deceived by those men, and at the same time to assure them it was utterly impossible they should be deceived? Moreover, I ask, To whom doth he direct this exhortation? To the elect? Then must he do it to them who could not possibly be deceived; and so his words must bear this uncouth sense, “be very careful, lest ye be deceived by these men; for I assure you, it is absolutely impossible they should deceive you.” Or was he thus concerned only for reprobates? And why then did he decree they should be so from all eternity, and never should have grace effectual, or sufficient to preserve them from the wiles of satan?

^m Matthew xxiv, 24.

Secondly. In the same chapter, our Lord exhorts them ‘to see to it, to watch and pray,ⁿ lest the day of affliction, the hour of temptation, coming suddenly upon them, should find them sleeping; and lest their hearts should be over-charged with surfeitings and drunkenness, and that day should come upon them unawares; to watch and pray that they may be counted worthy to escape all these things.’ Now are these suppositions which can agree to men who cannot possibly be found sleeping in this spiritual sense, on whom the day of Christ cannot come thus unprepared, and who never can be unworthy to stand before the Son of man? Or were not his apostles, to whom he speaks these things, of the number of the elect? Can there be any need of such vehement exhortations to constant prayer and vigilance, heed and circumspection, to prevent what could not possibly befall them? Or was our Lord thus concerned only to exhort them who he well knew could never possibly avoid these things?

Thirdly. Christ here declares, that by reason of the extreme affliction of those times ‘many should be offended;’ that is, should fall off from the faith. See the note on Matthew xviii, 6: And adds, that “because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold; but he that endures to the end shall be saved.” Matt. xxiv. 12, 13. Where, that Christ speaks not only of a hypocritical outward affection to him, may be gathered from his styling it not *pretence*, but *love*; his supposition that it was fervent love, for what was never hot, cannot wax cold; yea, such love in which had they endured, they would certainly have been saved. And yet he doth not only intimate, that some would not continue in this love to the end, but plainly doth foretel, that it in many would wax cold. To answer therefore directly to the argument urged from this text, I say,

ANSWER SECOND. (*First.*) That the phrase *εἰ δυνατόν*, ‘if it be possible, if it may be,’ doth not denote an absolute impossibility, but only a great difficulty in the performance of an act possible. So Acts xx, 16, “Paul hastened, *εἰ δυνατόν αὐτῷ*, IF IT WERE POSSIBLE FOR HIM, to be at Jerusalem before Pentecost;” and yet sure he made not all this haste to do what was impossible. The apostle commands us, *εἰ δυνατόν*, ‘IF IT BE POSSIBLE, as much as in us lieth, to have peace with all men,’ Rom. xii, 18,

ⁿ Mark xiii, 33, 35, 36. Luke xxi, 34, 36.

and yet he doth not exhort us to use our utmost endeavours to do what was impossible. *Εἰ δυνατόν*, "If it be possible," saith Christ, "let this cup pass from me," Mat. xxvi, 39, and yet he adds, "all things are possible to thee, O Father." Mark xiv, 35, 36. And hence the phrase is changed by St. Luke into *εἰ βήλει*, 'IF THOU WILLEST.' Now that the deceiving of christians in those times of miraculous endowments was very difficult, is evident from that speech of Galen concerning a thing hardly feasible, *θάπτον τις τὸς ἀπὸ Χριστοῦ μεταδιδάξῃς*, 'sooner may a christian be turned from Christ.'

Secondly. This phrase imports not what the event would be upon the elect, but the vehemency of the endeavours of seducers, that they would do the utmost they could to seduce the christian from his stedfastness; and this is evident from the words of St. Mark, "they will shew signs and wonders, *πρὸς τὸ ἀποπλανᾶν εἰ δυνατόν*, TO DECEIVE, IF THEY ARE ABLE, the elect."^a Now to say "such a one will do you a mischief if he can," is surely no security that he will do you none. And,

Thirdly. Should this phrase respect the event, it may do it not absolutely, but only with relation to the means here mentioned; that is, "they shall shew signs and wonders" which shall prevail to seduce Jews, Samaritans, and Heathens, and even Christians, were it possible for impostors by "lying signs and wonders," to deceive them who are invested with a power of working greater signs and wonders by the assistance of the Holy Ghost, and will attend to the things wrought among them, or by them.

II. OBJECTION SECOND. "It is *'the will of the Father, that every one that believeth in Christ, and is given to him by God, should not perish, but have everlasting life.'*"^b but this he cannot have, unless he persevere to the end; therefore every true believer shall thus persevere."

ANSWER. Now in answer to this, and to all other promises or declarations of like nature, which engage that God will give eternal life to the believer, I say that nothing is more certain than that they are only to be understood of such a faith as doth endure to the end, and so includeth perseverance in it. Matt. xxiv, 13. For either these promises are made to temporary believers, which is disowned in the objection, and is contrary to the tenor of the

^a Mark xiii, 22.

^b John vi, 39, 40.

scripture, and makes the promises of eternal life, and the threats of perdition belong to the same persons; or else they belong only to such as do continue in the faith, and then it is demonstratively evident that perseverance is included in them, and therefore cannot be proved from them without begging the question.

REPLY. If it be said that "the promise of eternal life being made to the believer, argues that they who fall away were never true believers;"

ANSWER. To this I answer, *First*, that they are as expressly styled *true believers* as others are. The '*little ones*,' who are supposed such as may be offended and perish, are those that "believe in Christ." Matt. xviii, 6, 14. Those represented by the stony ground are such as "for a while believe, and their only fault is, that afterwards they are offended, and fall away" from this faith. So the "weak in faith" who may perish through the scandal of the strong, have a true, though a weak faith; such a one is '*Christ's servant*,' Rom. xiv, 4, one *for whom Christ died*,' verse 15, 1 Cor. viii, 11; and his faith is '*the work of God*.' Rom. xiv, 20. Among the Samaritans '*many believed in Christ*,' John iv, 39, 42; and yet they all fell off from him to Simon Magus, Acts viii, 10, and many of those myriads of '*Jews that believed*,' Acts xxi, 20, fell away afterwards, as hath been proved already. Now what ground hath any man to say, that "the word *believers* doth not bear the same sense, when it is used of such persons, as when it is used of those who do not fall away?" That they believe only for a time, that they are not stedfast and rooted in the faith, who are after '*moved away from the hope of the gospel*,' is said by the Spirit of God; but that they did not truly believe as well as others, is never said.

Secondly. That this faith, as to its kind, is true, is evident from this consideration, that Christ and his apostles require such persons not to change it, but only to continue in it; not to believe with a faith true and real as to kind, but to be '*stedfast in the faith*' they had already. Thus when the Jews believed in Christ, Jesus said to those that believed on him, '*if ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed*,' John viii, 30, that is, such disciples on whom I shall confer the life and blessed resurrection promised, chap. vi. And Paul and Barnabas exhort the believers at Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, '*to continue in the faith*.'

Thirdly. This answer thwarts those numerous texts of scripture which suspend the benefits promised to believers on their continuance in the faith, (it being certain that no such benefits can belong to them which continue in a false faith) as, v. g. “ye shall be presented blameless, if ye continue in the faith rooted and grounded, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel.^b They shall be saved, if they continue in faith.^c Ye are Christ’s house, if ye hold your rejoicing of hope firm to the end.^d Ye are made partakers of Christ, if ye hold the beginning of your confidence stedfast to the end.^e If that which ye have heard from the beginning, abide in you, ye shall continue in the Son, and in the Father;^f thou standest by faith, if thou continue in his goodness.”^g And

Fourthly. It enervates all the exhortations of the Holy Spirit to ‘*hope to the end,* 1 Peter i, 13, *to be stedfast in the faith,* 1 Cor. xv, 58, 1 Peter v, 9, and *to take heed that we fall not from our stedfastness,* 2 Peter iii, 17; and all the declarations of the scripture, that ‘*we must be faithful to the death, that we may inherit eternal life;*^h *we must endure to the end, that we may be saved;*ⁱ and that *if the just man who lives by faith draw back, God’s soul will have no pleasure in him.*’^k For if he that hath true faith and hope must believe and hope to the end, he cannot fall from his stedfastness, and so these exhortations must be needless; the supposition that he may “draw back to perdition” must be false; and he that is once faithful must be so unto the death. In a word, the only distinction betwixt a living and a dead faith is this, that the first is fruitful in good works, the second is “faith without works;” so that as long as faith is attended with the good works required of the faithful, the man lives by faith; and when it ceaseth to do so, his faith is dead. Nor is there any other difference betwixt temporary and saving faith but this, that the temporary believer is “moved and falls away from his faith and hope,^l and holds not the beginning of his confidence firm to the end,”^m as the other doth, as is demonstrable from this, that the only fault of the man that believes only for a time is this, that he “after falls away, and when persecution or temptations do arise, he is offended;” and the only thing that renders the faith of the other saving, is, that he perseveres in it to the death.

^b Colossians i, 23. ^c 1 Timothy ii, 15. ^d Hebrews iii, 6. ^e verse 14. ^f 1 John ii, 24.
^g Romans xi, 21, 22. ^h Revelations ii, 10. ⁱ Matthew xxiv, 13. ^k Hebrews x, 38.
^j Colossians i, 23. ^m Hebrews iii, 14.

III. OBJECTION THIRD. They argue thus, “‘*the Lord hath not cast off his people whom he foreknew.*’ Rom. xi. 2. Whereas they who persevere not to the end, will be cast off by him; they therefore whom he foreknows will persevere.”

ANSWER. That this text cannot relate to any foreknowledge God hath of his elect, from all eternity, but only to his foreknowledge and choice of the Jewish nation before any other nations of the world, and only signifies that God had not entirely cast off his people Israel. Now to confirm this interpretation, observe,

First. That there be two questions handled in this chapter; the first is this, ‘*hath God cast off his people?*’ To which the answer given, to the 10th verse, is this, ‘*God hath not entirely cast*’ them off, he having among them a remnant of believers; as in the great apostacy from him to Baal, he had a remnant ‘*who bowed not the knee*’ to him. The second question is this, are the obdurate Jews so fallen as that they shall never rise again? Is that nation so cast off as never to be received again to favour? And to this also he answers in the negative, from the 11th verse to the end of that chapter. Observe,

Secondly. That of the people of Israel, Moses speaks thus, ‘*thou art a holy people to the Lord; the Lord thy God, προεἰλετο,*

HATH CHOSEN thee to be a peculiar people to himself, מִבְּלֵ (michol) BEFORE ALL the people that are on the face of the earth.’ Deut. vii. 6. x. 15. Now to be chosen, and to be known of God, are the same thing in scripture, and therefore the phrase

is elsewhere varied thus, ‘*you have I known מִבְּלֵ (michol) BEFORE ALL the families of the earth.*’ Amos iii. 2. And those words of Hosea, chap. xi. 12, ‘*Judah yet ruleth with the Lord, and is faithful with his saints,*’ are by the Septuagint thus rendered, καὶ Ἰσραὴλ νῦν ἔγνω αὐτοὺς ὁ θεὸς καὶ ὁ λαὸς ἅγιος κληθήσεται τῷ θεῷ, ‘as for Judah, now God hath known them, and he shall be called the holy people of God.’ So that the people ‘*whom he foreknew,*’ may be here only a periphrasis of the Jewish nation, as will be evident (1.) from this consideration that these words, καὶ ἀπώσεται ὁ θεὸς τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ, ‘*the Lord hath not cast off his people,*’ are plainly cited from Psalm xciv. 14. xcv. 11; in both which places they are spoken of the whole Jewish nation, and

therefore it is reasonable to conceive that the words added to them by the apostle must relate to the same people, especially if we consider that the whole argument of the apostle here confirms this interpretation; for (1.) he proves that '*God had not cast off his people*' utterly, and without exception, because he was an Israelite. (2.) He confirms this from what the scripture saith in the history of Elias, complaining of a revolt so general, that he only seemed to be left among them who adhered to him; and receiving this answer from God, that they were not all revolted from God, as he supposed, he having '*reserved 7,000 persons who had not bowed the knee to Baal*,' and thence concluding, that so it was now with the same people, there being now '*a remnant of them that believed according to that election of grace*,' which hath chosen them to be members of the church of Christ. And (3.) '*the election*,' saith he, '*hath obtained, but the rest were blinded*,' verse 7. Who sees not now that all this is spoken of God's people Israel, and consequently that the people whom he foreknew must signify that very people?

IV. OBJECTION FOURTH. "*Whom God justifies, them he also glorifies*.' Rom. viii. 29. And therefore they who are once justified can never fall from grace, because they cannot fail of glory; and because '*nothing can separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus*,''' verse 37.

ANSWER FIRST. To this argument I have returned one satisfactory answer when I discoursed of this text under the head of ELECTION,^a viz. that all the sufferings of those who loved God, and were called according to his purpose of making them Sons of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, shall work together for their good, ὅτι ἔς προέγνω, FOR WHOM HE THUS FOREKNEW, *he predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son*,' that is, to be like him in sufferings, verse 17, 2 Tim. ii. 11, who '*suffered first, then entered into his glory, leaving them an example that they should follow his steps*.' 1 Pet. ii. 21. And whom he thus fore-appointed to sufferings, 1 Thess. iii. 3, he in due time called to suffer; and whom he thus called, upon their faith and patience under their sufferings, for his sake, he justified, that is, he approved of them as faithful servants to their Lord, and afterward gave them a glorious reward of all their sufferings, they

^a Answer to Argument 5.

having ‘*through faith and patience, inherited the promises,* Heb. vi. 12; or he made them glorious under sufferings by the Spirit of glory and of God resting on them, and rendering them happy sufferers. 1 Pet. iv. 14. This interpretation I have there confirmed; and if it stand good, it affords a double answer to this argument, viz. that *to be justified* here, doth not import *to have their past sins pardoned,* but *to be approved of God as patient sufferers.* (2.) That upon their being ‘*faithful to the death, he hath given them the crown of life.*’

ANSWER SECOND. The word ἐδόξασε, ‘*he hath glorified them,*’ upon the sense of which the whole strength of this argument depends, is by the Fathers thus interpreted, “he hath made them glorious, by giving them his Holy Spirit, to enable them to work the greatest miracles, and to endow them with spiritual gifts,” and all those christian virtues which are the fruits of the Spirit, and to be to them an earnest and confirmation of that future glory he hath promised to them. And according to this sense of the word, it is evident that this argument is of no force, as being wholly built upon a false sense of this word.

Now according to this interpretation the import of these words is this, ‘*all things shall work together for good to them that love God, to the called according to his purpose*’ of bringing sons to glory by Christ Jesus, ὅτι ἐς πρόγνω, ‘*for whom he hath thus foreknown,* that is, hath chosen for his church and people now, as he did the Jews of old, *them he predestinated or fore-appointed to be conformed to the image of his Son,*’ their elder brother, that is, to be ‘*sons of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.*’ And the method he used to bring them to this adoption was this, (i.) To call them to the faith of Christ; (ii.) To justify them upon their cordial embracing of this faith from their past sins, so that there might be ‘*no condemnation to them being in Christ Jesus;*’ Rom. viii. 1; and (iii.) To render them a glorious people by the Holy Spirit given to them, because they are sons, as an earnest of their future glory. To confirm this interpretation let it be noted,

First. That the connective particle, ὅτι, verse 29, shews that the words following are introduced as a proof of the preceding words, ‘*all things shall work together for good to them that love God, that are called according to his purpose; FOR, whom he foreknew, &c.*’ Note,

Secondly. That this whole proof refers not to any thing yet to come relating to the persons *'called according to his purpose,'* but to the time past, and what hath been done for them already; for the words are, *'whom he hath fore-known he hath predestinated, he hath called, he hath glorified.'* Note,

Thirdly. That, ἐς προέγνω, *'whom he hath fore-known,'* doth not relate to God's knowledge of these persons from all eternity, but to his affectionate knowledge of christians as his church, *'his chosen generation, his peculiar people,'* 1 Peter ii, 9, as the Jews are styled, xi, 2. See the ANSWER to the foregoing objection. These who are thus converted, and become his peculiar people before and above other nations, are said *to be known of God* in a peculiar manner, and with an affectionate knowledge; as in these words, *'if any man love God, he is known of God.* 1 Cor. viii, 3. But *now that ye know God, or rather are known of God.* Gal. iv, 9. *The Lord knoweth who are his.* 2 Tim. ii, 19. These things being thus noted, I conceive the sense of the whole to be this,—“all these afflicting things shall work together for good to them that are called according to his purpose;” for those whom he hath so foreknown, as to make them, γένος ἑκλεκτον, *'HIS ELECT, and his peculiar people'* before others,—for them he hath designed the choicest blessings, even the adoption of sons, and their being co-heirs with Christ; and in order to this it is that he hath chosen them out of the world to be his church, “a holy nation, and a peculiar people to himself,” and hath justified them, or given them a full remission of their sins, and hath already made them glorious by causing *'the Spirit of glory and of God to rest upon them;'* he hath made them all glorious within, by adorning them with the fruits of the Holy Spirit; he hath made them glorious in the sight of the world, by giving them those gifts and powers of the Holy Ghost which cause men highly to esteem of them, and to glorify God in their behalf; he hath thereby conformed them already in a great measure to the image of his Son; for “they with open face as in a glass, beholding the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image with him, from his glory to glory derived upon them by the Spirit of the Lord.” 2 Cor. iii, 18.

To proceed to answer the second part of the objection from those words, *'who shall separate us from the love of Christ, or the love of God in Christ Jesus?'*

Note (*First*), that this enquiry is not “Who shall separate us from the love with which we love God or Christ? but “Who shall separate us who love God, and testify that love by keeping his commandments, John xv, 14, from his affection towards us?” The apostle therefore only intimates that such persons continuing in the love of God, shall be preserved by him from the temptations here mentioned, and so supported by his grace and Spirit, as to be able to bear them. But he doth not say “the love of no christian shall *‘wax cold,’* Mat. xxiv, 12; that none of them shall *‘lose his first love.’*” Rev. ii, 4. Were there no cause to fear this, why doth Christ exhort his disciples to *‘abide in his love,’* John xv, 9, and his apostles exhort others *‘to keep themselves in the love of God,* Jude 21, *to look diligently to it that they fall not from the grace and favour of God,* Heb. xii, 15, and to *continue in the grace of God?’* Acts xiii, 43.

Secondly. I answer that the apostle doth not say that “nothing can separate true believers from the love of God or Christ;” but only declares his persuasion that nothing would do it, or that they had no cause to fear these things, or to be shaken from their steadfastness in expectation of those inestimable blessings God had promised to, and Christ had purchased for them, by any of these tribulations, *‘these light afflictions being not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed.’* Verse 18. And they having good ground to hope that all the evils they shall bear shall conduce to their good, that Christ will still be ready to support them under them by his power, and to help their infirmities by his Spirit, and at last give them the glory prepared for the sons of God; he might well persuade himself they should not separate them from the love of God. The apostle therefore doth not by these words intend to teach believers that they could not be shaken by any of these things; for that would have contradicted the drift of all his epistles, in which he doth so oft express his fears lest they should be shaken with them, and so far tempted by them as to “be moved away from the hope of the gospel, and render all his labour vain,” and offers so many arguments and motives to prevent this effect of these temptations; but only doth intend to say, that from these considerations, they had so great inducements to persevere and continue steadfast in the love of God, as gave him a strong ground of persuasion that they would do so.

V. OBJECTION FIFTH. "If true believers have that Spirit of God who 'seals them up to the day of redemption,' (Eph. iv, 30,) and 'is the earnest in their hearts of the inheritance of life;' (2 Cor. i, 21, 22. Eph. i, 13;) then all who are once the sons of God, and therefore have the Spirit of God dwelling in them, must be assured that they shall enjoy this inheritance; but true believers have this Spirit of God; for 'because they are sons, God hath sent the Spirit of his Son into their hearts.'" Gal. iv, 6.

ANSWER FIRST. That these metaphors neither do nor can signify that they who have once the Spirit can never lose him, or cause him to depart from them, is evident from these considerations:

First. That they who have been 'the temples of God,' by virtue of his Spirit dwelling in them, may so corrupt this temple as to be themselves destroyed; as is demonstrable from these words of St. Paul to the Corinthians, 'know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him will God destroy; for the temple of the Lord is holy, which temple ye are.'^a See the note there. He adds, that they whose bodies are 'the members of Christ, and who are one spirit with him,'^b may make these bodies "the members of an harlot," and may defile that body with fornication, which is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and so may deprive themselves of their interest in Christ's kingdom; for "no fornicator shall inherit the kingdom of God."^c So certain is that of Hilary, that *membra adhaerentia meretrici, desinunt esse membra Christi*, 'they who are guilty of fornication, cease to be the members of Christ,' and so agreeable to all antiquity,^d who generally teach that God

^a 1 Corinthians iii, 16, 17.

^b Chapter vi, 15, 19.

^c Verses 9, 10.

^d Cum omnes templum simus Dei, illato in nos et consecrato Spiritu Sancto, ejus templi aeditua et antisita pudicitia est, quae nihil immundum, nec profanum inferri sinat, ne Deus ille qui inhabitat inquinatam sedem offensus derelinquat. Tertul. de cultu fem. l. 2, c. 1.

Ἐπειδὴ ἅγιος ἐστὶν ὁ ναὸς ἅγιον ἔχων τὸν ἐνοικῶντα, ἐδύναται εἶναι ὁ πόρνος ναὸς θεῶν. Ἐcum. in locum. Τοιγαρῶν ὁ πόρνος ἐδύναται εἶναι ἅγιος ἐπειδὴ τὸ ναὸς εἶναι ἀπώλεσεν ἐξοικισθῆναι τῷ ἁγιάζοντι αὐτὸν πνεύματι. Theoph. in locum.

^e Since we are the temple of God by his Holy Spirit brought into us and consecrating us, the keeper and priestess of his temple is that chastity which cannot suffer any thing unclean or profane to enter, lest the Holy God, whose habitation it is, being displeas'd at the pollution of his abode, should entirely desert it? Tertullian.

dwelling in us by his Spirit may be provoked to quit his habitation; and that he whose body is the temple of the Lord by virtue of his Spirit dwelling in him, may defile that temple to his own ruin, and cause the Holy Spirit to depart from it. And,

Secondly. This is farther evident from the apostle's fears that satan might so far have tempted his Thessalonians as to render "all his labour vain among them;"^e for he acknowledges that these Thessalonians had "received the word with much affliction, and yet with the joy of the Holy Ghost; that they received it not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance;"^f that they had shewed the work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in Christ Jesus, and were the elect of God in whom the word wrought effectually."^g They therefore had assuredly received the Spirit of God, and yet he fears they might so fall away as to render his labour among them vain, and therefore so as to cause his Holy Spirit to depart from them.

And, *Thirdly,* this is farther evident from the exhortations, in these epistles, directed to those men who are said to have this seal, and earnest of the Holy Spirit; for to the Corinthians thus sealed, the apostle sends this exhortation, '*I beseech you that you do not receive the grace of God in vain,*'^h plainly supposing that this might be done: He adds, that he was '*jealous over them, lest having espoused them to one husband, Christ, their minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ;*'ⁱ and doth express his fears lest he should bewail many who had sinned already by uncleanness, fornication and lasciviousness;^k that is, by sins which did corrupt the temple of God, which made the members of Christ "the members of an harlot," and excluded them from the kingdom of God, '*and had not repented of those sins.*'

Again, in that epistle to the Ephesians, in which the apostle saith they were "sealed with the Spirit of promise, and made an habitation of God through the Spirit;" he exhorts them to avoid "all fornication, uncleanness, and covetousness, as knowing that no

^e Because the temple is holy and has a holy inhabitant, a fornicator cannot be a temple of God. Eucumenius on the passage.

^f A fornicator therefore cannot be holy, because he hath destroyed the very existence of a temple by driving out the Spirit that sanctified it. Theophylact. ED.

^e 1 Thessalonians iii, 5.

^f Chapter i, 4, 5, 6.

^g Chapter ii, 13.

^h Chapter vi, 1.

ⁱ Chapter xi, 3.

^k Chapter xii, 20, 21.

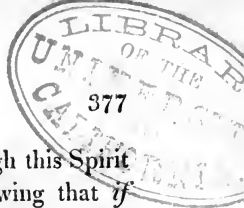
fornicator, unclean, or covetous person hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ, and of God;" and therefore no such person can have the Spirit of God abiding in him. '*Let no man,*' saith he, '*deceive you with vain words; for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.*'^l Now if this sealing, this earnest of the Spirit, had absolutely secured them from these sins, and from the wrath of God, due to as many as are guilty of them, why is he so concerned to deter them from them, and to exhort them not to be so deceived as to fall under this wrath? Such cautions naturally tending to express the danger men lie under of the judgment threatened. Yea, why doth he desire that '*they faint not at his tribulations,*'^m and exhort them to '*put on the whole armour of God that they may be able to withstand* (the temptations which might befall them) *in the evil day, and having done all to stand,*'ⁿ if he thought them absolutely secure from fainting or falling in that day?

ANSWER SECOND. These expressions therefore cannot be designed to teach us that they who have once received the Holy Spirit cannot quench him, or grieve him so as to cause him to depart from them, that being the natural consequence of grieving him, as hath been shewed in the note there; but only to inform us that the Holy Spirit vouchsafed to Christ's church and members, gave them a just assurance of the truth of christian faith, and consequently of the farther blessings Christ had promised to his faithful persevering servants in the world to come. To give a true account of this, consider that christianity, when it first came into the world, required of all who should embrace it, the duties of self-denial, taking up the cross, and being faithful to the death, and the encouragements it gave them to perform all this was only the promise of the Holy Spirit to be with them, and be their comforter at present, and the promise of eternal life hereafter. Now that Christ made good to them this first promise, and that the primitive christians were plentifully and wonderfully endowed with the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, is fully evident from the epistles and acts of the apostles, and hath been fully proved in the preface to them both; and by the vouchsafement of this Spirit they are said to have an earnest of their future inheritance, and

^l Chapter v, 3, 6.

^m Chapter iii, 13.

ⁿ Chapter vi, 14.



to be sealed up to the day of redemption, they through this Spirit 'groaning for the redemption of the body,'^o and knowing that *if this earthly tabernacle were dissolved, they had a building made without hands, eternal in the heavens.*^p Whence it is evident that they who had these first-fruits of the Spirit, had thereupon an argument to satisfy them of the future blessings promised to them; and hence they by this Spirit are said to have the *earnest* of their future inheritance, and to be sealed up to the day of redemption.

VI. OBJECTION SIXTH. Whereas some from these words, '*the foundation of God standeth sure, the Lord knoweth who are his,*'^q argue thus, that "the foundation of God is his election; and that though the faith of some be overthrown, yet the Lord knoweth his elect; and will not suffer their faith to be so:"—I answer,

ANSWER. That this argument depends upon two suppositions already proved to be false, viz. (1.) That *the foundation of God* is his "election;" whereas it is indeed the doctrine, and promise of a blessed resurrection, denied by Hymenæus and Philetus. (2.) That *God's knowledge of his*, is his "knowledge of his elect;" whereas in truth it only signifies that the Lord knoweth and approves of them who are commissioned to preach his doctrine to the world, or that he loves his faithful servants. See this proved in the DISCOURSE OF ELECTION in the answer to the FOURTH OBJECTION.

VII. OBJECTION SEVENTH. "They '*who are kept by the power of God through faith to salvation*' cannot fall away; but all the faithful are so kept." 1 Peter i, 5.

ANSWER. To this I answer, (1.) that this place only proves that all who are preserved to salvation are so kept by the power of God; but not that all believers are so kept. (2.) It proves only that they are kept '*through faith, that is, if they continue in the faith rooted and grounded, and are not removed from the hope of the gospel, Col. i, 23, if they hold the beginning of their confidence stedfast to the end.*' Heb. iii, 14. For this faith being the stedfast '*expectation of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen,*' will render us victorious over the world, 1 John v, 4, enable

o Romans viii, 23.

p 2 Corinthians v, 1, 5.

q 2 Timothy ii, 13, 19.

us to resist *'the temptations of the devil, 1 Peter v, 9, to prefer affliction with the people of God before the pleasures of sin for a season, Heb. xi, 25, 26, and even to suffer death, not accepting a deliverance, in expectation of a better resurrection.'* Verse 35. And, *Lastly*, this faith engageth the power of God in our preservation, and so causeth us *'out of weakness to be strong.'* Verse 34. But this place proves not that they shall certainly continue in the faith.

VIII. OBJECTION EIGHTH. "If they who fall away were never truly faithful, they who are truly so can never fall away; but the first is proved from these words of St. John, *'they went out from us, but they were not all of us; for had they been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us, &c.'*" 1 John ii, 19.

ANSWER. To this I answer, that the whole force of this argument depends upon these things; 1. that *to be of us* is "to be elected, truly justified, and sincere believers." 2. *Not to be of us* is "never to have been elected, or sincerely christians." 3. That *to go out from them* is "to renounce the church of Christ, so as only reprobates could do." 4. That *to abide with them* was "to continue faithful and sincere christians;" all which things are uncertain, if not plainly false. For that these words, *they were not of us*, cannot signify "they were not of the number of the elect," but only "they were not of the church in general, and of the mind of the apostles and the church that adhered to them," is evident from this,—(1)that from them they went out, and with them they might have remained: whereas they could not go out from the elect only who are not visible; nor could they have remained with them who were never of them. (2.) Their going out from them for a season was no certain argument that they were not of the elect, since it is confessed they may fall totally, though not finally.

ANSWER SECOND. The true sense of the words seems plainly to be this,—These anti-christs or deceivers went out from us of Judea; for some, *κατελθόντες ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰουδαίας*, 'GOING OUT FROM JUDEA taught the brethren that except they were circumcised after the manner of Moses, they could not be saved.'^r They went out also from the apostles; for *'we have heard,'* say they, *'that τινὲς ἐξ ἡμῶν ἐξελθόντες*, SOME GOING OUT FROM US

^r Acts xv, 1.

have troubled you with words, perverting your soul, saying that ye ought to be circumcised, and keep the law."^s The persons who taught these doctrines are styled "false brethren, false apostles, deceitful workers, ministers of satan, dogs, evil workers, the concision."^t Their doctrine tended to the subversion of souls, to the corrupting and turning men's minds from the simplicity that is in Christ, to hinder the truth of the gospel from continuing with them, to make Christ die in vain, to cause christians to fall from grace, so that "Christ should profit them nothing," so that they were "false prophets, false apostles, and anti-christs," in the worst of senses. And by their going out from the apostles and churches of Judea to preach this destructive doctrine to the Gentiles, which both the church of Judea, and the apostles assembled for that purpose, flatly disowned and censured, it sufficiently appeared that all the preachers of these doctrines were not of them; these therefore must be some of those many anti-christs which the apostle writing to the Jews here speaks of, and they also divided and separated from the church, and became Hereticks under the names of Cerinthians, Nazarenes and Ebionites, and their heresy prevailed in Asia Minor, where St. John's province was. 2 Tim. i, 15.

IX. OBJECTION NINTH. "He that cannot sin, and that for a perpetual reason, cannot fall away and perish by sin; but *every one that is born of God sinneth not; for his seed abideth in him, neither can he sin because he is born of God.*" 1 John iii, 9.

ANSWER FIRST. That these words cannot be intended to signify that "he who is *born of the Spirit and the word*" can never fall from that state," is evident, partly because it hath been proved already that the Holy Spirit may depart, and quit his habitation, and so he who was once born of the Spirit may cease to be so, partly because men may not continue in the word, but may be "removed from the hope of the gospel," as is apparent from the words of this apostle, who having told the converted Jews that "the old commandment was that which they had heard from the beginning,"^a he adds, "let that which ye have heard from the beginning abide in you; for if that which you have heard from the beginning abide in you, ye shall abide in the Son and in the

^s Verse 24.

^t 2 Corinthians xi, 13, 15. Galatians ii, 4. Philippians iii, 2. Acts xv, 24. 2 Corinthians xi, 5. Galatians ii, 5, 21. v, 2, 4.

^a 1 John ii, 7.

Father.”^b And again, “little children, abide in him, that when he shall appear you may not be ashamed at his coming;” clearly intimating by these exhortations that they might not abide in him, and his word might not abide in them. In his second epistle, he tells the elect lady and her children, that “many deceivers were gone out into the world who denied that Jesus Christ was come in the flesh;” and therefore bids them “look to themselves that they lose not the things that they had wrought,”^c viz. by embracing the doctrines of such deceivers; and to make them the more cautious, he adds, “he that transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God,”^d plainly insinuating, that they might so be drawn away by these deceivers as not to abide in the doctrine of Christ, and so might lose their interest in God, and the things which they had wrought. And this he learned from his Great Master, who declared that they only were his true “disciples who continued in his word,” and that they who did not “keep his word,” did not truly love him.

ANSWER SECOND. As those words of Christ, “a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit,” to wit, because it is corrupt; and those of the apostle, “the carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be,”^e viz. because it is carnal; and “they that are in the flesh cannot please God” for the same reason, do not prove that a corrupt tree cannot cease to be corrupt, or become good, or that the carnal mind cannot cease to be so, and become spiritual; so neither do these words, “he that is born of God cannot sin, because he is born of God,” prove that he who is born of God cannot cease to be so, and then go on in a course of sin to his own destruction.

Again, as these words “how can you that are evil speak good things? the world cannot hate” you that are of it, the Jews “could not believe, the world cannot receive the Spirit,” do not signify an impossibility that it should be otherwise, but only their present indisposition to the contrary, and the aversion of their minds from those things which it is said they cannot do: So those words, “he that is born of God cannot sin,” do not import any impossibility that they should do so, but only that they have at present that frame of spirit which renders them strongly averse

b Verses 24, 27, 28.

c Verses 7, 8.

d Verse 9.

e Romans viii.

from sin, and indisposed to yield to any temptations to commit it.

ANSWER THIRD. The interpretation which many of the ancient Fathers give us of these words is a demonstration that they believed not the doctrine of the Saints' Perseverance, for they expound the words thus, " 'he that is born of God sinneth not,' neither can sin, *quandiu renatus est*, ' whilst he is born of God,' because he ceaseth to be a child of God when he sins;" and this must necessarily be the import of the words if you interpret them of living in a habit or any course of sin; for it is as certain that whilst a man doth so, he is not born of God, as it is that whilst a tree bringeth forth corrupt fruit, it cannot be a good tree; and it is as certain that when a man falls back into any habit, or course of sin, he ceaseth to be a child of God for the same reason.

CHAP. IV.

*Containing an answer to the pretended promises of the Saints'
Perseverance to the end.*

TO those now considered, some add divers texts from the Old and the New Testament, in which they do pretend God hath engaged himself by promise absolute to preserve true christians to the end. The texts produced from the Old Testament are these,

I. ARGUMENT FIRST. " 'The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed. Isaiah liv, 10. My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put into thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor thy seed's seed, from henceforth and for ever. (lix, 21.) They shall be my people, and I will be their God. And I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good, but I will put my fear into their hearts that they shall (may) not depart from me. Jer. xxxii, 38, 39, 40. I will betroth thee to me for ever, yea I will

betroth thee to me in righteousness and judgment, and loving kindness, and mercies."

ANSWER FIRST. It is exceeding evident that all these places speak of nations in the general, and not of a few private persons among them; of her who was, when Isaiah prophesied, as "a woman forsaken in widowhood, and grieved in spirit;" and yet had the "Holy One of Israel for her husband and her Redeemer:"^a of Sion and Jacob: of the "children of Israel and Judah to be gathered out of all countries into their own land:"^b of them "who came out of the land of Egypt, who had burnt incense to Baalim," and whose feast days were "new moons and sabbaths."^c Now from this observation arise these arguments to prove these places cannot concern the elect only, or their final perseverance.

For (*First*,) If here be any promise of final perseverance, it must be made good to all to whom the promise doth belong; and so it must be made good to all who came out of Egypt first, and afterwards out of the captivity; to all that dwelt '*safely in their own land*;' which the whole tenor of the scriptures both of the Old and the New Testament disproves.

Secondly. If these spiritual promises respect the elect, then the promises of temporal blessings being made to the same persons, must respect them also, and so they must all '*abide safely in the land of Canaan, and buy there fields for money*;^d they must be *far from oppression, from fear and terror*;^e they must *abound with corn and wine and oil*;^f which yet were never looked upon as promises made to the elect, much less as things peculiarly belonging to them. And,

Thirdly. If these promises belong to the elect, the seed of these elect, and their seed's seed must be *elected* also; for so the promise runs, Isaiah lix, 21. The promise also in Jeremy is '*for the good of their children after them*.' Jer. xxxii, 39. And this '*the everlasting covenant, the covenant of peace*' which shall not be removed, seems plainly to require, as it is made to be a covenant respecting the elect; whereas it is certain from experience that the seed of the elect are often very wicked persons, and therefore not elect, but reprobates.

^a Chapter liv, 5, 6.

^b Jeremiah xxxii, 32, 37.

^c Hosea ii, 11, 13, 15.

^d Jeremiah xxxii, 37, 43.

^e Isaiah liv, 14.

^f Hosea ii, 22.

ANSWER SECOND. All these are only promises that he would not wholly forsake that nation so as never to have any farther thoughts of kindness to them, he having made *'an everlasting covenant with their fathers to be the God of their seed after them.'* Gen. xvii, 7. Whence the apostle concludes, that though the Jews are now broken off, *'they shall be grafted again into their own olive tree, because if the root be holy, so are the branches,'* Rom. xi, 16; and adds, that even after their rejection they were still *'beloved for the Father's sake, for the gifts and callings of God are without repentance.'* Verses 28, 29. They also chiefly do concern the time of the Jews' general conversion to the faith, to which St. Paul plainly refers the words of Isaiah, lix, 20, proving there shall be such a conversion from those words, *'there shall come a Deliverer out of Zion, who shall turn away iniquity from Jacob.'* And St. John, Rev. xxi, 23, 25, refers the like words, (lx, 1, 2, 3,) to the same time. This also is the time of which the same prophet speaks, (liv.) as is evident from these words, *"I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and thy foundations with sapphires; I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones,"* as is evident from the like description of the New Jerusalem, Rev. xxi, and Tobit xiii, 16, 17, xiv, 5, 6, 7. And of the prophecy of Jeremy, the learned Dr. Gataker speaks thus, note on Jer. xxxii, 40, *"whence may well be gathered, that when this people shall be brought home to Christ, they shall never fall off from him again; Isaiah lix, 20, 21."* Nor can any other time be probably assigned when these great promises were accomplished; not the time following their return from their captivity, when so many of their *'princes, rulers, and people were joined in affinity with the Heathens against God's express law, and could not stand before God by reason of their trespasses, Ezra ix, when they were in great affliction and reproof, when they were servants, and others had dominion over their cattle, and their bodies at pleasure, and they were in great distress.'* Neh. ix, 36, 37. For surely then they did not live *"in safety and far from oppression, when the priests despised and profaned the name of the Lord, and offered polluted bread upon his altar, and brought the torn, the lame, and the sick for offerings,"* Mal. i, 6—13: when they *"departed out of the way, caused many to stumble at the law, and corrupted the cove-*

nant of Levi," ii, 8: "when Judah dealt treacherously, and an abomination was committed in Israel and in Jerusalem, by profaning the holiness of the Lord, and marrying the daughter of a strange God," so that he "regarded not their offerings, any more," verses 11, 13: when "they said (profanely) every one that doth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them, and where is the God of judgment?" verse 17: when they were all under a curse for robbing "God in tithes and offerings," iii, 8, 9. Yea, when they atheistically said, "it is vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances?" complaining that "the proud were happy, and they that work wickedness were set up, and they that tempted God were delivered." Verses 14, 15.

Or could these promises be fulfilled in the times of the Messiah, that is, in those very times when "the axe was laid to the root of the tree, to cut it down;"^g when they were "given up to a spiritual slumber;"^h when "the kingdom of God was to be taken from them;"ⁱ when they were "broken off from their own olive-tree,"^k and "wrath came upon them to the uttermost?"^l

ANSWER THIRD. The promise made to Israel, Hosea ii, 20, is only made to her 'returning to her first husband.' Verse 9. The promise, Isaiah liv, of a covenant of peace that should not fail, was made under a like condition, as these words in the following chapter shew; "incline your ear and come unto me, hear and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you."^m The promise, Jer. xxxii, 39, 40, "I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me; I will not turn away from them to do them good, but I will put my fear in their heart that they may not depart from me," is not an absolute promise that they should fear him always, but only an indication that his kind providences should be such towards them as should lay upon them the highest obligations to continue steadfast in his fear, ל (le,) and לְבִילְתִּי (Lebilti) being often used, not to signify the certainty of the event, but the design and purpose of God in affording the means: so 'the Lord requires thee to keep his commandments, and his statutes, לְטוֹב לְךָ (letob lac,) THAT IT MAY

^g Matthew iii, 10.

^h Romans xi, 8.

ⁱ Matthew xxi, 43.

^k Romans xi, 20.

^l 1 Thessalonians ii, 16.

^m Chapter iv, 3.

BE WELL WITH THEE. *The king shall read in the book of the law, that he may learn to fear the Lord, that he turn not aside from the commandment, that he may prolong his days.* xvii. 19, 20. *And I will make them learn my words, that they may fear me.* iv. 10. *So these things have I spoken to you that you may not be offended;* John xvi. 1; and especially in those, *Ezek. xi. 16—21. viz. 'I will gather you from the people, and assemble you from the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel, and I will give them one heart, and will put a new Spirit within you, and will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh, וְלֵב (lemmaan) THAT THEY MAY WALK in my statutes, and keep my ordinances, and do them.'* And to shew that this signifies not the event, but only God's design, and that these means are proper to produce this end, it follows, verse 21, *'but as for them whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations, (which I said, verse 18, they shall take away,) I will recompense their way upon their heads.'*

ARGUMENT SECOND. "Our Lord hath promised that *'he who drinketh of the water that he shall give him, shall never thirst, because that water shall spring up in him to eternal life,'* John iv. 14; and that *'the Comforter given to believers shall abide with them for ever,'* John xiv. 16; that *'he who comes to him shall never hunger, and he that believeth in him shall never thirst,'* John vi. 35; therefore he that is once a believer, shall be ever so, and he that hath once the Spirit, shall never lose him."

ANSWER FIRST. I have already shewed, in answer to the Fifth Objection of the former chapter, that the Holy Spirit may entirely depart from them in whom he once inhabited; whence it must follow that two of these texts cannot bear the sense this argument requires. I have also proved, in answer to the second objection, that the promises made to believers in the Gospel of St. John, respect only such believers as shall continue stedfast in the faith, and so have answered the third text alledged.

ANSWER SECOND. To answer to these places in particular, (*First*) the promise of the abode of the Spirit with any christian, John, xiv. 16, is only made on this condition, that they continue so *'to love Christ as to keep his commandments.'*—(ii.) It is a pro-

mise made to recompense Christ's departure from them, and so seems only to concern Christ's apostles with whom he was then corporally present, or to concern only the Spirit's presence with his church in general, not in the heart of every christian, for so Christ himself abode not with them.—*Secondly.* The other two texts may be both understood of Christ's doctrine, 'He that cometh to learn my doctrine, and believeth it, when he hath learnt it, shall need no farther teaching in order to his future happiness, because the observance of what he hath learned from me already, will bring him to eternal life.'—And, *Thirdly,* if you expound the words, John iv. 14, of the receiving of the Holy Spirit, they can be only meant of him in whom this Spirit still abides. For therefore shall he '*never thirst,*' saith the text, '*because the water given shall be in him as fountain water, springing up to life eternal;*' whereas it can no longer spring up than it abideth in him. The import of the words seems therefore to be this,—that whereas the water which we drink to quench our natural thirst, will neither abide long in us, nor long quench our thirst, this Holy Spirit will abide for ever with them who do not by their sins expel him, and, so abiding, he will for ever quench and satisfy their thirst after eternal life, as being in them the '*Earnest of their future inheritance.*'

III. ARGUMENT THIRD. "If Christ hath assured his sheep that they shall never perish, and that none shall snatch them out of his hands," then hath he assured them that they shall never fall away finally, seeing they who so fall away will perish; and also that no tempter or temptation shall effectually seduce them from the way of piety, since then they would snatch them from Christ's hands."

ANSWER FIRST. The frequent cautions and exhortations directed in the scripture to Christ's sheep not to fall from grace, but continue steadfast in the faith,^z are certain demonstrations that they may do so; for if the sheep of Christ can no more cease to be so, than a man, whilst he lives, can cease to be a man, these exhortations to take care they fall not off from being so, must be as vain as a caution to a man would be not to outlive his manhood. To answer therefore directly to this text, I add,

^z John, x, 28.

Secondly. That Christ here only promises his sheep should never perish through any defect on his part, or by the force of any plucking them by violence out of his hands, so the particle *και*, which is here illative, shews, viz. they therefore shall not perish, "FOR none shall pull them out of my hand." And this is still more evident from the reason following, '*my Father is greater*' than all their adversaries; so that none can pull or force them out of his hands, now his power and mine is one and the same. Well therefore said Isidore Pelusiota, "no man can snatch them away by force and tyranny; for then they must perish without and against their wills. But this may be done by deceit and allurements, *παρὰ τὴν τῶν αὐτεξουσιῶν ἀνθρώπων βραθυμίαν*, 'through the negligence of men who have the freedom of their wills;' for such men, who by the allurements of the world, the flesh, and the devil, thus cease to obey Christ's laws, are not snatched out of his hands, but chuse to go from him."

Thirdly. This text seems only to speak of such sheep who have already persevered so as to receive the reward of their obedience, eternal life, assuring them that their felicity shall be incapable of interruption; for so the whole verse runs, "I give to them eternal life, and they shall never perish." And this seems fairly gathered from the former verse, where he describes his sheep as such who "hear his voice and follow him:" and then he adds, to them who do so, "I give eternal life." He therefore cannot reasonably be supposed to promise that which he here affirms they did, that they should hear his voice, and follow him, still unto the end; but rather that which is the sure reward of them who do so.

IV. ARGUMENT FOURTH. "If God's fidelity be engaged to "confirm them unblameable to the end" whom he hath called to the communion of his Son, 1 Cor. i, 9, 10; if his faithfulness will not "suffer them to be tempted above what they are able to bear," x, 13; if St. Paul had ground of confidence that "he who had begun the good work in his Philippians, would perfect it unto the day of the Lord Jesus," Phil. i, 6; if it be part of God's fidelity "to sanctify them whom he hath called, wholly in body, soul, and spirit," 1 Thess. v, 23, 24, "and to establish them, and keep them from evil," 2 Thess. iii, 3, then must they persevere to the end; but all these are the express assertions of the holy scripture. Ergo."

ANSWER FIRST. Now for a general answer to all these texts, let it be considered, that God in scripture is often said to do a thing, when he does that which hath a proper tendency to the effect, and is sufficient to procure it, and hath done all that was requisite on his part, in order to it; so that if the effect be not wrought in us, it is by reason of some defect in us, or some neglect of doing that which he hath given us sufficient means and motives to perform. Thus is he said to have *'purged Jerusalem though she was not purged,'*^a because he by his prophets had vouchsafed proper and sufficient means for her purgation, by his frequent admonitions, exhortations, expostulations, promises, and threatenings, and by the strivings of his Holy Spirit with them, though, by their obstinacy in their sinful courses, they obstructed the influence of God's word and Spirit upon them. He caused the whole "house of Israel to cleave to him, as a girdle cleaves to a man's loins;"^b though all that he had said and done in order to it, proved ineffectual, because "she would not hear." He is said "to teach them to profit, and lead them by the way that they should go,"^c who neither were led, nor taught, because "they hearkened not to his commandments;" and saith, "this people have I formed for my praise;"^d and yet he adds, "but thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob, thou hast been weary of me, O Israel; thou hast not honoured me with thy sacrifices, but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquity;"^e and of Babylon he saith, רִפְּאֵנוּ (*ripinu*), "WE HEALED Babylon, and she was not healed."^f Thus are they said to know God, who had such means to know him imparted by his providence, as rendered their ignorance of him, and their idolatry "without excuse."^g "The riches of God's goodness, patience and long-suffering," is said "to lead them to repentance" who continued "in the hardness, and the impenitency of their hearts;"^h and God is said to be "in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing to them their iniquities," because he had made him "a sacrifice for their sin, that they might be made righteous through faith in him;"ⁱ and yet that he was doing this for them who were not actually reconciled to him, and so whose sins were not forgiven, appears from the

^a Ezekiel xxiv, 15.^b Jeremiah xlii, 11.^c Isaiah xlvi, 17, 18.^d Chapter xliii, 21.^e Verses 22, 23.^f Jeremiah li, 9.^g Romans i, 20, 21.^h Romans ii, 3, 4.ⁱ 2 Corinthians v, 19, 20, 21.

words following, ‘we therefore beseech you to be reconciled unto God.’ Thus the grace of God is called *saving grace*,^k because it teacheth us to do that which if we conscientiously perform we shall be saved. The converted Jews are styled, οἱ σωζόμενοι, ‘the saved;’ⁱ though many of them after fell away, as hath been proved, note on 2 Thess. ii, 3. And all the members of the church of Corinth are styled ‘the saved,’^m though there were found many among them who had “not repented of the lasciviousness, uncleanness, and fornication which they had committed,”ⁿ and so lay under the guilt of those works of the flesh, which “they who do,” saith the apostle “shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

ANSWER SECOND. To proceed to a particular answer to the texts alledged; (*First*,) the words cited from 1 Cor. i, 9, 10, “who shall confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ: God is faithful, by whom ye were called to the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ:” (verse 10.) I say these words cannot contain a promise of perseverance made to the elect only among the Corinthians, (i.) because the apostle plainly speaks to the whole body of the Church of Corinth; “to the church of God which is in Corinth, to all that call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (ii.) Because he speaks not only of their not falling away finally, but of their being preserved unblameable; whereas it is certain that the elect are not always so preserved.—(2.) These words are by the ancients thus interpreted, “God in the day of the Lord Jesus which you expect, will confirm you for ever blameless; for,” say they, “God is faithful who hath promised to them that obey the gospel, *υιοθεσίαν* ‘the adoption,’^o that is, ‘the redemption of the body;’ or that they shall be partakers of that kingdom and glory to which he hath called them.” 1 Thess. ii, 12.—Or, (3.) they are well expounded by Grotius thus, “he will do, *quod suarum est partium*, ‘all that is requisite on his part’ to render you unblameable to the end; so that you shall not fail of being so through any want of divine grace requisite to that end, or any unfaithfulness on his part to his promise, who hath already reconciled you to himself through the death of Christ, “to represent you holy and unblameable, and unreprouvable in his sight, if ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel.” Col. i, 23.

^k Titus ii, 11, 12.

ⁱ Acts ii, 47.

^m 1 Corinthians i, 18.

ⁿ 2 Corinthians, xii, 20, 21.

^o Romans viii, 23.

Secondly. To those words, "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted (by persecutions) above what you are able (by his grace) to suffer; but will with the temptation make a way (so far) to escape, that you may be able to bear it;" 1 Cor. x, 13; and therefore if you will use the strength which he is ready to afford, shall do so,—I answer, (1.) that these words ought not to be restrained to the elect; for the preceding words, "no temptation hath happened to you but such as is common to men," are spoken to the whole church of Corinth. Moreover God hath doubtless engaged to all that enter into covenant with him, to enable them to perform the conditions of that covenant, since a covenant upon an impossible condition cannot be performed, and all are bound to pray in faith that they '*may not be tempted above what they are able through his strength, to bear.*'—(2.) This text must be impertinently alledged, because it only contains a promise of ability sufficient to resist temptations if men will use it; but doth not contain an engagement that this strength shall be effectual, or certainly improved to that end.—And (3.) I have shewed, when I discoursed of the cautions given to believers, that in the words immediately preceding, "wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall," and in the words following, "wherefore, beloved, flee from idolatry," there is a plain indication that they who truly think they stand, may fall, as did the Jews there mentioned; and might be guilty of idolatry, which he himself declares to be a sin exclusive from the kingdom of Christ. 1 Cor. vi, 9.

Thirdly. To the words cited from Phil. i, 6, viz. "being confident of this, that he who hath begun the good work in you, will perform it to the day of Jesus Christ," I answer, that it is evident the apostle speaks not out of any opinion of the election of any, much less of all the Philippians to eternal life, or of the certainty of their perseverance to the end; for why then doth he exhort them "to work out their salvation with fear and trembling," to stand fast in the Lord, and to retain the word of life, that he might have joy in the day of Christ, that he had not run or laboured in vain among them?"^q He speaks this therefore from a judgment of charity; "because," saith he, "it is just" or fit "for me to conceive thus of you," by reason of that great affection you

^p Chapter ii, 12.

^q Chapter iv, 1. ii, 16.

have for me, and your patience under the like sufferings. Now he who only gives these reasons of his confidence, gives us just reason to conceive he knew nothing of the necessity of their perseverance by virtue of their election to salvation.

Fourthly. Those words, *‘I pray God your Spirit, soul, and body may be preserved blameless to the coming of the Lord Jesus: faithful is he who hath called you, who also will do it;’* 1 Thess. v, 23, 24; do only signify that he will not be wanting on his part towards it: I say, his part; for if the fidelity of God required that he should sanctify and preserve them blameless to the end without their care and industry, or should work in them certainly and absolutely that care, and the apostle believed this, how could he fear lest these Thessalonians should be so overcome by satan’s temptations as that *‘his labour with them might have been in vain?’* This being in effect to fear that God might be unfaithful to his promise. And, for the same reason, the words cited from 2 Thess. iii, 3, must be thus interpreted, “the Lord is faithful, who (therefore) will (do all that is requisite on his part to) establish you, and preserve you from evil.”

CHAP. V.

Enquiring which of the two opposite opinions tends most to administer true comfort, and to promote holiness of life.

THE only objection from reason against this doctrine that saints may fall away from grace, is, that “it is obstructive of the peace and comfort of believers, it impairs their humble confidence in God, and fills them with continual fear and dread of falling from that happy state.”

Whereas indeed our doctrine only teacheth, with the holy scriptures, that a well grounded peace is *‘the fruit of righteousness,’* and consequently that by going out of the way of righteousness, we go out of the way of peace: that all true peace and

comfort ariseth from the testimony of an upright conscience; *'this being the foundation of our rejoicing, even the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, we have had our conversation in this world:'*^t that then only have we ground of confidence with God, when *'our heart doth not condemn us'*^u of wilfully departing from him: that we ought "to work out our salvation with fear and trembling;"^w and, seeing we serve that God, "who without respect of persons judgeth every man according to his works, to pass the time of our sojourning here in fear:"^x that *'happy is the man that feareth always'*^y with that fear of caution which renders him more watchful against sin; this being a demonstration of his uprightness. And further let it be considered,

First. That a doctrine is not therefore true because it is comfortable, if it be liable to just exceptions upon other accounts. For very comfortable to the Jews was the doctrine of their Rabbins, "that all that were of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh (styled in the Old Testament, *'the elect'*) should inherit the everlasting kingdom, *κῆν ἀμάρτωλοι ᾧσι, καὶ ἄπιστοι, καὶ ἀπειθεῖς πρὸς τὸν Θεόν,* 'though they were sinners, and unfaithful and disobedient towards God;' and that, *κῆν ἀμάρτωλοι ᾧσι Θεὸν δὲ γνώσκουσιν,* 'though they were sinners, yet, if they knew God,' he would not impute to them their iniquities."^a

(2.) Comfortable to his followers was that doctrine of Simon Magus, that "they who believed in him, and his Helen, might freely do what they pleased, as being to be saved not by good works, but by his grace;"^b which also was the doctrine of the Valentini-ans who also held that they were "perfect, and, *σπέριματα ἐκλογῆς,* 'children of the election,' receiving grace from the unexpressible conjugation, so that 'it was impossible they should be corrupted, whatever they did.'^c To which I might add the doctrines of our

^t 2 Corinthians i, 12.

^u 1 John iii, 21.

^w Philippians ii, 12.

^x 1 Peter i, 17.

^y Proverbs xxviii, 14. xxiv, 21.

^a Just. M. Dial. cum Tryph. p. 369, 370.

^b Ut liberos agere quæ velint, secundum enim ipsius Gratiam salvari homines, sed non secundum operas justas. Irenæ. Lib 1, cap. 20.

Διὸ καὶ ἐλευθέρως πάντα πράττειν, μηδένα ἐν μηδενὶ φοβὸν ἔχοντας, Ib. c. 9, p. 61, Ed. Ox. ibid. p. 31.

'And therefore do every thing freely, since they had no fear of any thing.' Irenæus, Book 1, chap. 9. ED.

^c Ἀδύνατον φόρον καταδέξασθαι κῆν ὁποῖαις συγκαπαγένωνται πράξεσιν. Ibid. p. 30.

Antinomians, and other Solifidians, all very comfortable to men of carnal minds; but very opposite to, and destructive of, that *‘doctrine which is according to godliness.’*

Secondly. That a possibility of falling into a very great evil, though it be such a one into which I see daily others fall, and to which I may be obnoxious, creates no trouble or anxiety to any man, provided he knows he cannot fall into it unless he will, and cluseth so to do, and unless he acts contrary to all the rules of reason and discretion, and the strongest motives and sufficient means vouchsafed to avoid it. Men may very possibly, and too often do, embezzle their estates by gaming, whoring, drinking, gormandizing, and contention; they often forfeit them by misdemeanors, hazard and lose their lives by duelling, sedition, rebellion, pride, and ambition; and yet no wise man is therefore tormented with continual fears that this may be his own case, because he knows he cannot fall into those vices but by his own choice, that God hath given him reason and understanding sufficient to preserve him from them, and all the motives which pleasure, honour, temporal advantage, and his eternal interest can minister to resist all temptations to them. And in like manner it being certain that no good christian can fall from grace unless he will, and even chuse to do so; that he hath wisdom to discern the unspeakable folly and danger of so doing; that God hath given him a new nature, and so a frame of spirit opposite to all temptations so to do, and the greatest aids, encouragements, and the most powerful motives to continue constant to the end; why should he have any ground to live uncomfortably, or to abate of his inward peace, because he is under a remote possibility of falling from the divine favour, and not rather *‘believing to rejoice in hope of the glory of God?’*

Note, (*Thirdly.*) That this doctrine of the impossibility of saints falling finally from grace, cannot truly be comfortable for two signal reasons:

1. Because though it seems comfortable to a man, who thinks himself a good christian, to believe he ever shall continue so; yet the reverse of this doctrine is as uncomfortable, viz. that he who does not so continue to the end, let him have been never so fruitful in the works of righteousness, or in the labour of love, or in religious duties, or in a zeal for God and goodness, was never better than a hypocrite. And then how few can be assured of

their own sincerity, or prove the truth of their faith, by better works than they themselves confess a hypocrite may do? Now it is at least as uncomfortable to be in doubt of my sincerity, as of my continuance in the way of righteousness, though I am sincere at present.

2. Let men hold what doctrines they please; yet as it is with them who question providence and a future judgment, their impious persuasions cannot remove their fears arising from the dictates of a natural conscience; so neither can men's theological persuasions remove the fears and doubtings which do as naturally arise from the dictates of a conscience enlightened by the word of God. When therefore that condemns, and doth pronounce us guilty of any wilful sin, we can have no peace from any thing but our assurance that our sincere repentance hath removed the guilt; but shall be either doubtful of our sincerity, or our continuance in it. Whilst we can say with David, *'I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from my God: I was also upright before him, and kept myself from mine iniquity:'*^d Whilst conscience doth not condemn us of wilful violations of our covenant, there is as much confidence in God from our opinion, as from the other. We can assure all men that, whilst they love God, they shall be beloved by him; and that *'his countenance will favourably behold the upright.'* And the other doctrine can afford true comfort to none whose conscience doth condemn them of wilful violations of God's law; that is, of breaking the conditions of the new covenant, or of not keeping his commandments, which is so often made the test of a sincere affection to our God and Saviour. Either then we would have peace and comfort, though our hearts depart from God, and deal unfaithfully in our covenant, or only while our hearts do cleave unto him, and we be not unfaithful to it: if we desire comfort in the last case only, our doctrine doth as fully yield it as the other. If in the case of the departure of the heart from God, and breach of covenant, (i.) We desire that comfort which God's word plainly and frequently denies us, as is apparent from the very condition of the covenant of grace, sincere obedience, and from the threats it hath denounced against apostatizers. (ii.) We would have

^d Psalm xviii, 21, 23.

comfort when our own heart cannot afford it, because it cannot at the same time thus condemn, and yet speak comfort to us. (iii.) We would have that comfort which even the doctrine of perseverance cannot yield, seeing the patrons of it do confess that when men fall into wilful sins, though they lose not the title to the divine favour, they lose the comfort of it till they have repented; that this at present cuts off their assurance of being God's children, and consequently of their perseverance to the end.

So that the difference in this case seems only to be this, that when men's hearts do thus condemn them, if they believe our doctrine, they have reason to suspect their fall from grace, by violating the conditions of the covenant of grace; if they be of the other persuasion, they have cause to suspect their sincerity, and fear that they were never upright christians. And the advantage on our side is this,—that our opinion naturally tends to render men more careful to avoid all wilful violations of the laws of God, and more speedy in their repentance, and their return unto their duties, than the other doth, this being a most certain rule that that motive is more forcible to engage us to an action, which renders the action to which I am engaged of absolute necessity for the obtaining of the most important end, of which I am assured by performance of it, than that which either renders this end attainable without the performance of that action, or declares that another stands absolutely engaged to cause me to perform it.

II. Let us now take a view of the contrary doctrine; and seeing it asserts that they who have once attained to the favour of God can never fall from it, and also grants that Lot, David, Solomon, and Peter were such persons; they must own that drunkenness and incest, murder and adultery, do not put men out of God's favour; that men's hearts may *'be turned from the Lord to the most gross idolatry, even that of Ashtaroth, the goddess of the Zidonians, and of Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites;'*^e that after the most solemn engagements to the contrary they may deny Christ before men, and that with oaths and execrations, and still continue high in favour with God: which as it seems the plainest contradiction to those numerous places of scripture, which declare these are such sins which they who do *'have no inheri-*

^e 1 Kings xi, 5, 9.

tance in the kingdom of God or of Christ,' and that they are sins to which the law of Moses threatened death without admission of any atonement by sacrifice, and the severest of God's judgments, even '*the casting of them off for ever;*' so doth it give a great encouragement, to those who have once gotten an opinion that they are the children of God, to indulge themselves in the like iniquities, as being never able '*to separate them from the love of God:*' This doctrine tending evidently to abate the force of all the prohibitions of sin, of all the exhortations to avoid it, of all the cautions to resist and flee from all temptations to commit it, and of all the dreadful judgments denounced without exception against all who do commit it; for when once persons begin to think that they are out of the reach of the severest of these judgments, and that they cannot possibly belong to them, they cannot rationally be moved by the fear of them to depart from that iniquity to which they are denounced.

Secondly. It lessens the force of all the motives offered in the scripture to engage us to persevere in righteousness and goodness, and '*to have our fruit unto holiness, that the end may be eternal life.*' For an absolute promise both of the reward, and of all means conducing to it, cannot so powerfully engage us to the pursuit of the said means, as such a promise as suspendeth the reward upon our own diligence in the use of the means, and so gives place for hope and fear, the two great principles of action, both which must be excluded by an absolute promise, since as we cannot rationally fear what cannot possibly befall us, so what we are already sure of, we do no longer hope for, but with the greatest confidence expect.

Thirdly. It seems not well consistent with the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God to give an absolute assurance of his favour, and the fruition of himself for ever to any creature, though he fall into the sins forementioned. For though it may be said "he doth this only by assuring them that they shall repent of those sins, and return to their obedience," yet doth not this seem suitable to his threats of the severest of his judgments against all persons whatsoever who shall thus offend, since they were certainly designed to deter them from those sins by fear of falling under those most dreadful judgments, whereas these promises are plain assurances that though they do commit them, they shall not be

obnoxious to those judgments. They also seem contrary to the divine purity, on the same account, as tending to diminish in others the dread of those iniquities which they are thus assured cannot prove fatal to them. In a word, there is not even the shadow of a promise in the holy scripture, that though such or such persons fall into murder, adultery, heathenish Idolatry, He will not suffer them to die in them, but will assuredly cause them to repent and turn to their obedience; but there is an express declaration, that “when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness and committeth iniquity, and doth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doth, all the righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned; in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in the sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.”^u The promises of the Old Testament run in another strain; viz. “The Lord will be with you while ye be with him, but if ye forsake him he will forsake you;” yea “He will cast you off for ever;”^w but as for such as decline to their perverse ways, the Lord will lead you forth with the workers of iniquity;^x and the promises of the New, that he will ‘*stablish them, and keep them from evil, and preserve them holy and unblameable.*’ But I find not one promise in the Old or the New Testament, that when the righteous wickedly depart from God, and do after the abominations of the wicked, they shall yet live, and not die in their iniquities.

III. It were easy to confirm this doctrine from the concurrent suffrage of the ancient fathers; but this seems to me unnecessary after the confession of the learned Vossius, *communem hanc fuisse antiquitatis sententiam*, that ‘this was the common sentence of antiquity;’ and that *antiquitas tota indeficibilitati adversatur*, ‘all antiquity was contrary to this doctrine of the indeficibility of the saints.’^y The words of the Greek and Latin Fathers, which he cites to prove this, may be seen in John Goodwin’s fifteenth chapter on that subject, who also adds to them the consent of many Protestants.^z

^u Ezekiel xviii, 24.

^w 1 Chronicles xxviii, 9.

² Chronicles xv, 2.

^x Psalm cxxv, 5.

^y Hist. Pelag. L. 6. Ch. 12.

^z Redemp. Redeemed, from § 5. to the 14th.

Discourse VI.

CONTAINING AN ANSWER TO THREE OBJECTIONS AGAINST
THE DOCTRINES ASSERTED, AND THE ARGUMENTS BY
WHICH THEY ARE CONFIRMED.

CHAP. I.

OBJECTION FIRST. THE FIRST grand OBJECTION against the force of many of the arguments used in these discourses is this, that “they seem as strongly to conclude against God’s foreknowledge of future contingencies, as against his absolute decrees; for that comprehending the knowledge of what all men will do, it seems as unreasonable to command, exhort, or tender motives to men to perform what God beforehand sees they will not do, as in case of what he knows they cannot do; and as contradictory to his goodness to bring them into the world, whom he foreknows will certainly be miserable through their own fault, as those whom he reserveth to be miserable through the fault of Adam. It also seems as vain, superfluous, and delusory, to seem passionately concerned that they may be saved, or to use patience, long-suffering, or any other means to prevent their ruin, or to lead them to repentance whom he certainly foresaw would not be by these means induced to repent, that they might be saved, and who infallibly would perish; as to act thus towards them who lie under a decree of reprobation.” Now,

I. ANSWER FIRST. It is observable, that though this argument be offered in favour of the decrees of absolute election, and that especial grace which is vouchsafed to the objects of it, which makes it necessary for them to be ‘*vessels of mercy*,’ and of that absolute reprobation, which makes it necessary for all the objects of it to be ‘*vessels of wrath*,’ and infallibly to fail of salvation, yet doth it plainly overthrow them, or render them superfluous. For,

be it that these decrees were made from eternity, yet seeing God's fore-knowledge of the events of all men was also from eternity, must he not know what would be the condition of all men when he made these decrees? And what need then could there be of a decree for that event which was infallible, by virtue of his fore-knowledge without that decree? Either he foresaw these events independently on, and in the same moment that he made these decrees; and then seeing the objects of both these decrees are the same individual persons which he saw then would certainly be saved, or perish independently upon them, what need could there be of these decrees to ascertain that event which his own prescience had rendered certain and infallible? Or else it must be said, that "God only foresaw these future contingences, by virtue of his decrees, that they should come to pass;" and then his decrees must be before his knowledge and the reason of it; and so, as this argument doth not at all lessen the horror of them, so is it obnoxious to these dreadful consequences,

First. That it plainly renders God the author of sin; for to say with Calvin, Dr. Twiss, and Rutherford, *Deum non aliâ ratione providere quæ futura sunt, quam quia ut fierent decrevit*, 'God only doth foresee things future, because he hath decreed they should be so,' "is," saith Le Blanc, "to say *God moves and pre-determines the wills of men to those things which are evil.* Now, who can affirm," saith he, "that God antecedently decrees and determines the wills of men to hate and blaspheme him, and therefore foresees that they will do so, and not make God the author of those sins?" Nor is this less evident from the way that Alvarez and many other School-men take to salve this matter, viz. that "God foresees the evil men will do, *in decreto suo de non dando efficax auxilium ad vitandum peccatum; quoniam Deo deferente, aut non adjuvante peccatorem ne cadat, infallibiliter est peccaturus*, 'in his decree not to give them efficacious help to avoid sin; for God thus deserting them, or not thus assisting the sinner, that he may not fall, he infallibly will sin':" for either God did not foresee the sin of fallen angels, or of falling Adam; or else, according to this doctrine, must render their sin necessary by his decree not to afford them efficacious assistance to avoid it, and so their sin will be no sin at all, according to St. Austin's definition of it, that "it is the will to do that from which we have

freedom to abstain." (ii.) Prescience thus stated must be attended with a fatal necessity, though in this case it is not God's foreknowledge, but his decrees, which creates that necessity; all things, upon this supposition, being necessary, that is, such as cannot otherwise be, not because God foreknows them, but because by his immutable decrees he hath made them necessary, that is, he foreknows them because they are necessary, but doth not make them necessary by foreknowing them. Consider,

Secondly. That if there were any strength in this argument, it would prove that we should not deny the liberty supposed in all the arguments we have used against these decrees, but rather prescience itself; for if those two things were really inconsistent, and one of them must be denied, the introducing an absolute necessity of all our actions, which evidently destroys all religion and morality, would tend more of the two to the dishonour of God, than the denying him a fore-knowledge.

Thirdly. Observe that if these Decretalists may take sanctuary in the fore-knowledge God hath of things future, the Hobbists and the Fatalists may do the same. For as I cannot know how God's foreknowledge is consistent with the freedom of the will of man, so am I as little able to discern how it is consistent with any freedom in his actions, or how God can foreknow them whilst they are future, without foreknowing that there are such causes as certainly and necessarily shall and must produce them. And it is very worthy of their observation that the Hobbists having knowledge of christianity, found their doctrine of the necessity of all things, and the no freedom of the will to will, upon the ninth chapter to the Romans. Thus when Bishop Bramhall had objected against Hobbs, that from his doctrine of the necessity of all events, it follows that 'praise and reprehension, rewards and punishments are all vain and unjust, and that if God should openly forbid, and secretly necessitate the same action, punishing men for what they could not avoid, there would be no belief among them of heaven or hell;'^a Mr. Hobbs replies thus, 'I must borrow an answer from St. Paul, Rom. ix, 11, to the 18th verse: for there is laid down the very same objection in the case of Esau and Jacob, &c. for the same case is put by St. Paul; and the same objection in these words following, *thou wilt ask me*

^a P. 668, 669.

‘ then, *Why doth God complain, for who hath resisted his will?*’
 ‘ To this therefore the apostle answers, not by denying it was God’s
 ‘ will, or that the decree of God concerning Esau was not before
 ‘ he had sinned, or that Esau was not necessitated to do what he
 ‘ did; but thus, ‘ *who art thou, O man, that repliest against God?*
 ‘ *Shall the work say unto the workman, Why hast thou made me*
 ‘ *thus? Hath not the potter power over his clay, to make one ves-*
 ‘ *sel to honour, another to dishonour?*’ To say then that “ God
 ‘ can so order the world that a sin may be necessarily caused in a
 ‘ man,” I do not see how it is any dishonour to him; I hold no-
 ‘ thing in all this question between us, but what seems to me not
 ‘ obscurely, but most expressly said in this place by St. Paul.’
 It also deserves to be observed by them, that the Fatalists of old
 founded their doctrine upon the certainty of divine prescience
 and predictions, which, they said, “ could not be certain, *nisi*
omnia quæ fiunt, quæque futura sunt, ex omni aternitate definita
essent fataliter, ‘ if all things done, or to be done, had not been
 certainly determined from all eternity.’^b “ It was the fear of this,”
 saith Origen, “ which made the Greeks embrace this impious
 doctrine, that God did not foreknow things future and contin-
 gent, *οἰόμενοι κατηναγκάσθαι τὰ πράγματα, καὶ τὸ ἐφ’ ἡμῖν μηδα-*
μῶς σώζεσθαι, εἰ ὁ θεὸς προγινώσκει τὰ μέλλοντα, ‘ they supposing
 that if God foreknew things future, all things would be necessary,
 and so the liberty of man’s will could not be preserved;’ which,^c
 saith Origen, “ will not follow, because it must be owned, *ὃ τῆν*
πρόγνωσιν αἰτίαν τῶν γινωμένων, τὸ δὲ ἐσόμενον αἴτιον τῆ τοιῶν δὲ εἶναι
τῆν περὶ αὐτῆ πρόγνωσιν, ‘ not that God’s prescience is the cause of
 things future, but that their being future is the cause of God’s
 prescience that they will be.’ “ And this,” saith Le Blanc,
 “ is the truest resolution of this difficulty,—that prescience is not
 the cause that things are future, but their being future is the
 cause they are foreseen;” whence it must follow, that man’s pe-
 rishing by his own wilfulness, when he might not have done so,
 must be the cause that God foresees that he will do so; the
 reason is, because God’s foreknowledge neither makes nor
 changes its object, but sees it as it truly is, and so must see that
 action to be freely and contingently future, which indeed is
 so, and that necessarily to be future which is so. This is so

^b Cic. de Divin. l. 2, n. 14.

^c Apud Euseb. Præpar. Ev. l. 6, c. 11, p. 256; 287.

evident, that it is owned by Mr. Hobbs in these words, ‘that
 ‘ “the foreknowledge of God should be the cause of any thing,”
 ‘ cannot be truly said, for fore-knowledge is knowledge, and
 ‘ knowledge depends on the existence of the things known, and
 ‘ not they on it.’^d And therefore let it be observed,

Fourthly. That God’s prescience hath no influence at all upon our actions. This Mr. Baxter proves thus; the word *future* and *possible*, applied to things is *terminus diminuens*;^{*} for to say this is *futurum possibile*, is only to say “this may be;” and to say this is *futurum*, is only to say “it will be.” Now to say “a thing will be,” or “may be hereafter,” is to say that “now it is not in being;” that is, it is nothing; now nothing is no effect, and therefore can have no cause; therefore God is no cause of the eternal futurity, or possibility of things. But if this way of arguing seem too nice and subtle, I enquire farther,—should God by immediate revelation give me the knowledge of the event of any man’s state or actions, would my knowledge of them have any influence upon his actions? Surely none at all, and yet my knowledge, as far as it is thus communicated, would be as certain and infallible as is that of God’s. To illustrate this in some measure by the comparison of our own knowledge, we know certainly that some things are, and that some things will be, as that the sun will rise to-morrow; and when we thus know they are, or will be, they cannot but be; yet manifest it is that our knowledge doth not at all affect the things we thus know, to make them either more certain, or more future than they would be without it. Now foreknowledge in God is knowledge; as therefore knowledge has no influence on things that are, so neither has foreknowledge on things that shall be, and consequently the foreknowledge of any action that would be otherwise free, cannot alter or diminish that freedom: whereas God’s decree of election is powerful and active, and comprehends the preparation and exhibition of such means as shall unfrustrably produce the end; and his decree of reprobation is active, as far as action is required to render any man deficient, and therefore sinful of necessity, it being a decree of with-holding, from the objects of it, that grace which can alone enable them to do what God commands, or to avoid what God

^d Br. p. 665.

^{*} ‘Diminishing boundary or term,’ ETL.

forbids on the severest penalty. Now sin having no efficient, but only a deficient cause, it consisting only in not doing what is commanded, and not avoiding what is forbidden, that which renders it necessary for me to be thus deficient must lay me under a necessity of sinning.

COROLLARY. Hence (*Secondly,*) ariseth another signal difference betwixt God's prescience and his decrees,—that God's prescience renders no actions necessary, though it sees some are in their own natures so, since otherwise it would lay a necessity on his own actions, he fore-knowing both what he can and will do; and from all eternity fore-knowing what he did, and will do in time. For example, he fore-knew that he would create a world, angels, and men in time, that he would send his Son into the world to die for sinners, and many things of a like nature; but this did not make it necessary that he should create the world, angels, or men, or send his Son into the world, or do all this then only when he did so. And if his fore-knowledge lays no necessity upon himself to act, nor any way impairs the freedom of his own actions, why should it be conceived that it lays any necessity upon human actions, or impairs the freedom of them? Now if this prescience doth not impair the freedom of our actions any more than if God had no such prescience, and it be reasonable to give precepts, and tender exhortations and motives to men free to perform what is required; and what they are exhorted, and thus moved to, it must be reasonable thus to deal with men, notwithstanding God's fore-knowledge of their actions. But it is not so with respect to God's decrees, his decree of election comprehending not only the end, but the means to it, as to be wrought by his especial grace; and his unfrustrable operation, which I cannot resist, if I cannot have the will to resist it; and that I cannot have, if this operation determines my will to act in compliance with it, and where the sin consists in a defect, that is, the not doing what is required, and the not avoiding what is forbidden, the decree of withholding that grace without which that effect is necessary, is a decree that the sin shall be inevitable; and to the objects of it necessary.

Fifthly. God's knowledge reaches not only, τὰ μέλλοντα, to 'future contingencies;' but also, τὰ δύναντα, 'future possibilities,' viz. He knows that such things may be, though they never will be, that I might will and do what I neither do nor will, and ab-

stain from that I do not abstain from, and that I will this when I might will the contrary; since otherwise I could not but will and do what I will and do, and could not but abstain from what I do abstain, and so both my will and actions must be necessary, that being so, *quod non potest aliter se habere*, ‘which cannot be otherwise.’ Moreover he foresees not only what will be done, but also after what manner it will be done, that free actions will be done freely, and so this prescience rather must establish than take away the freedom of our actions; for if God foresees I might abstain from what he sees I will not abstain from, and that I might both will and do what he sees I will neither will nor do, (as he must, if he sees that I act freely,) then he sees that I may not perish, when he sees that I will perish, and he sees that I may be willing and obedient, and so may be saved, when he sees that I will not be saved; and then there must be place and equitable ground for all his admonitions, exhortations, and motives not to perish, but to turn and live; because they are only exhortations, commands, and motives to do, and to abstain from, that which he sees that I may freely do, or may abstain from, and therefore must have power so to do.

If you puzzle me with these enquiries, “How then can God certainly know I will do what he sees I may not do?” or, “How can that be certainly known which neither in itself, nor in its causes, hath any certain being; but may as well not be, or not be done, as be, or be done?” this brings me, *lastly*, to observe,

II. That this argument only opposeth a great difficulty arising from a mode of knowledge in God, of which we have no idea, against all the plain declarations of his revealed will, produced in great abundance, against the imaginary decrees which men have imposed upon God without just ground. The judicious Le Blanc,^f after he had considered all the ways the wit of man had invented to rid their hands of this difficulty, *how God’s prescience could consist with man’s liberty*, breaks forth into this ingenuous confession, ‘Such darkness every where surrounds us, such inextricable difficulties occur in this matter, that I think it safest for us here to confess our ignorance, and seriously to profess *‘the knowledge of this is too excellent for me, and so sublime, that I cannot at-*

^f De Con. Libert. hum. cum præscient. n. 43.

‘*tain unto it;*’ and to believe this is one of those mysteries of ‘*which the Son of Syrach saith, ‘seek not after that which is too hard for thee; and search not into the things that are above thy strength.’*” “Nor is it any shame,” saith Mr. Thorndyke, “for a christian or a divine to profess ignorance, when the question is how a matter of faith is or may be true; but that in a matter so subject to common understanding, as the determination of the will by its own choice, experience justifying that which faith makes the ground of christianity, and reason of morality, I should make the whole tenor of the bible, the tender of christianity, the whole treaty of God with man concerning his happiness, delusory and abusive, as conditioning for that which no man can stir hand or foot for, till being determined he cannot do otherwise, because I cannot answer an objection arising from God’s prescience of future contingencies, of which I can have no idea, seems to me very reasonable.”^h I answer therefore to these objections, that God’s foreknowledge is well consistent with the freedom of man’s will, and the contingency of events, since otherwise all men’s actions must be necessary, though I know not how it is so, and it is therefore well consistent with his power to do the contrary, and therefore his foreknowledge that what may not be, certainly will be, though I know not how it is so, and therefore is consistent with his commands and prohibitions, exhortations, admonitions and motives to engage me to do what I will not do, and with all his commands and admonitions to abstain from that from which I will not abstain, because the same scripture which ascribes this foreknowledge to God, doth also assert my liberty to do or to refuse these things, charges men’s sins and final ruin on themselves, and ‘*sets before them life and death, blessing and cursing,*’ requiring them to chuse the one, and avoid the other, though I know not how both these things are consistent; the reason of my inability to discern this consistency being only my ignorance of what this foreknowledge of God is, or how he doth foreknow future contingencies; thus also is it in other incommunicable attributes of God; v. g. I know that the first Being must be, *ens a se*, ‘from itself,’ though I have no idea of being from himself; and also must be from eternity, though I have no idea either of an eternity *nunc*

^g Ecclesiasticus iii, 21.

^h Epil. part. 2, p. 200.

stans,* or an eternal succession. I know that God is Omnipresent, *totus ubique*,† though I know not what Omnipresence is, whether a multiplication or an extension of himself to every *ubi*,‡ or how a spirit can be extended; the reason is, because I am ignorant what this Omnipresence is, or how God is or can be so; as therefore in this case I am satisfied with my experience or knowledge of his actions in all places that he is so, so ought I to be satisfied with the like experience that notwithstanding God's foreknowledge I have as much free-will as if there were no such foreknowledge, though I am not able to reconcile my free-will to God's foreknowledge.

OBJECTION. "But then why may it not be said in like manner that all that you have offered against these decrees from the consideration of divine justice, holiness, truth and sincerity, goodness and mercy, may be consistent with those attributes though we know not how they can be so?"

ANSWER. To this I answer, (*First*,) that this is one signal difference between these two cases,—that the divine prescience hath been always owned by all christians from the beginning, as a necessary part of Christianity, till Socinus began to question it; whereas these absolute decrees were never known, much less asserted by any christian, till St. Austin's time. Now against a controverted point we have a right to argue from the evident absurdities which follow from it, and the contradiction that it bears to the communicable attributes of God; whereas against a necessary article of faith, viz. *the resurrection of our bodies*, we can plead no difficulties of apprehending how they can be raised; and against an avowed attribute of God, viz. *his Eternity or Omnipresence*, we can raise no objections from the *το πῶς*, or an enquiry, 'how this can be?' Because *incomprehensibility* is owned as an attribute of the divine nature; that is, we own his nature and incommunicable attributes cannot be comprehended by a finite mind, and so our arguments about the manner of their existence, or their actions, only do betray our ignorance. But then,

Secondly. As to God's communicable attributes, the matter is far otherwise, for we are called to imitate and to resemble him in them; 'to be holy as God is holy, righteous as he is righteous,

* 'Now existing.' ED.

† 'Altogether every where.' ED.

‡ 'Place.' ED.

kind and merciful as our Heavenly Father is merciful; his truth and faithfulness, and his sincerity, is the ground of our faith, hope, and dependence on him, and our expectation of good things from him, and therefore we must have just and true ideas of these things, though these ideas in this state of imperfection will be still imperfect. This I find very well illustrated and confirmed by Dr. Sherlock, in his answer to that enquiry how far the unsearchableness of God's judgments is an answer to the difficulties of providence, v. g. "there is great reason for this enquiry that no man may presume to attribute any thing to God which can never be reconciled with the common notions of good and evil, just and unjust, upon this pretence, that *the ways and judgments (add, and the attributes) of God are unsearchable and unaccountable, and that we ought not to demand a reason of them.*

"That there are such men in the world is sufficiently known to those who understand any thing of some modern controversies in religion; I need instance at present only in the doctrine of eternal and absolute election and reprobation, on which a great many other such like unaccountable doctrines depend, that God created the far greatest part of mankind on purpose to make them miserable, or at least, as others state it, that he ordered and decreed, or, which is the same thing, effectually permitted the sin and fall of Adam, that he might glorify his mercy in chusing some few out of the corrupt mass of mankind to be vessels of glory, and to glorify his justice in the eternal punishment of all others, even of reprobated infants, as involved in the guilt of Adam's sin. Now thus far I confess that they are in the right that these are very unaccountable doctrines; for to make creatures on purpose to make them miserable, is contrary to all the notions we have of just and good.

"But though we readily confess that the ways and judgments of God are unsearchable, yet men must not think, upon this pretence, to attribute what they please to God, how absurd, unreasonable, and unjust soever it be, and then shelter themselves against all objections by resolving all into the unaccountable will and pleasure of God; for God hath no such unaccountable will as this is, to do such things as manifestly contradict all the notions which mankind have of good and evil.

"God himself declares his abhorrence of all such imputations as these, as infinitely injurious to him, and appeals to the com.

mon notions of what is just and equal, to justify the general rules of his providence against the imputations of injustice in punishing the Jews for their Fathers' sins, by saying first, *'all souls are mine, as well the soul of the son as of the father;'*[†] and therefore he could not be thus partial to one of them above the other, and by declaring that the general rule of his providence was this, *'to do good to them that were good, and who continued in his goodness,'* and to punish them who continued in their wickedness without repentance, or turned away from their righteousness; and then leaving it to their own judgments, *'whether his ways were not equal;'*[‡] and elsewhere declaring what he had done to his vineyard to make her fruitful, and yet how unfruitful she remained after all his care, and leaving all men to *'judge betwixt him and his vineyard.'*

“Thus it is too certain, that much the greatest part of the world will be finally miserable; and this is very reconcileable to the justice of God, if the greatest part of mankind will be wicked, and so deserve to be miserable: but to say that ‘God created the greatest part of mankind, or that he created any one man under the absolute decree of reprobation, that he made them to make them miserable,’ can never be justified by the unaccountable will and pleasure of God; because it is notoriously unjust, if mankind are competent judges of what is just and unjust.”

In fine, this is all the Atheist endeavours to prove, and all that he desires should be granted him, to confute the belief of a God and a providence. That God does such things as we can give no satisfactory account of, does him little service, because the unsearchable wisdom of God answers such difficulties; but if we will grant him that God acts by such rules as all men, who judge impartially, according to the natural notions and the natural sense which we have of justice, must think unjust, this is what he would have; and he will give us leave to talk as much as we please of the arbitrary and sovereign will of God, but he will believe no such God. For this is not the natural notion of a God,—to be arbitrary, but to be just and good; and to say that “God is good and just,” but not good and just as men understand goodness and justice, is to say that “we have no natural notion of the goodness and justice of God,” and then we can have no natural

[†] Ezekiel xviii, and Chapter xxxiii.

[‡] Isaiah v, 5.

notion of a God. For if the natural notion of a God be this,—that he is just and good, it seems hard to think that we should have the natural notion of a good and just God, without having any natural notion what his goodness and justice is; but instead of that, should have such natural notions of justice and goodness, as (if we believe what some men say of God,) can never be reconciled with his being just and good. Add to this those excellent words of Dr. Tillotson; ‘ However we may be at a loss in our conceptions of God’s infinite knowledge and power, yet goodness, and justice, and truth, are notions easy and familiar, and if we could not understand these, the whole bible would be insignificant to us. For all revelation from God supposeth us to know what is meant by goodness, justice, and truth; and therefore no man can entertain any notion of God which plainly contradicts these, and it is foolish for any man to pretend that he cannot know what goodness, and justice, and truth in God are. For if we do not know this, it is all one to us whether God be good or not, nor could we imitate his goodness; for he that imitates, endeavours to make himself like something that he knows, and must of necessity have some idea of that to which he aims to be like. So that if we had no certain and settled notion of the goodness, justice, and truth of God, He would be altogether an unintelligible being; and religion, which consists in the imitation of him, would be utterly impossible.’^a And those words of his in his sermon on God’s foreknowledge, ‘ If God’s exhortations were not serious, he could not foresee the final impenitency of men; for to foresee men’s final impenitency is to foresee their wilful contempt of God’s warnings and exhortations, and their rejection of his grace; men’s wilful contempt of his warnings and exhortations cannot be foreseen, unless God foresee that his exhortations are serious, and in good earnest.’^b

III. OBJECTION SECOND. It is objected, that “by our doctrine we weaken the providence of God; for if he doth not order and effectually move the wills of men, he cannot compass the designs of providence.”

ANSWER FIRST. This objection will receive the shorter answer, because it falls into this great absurdity,—that it makes God

^a Sermon of the Perfection of God, p. 15, 16,

^b Page 161.

as much the author of all the evil as of all the good that is done in the world. For as his providences have for their object evil actions as well as good, so is it evident that it is as necessary for accomplishing the ends of it, that he should as effectually move the wills of men to the one as to the other; as in the case of Joseph's brethren, Judas betraying his master, and the Jews clamouring for his death. So that we may answer this argument with that of the Son of Syrach, '*say not thou He hath caused me to err, for he hath no need of the sinful man.*'^c But,

ANSWER SECOND. To answer more particularly, these things seem only necessary to accomplish all the designs of providence,

First. That God hath a perfect prospect of the events of all actions, as well of those which proceed from the free-will of man, as of those which issue from natural causes. For if he can discern as well what moral causes will produce such effects in free agents, as what physical causes will produce their effects in natural agents, it must be evidently the same thing, as to all the interests and concerns of providence, to compass his designs by moral, as by physical and natural causes.

Secondly. That he hath infinite wisdom to direct those actions to their proper ends, and cause the good and evil done by men to serve the ends of his providence, both towards themselves and others.

Thirdly. That he hath power to restrain them from the execution of those purposes which would thwart the designs of his providence, either by disabling them from bringing their designs to pass, or by withdrawing the subject or the object of them, or by such dispensations as he sees will turn the bents of their hearts another way, or by infinite other means his wisdom can discern and order, and his power can effect without laying any force or necessity upon the wills of men. For if there be no action of any free agent which he cannot thus restrain, when it thwarts the designs of his providence, if he permits no action which he cannot order so as to accomplish the designs of it, it is evident that nothing is or can be further requisite to the due ordering of all events according to his providence. But,

IV. ANSWER THIRD. Though this argument from providence doth not concern us in the least, yet it seems evidently to over-

throw the contrary doctrine; for what answer can they return to these enquiries?

First. Is it consistent with the justice of providence to wrap up all men's fate in that of Adam's?^d So that had he continued in his righteousness all the time before he begat a son, none of his posterity should have been the better for it, provided that he had sinned the day before; but if he once transgressed, all his posterity, to the end of the world, should be on that account the objects of God's wrath, and obnoxious to eternal damnation: Yea, that if he sinned but once, all men, even the new-born infant, should be liable to all these miseries on that account; but though he repented of that sin a thousand times, not one of them should be the better for it, though the same arbitrary will and decree of God could have made the penitent will of Adam, before he had begotten any children, the penitent will of us all, as well as the sinful will of Adam the sinful will of us all; and could have made him to sustain the person of all mankind when he repented, as well as when he sinned in eating the forbidden fruit; or could have made a compact with him, that if he repented of that sin, all men should be restored to his grace and favour by it, as well as he is supposed to have made a compact, that if he sinned, all his posterity should become the objects of his wrath upon that sole account.

Secondly. Is it not one great part of providence to give men laws for the direction of their actions, prescribing what he would have men do and leave undone; and that under a promise of reward to the obedient, and a declaration that he will certainly and severely punish the wilful and impenitent offender? Now do not they destroy both the justice and wisdom of this providence, who introduce God after the fall, ("which," say they, "had made man utterly unable to do any thing truly good, or avoid doing evil in any thing he doth") giving laws positive and negative for the direction of his actions, with threats of the severest and most lasting punishments if he neglect to do what is required, and to avoid what is forbidden; and that after his own decree, *de non dando efficax auxilium ad vitandum peccatum*, 'of withholding from him the assistance absolutely necessary to his doing the good required, or avoiding the forbidden evil.' From whence it necessarily follows, that he to

^d Genesis v, 3.

whom those precepts were given was then incapable, without that assistance, of doing the good required, or avoiding the forbidden evil, especially if we consider that, in the nature of the thing, and in the opinion of philosophers, *causa deficiens in rebus necessariis, ad causam per se efficientem reducenda est*, 'in things necessary, the deficient cause must be reduced to the efficient;' and in this case the reason of it is evident, because the not doing what is required, or not avoiding what is forbidden, being a defect, must follow from the position of the necessary cause of that deficiency.

Thirdly. Is it consistent with the justice of providence, to aggravate the sins of reprobates on this account,—that they '*knew their Lord's will and did it not*,' provided that knowledge rendered them no more able to do it than the most ignorant of men, or to make it such an aggravation of the sins of christians,—that they are committed against greater light, and stronger motives to perform their duty than ever was vouchsafed to the Heathen world; if, after this, they of them who lie under God's decree of preterition, are as unable to perform that duty as the worst of Heathens?

Fourthly. Is it suitable to the holiness of providence, or to that purity which is essential to the divine nature, and makes it necessary for him to bear a strong affection to, and to be highly pleased with, the holiness of all that are thus like unto him, and to reward them for it with the enjoyment of himself, notwithstanding, absolutely to decree not to afford, to the greatest part of them to whom he hath given his holy commandments, that aid which he sees absolutely necessary to enable them to be holy, and without which they lie under an absolute incapacity of being holy?

Fifthly. Is it reconcilable to the goodness of providence, or to the kindness, philanthropy, the mercy and compassion of our God in all his providential dispensations, so highly magnified in holy scripture, to deal with men according to the tenor of these doctrines? Can we conceive he is '*a God full of compassion, and one whose tender mercies are over all his works*,' who seeing many millions of millions of precious souls which he had made and sent into the world, equally wanting, and equally capable of his favour, (he having also equal reason to afford it as well to them as any other souls which were his offspring) passed an absolute decree to vouchsafe his favour only to a little remnant of them, leaving the far greatest part of them under a sad necessity of per-

ishing everlastingly for the offence of their fore-father Adam, committed long before they had a being; so that they must be as sure to be damned eternally, as they are to be born in time? Can he be truly styled '*a God of great goodness, or of rich mercy*' to such men? Or a true lover of their souls? Can he uprightly declare he used all his dispensations to recover them from a perishing condition, '*because he had compassion on them;*' and yet have determined from all eternity to leave them in a remediless condition? Can he ask in good earnest, '*what he could have done more to make them fruitful*' in good works than he had done? Can he declare he was '*long-suffering towards them, because he was not willing they should perish* but rather by his patience should be led unto repentance;' and yet, from all eternity, decree to leave them under a sad necessity of perishing, and to deny them that assistance which could alone produce within them repentance unto life?

Sixthly. Doth it comport with the wisdom of providence, to promise or to threaten upon impossible conditions; an impossible condition being, in true construction, none at all? How much less will it comport with the same wisdom to tender the covenant of grace to all mankind to whom the gospel is vouchsafed upon conditions which the most part of them, before that covenant was established, were utterly unable to perform, and who by God's decree of preterition were inevitably left under that disability; or to declare he exercised such providences towards his people to try them, thus disabled, whether they would obey his commandments or not, that is, whether they would exercise those faculties which, under that disability, they could not exercise? Is it agreeable to this wisdom to be still soliciting, entreating, chastising, punishing, alluring, and sending prophets, preachers, messengers to engage them to do what his decree, *de non dando auxilium necessarium*, 'of not affording the aid necessary for those ends,' had rendered it impossible for them to do? Surely these dealings must import this, - that God saw they might have done what, through want of due attention, consideration, and reflection, they did not; or that he passionately desired that might be done, which only was not done because he did not unfrustrably work the change in them? That is, he seriously desired and wished they had been of the number of his elect, when he himself, by an absolute decree from all eternity, had excluded them out of that number.

Seventhly. On the other hand, can it accord with the same wisdom of providence to threaten the severest judgments to them, if *'they repented not, or if they turned away from their righteousness, or fell away from their own stedfastness, or endured not to the end,'* whom he had absolutely decreed to give repentance to, and *'by continuance in well-doing'* to preserve them to a blessed immortality; or to caution them not to do so, or to enquire whether temptations had not prevailed upon them so to do, or bid them fear lest they should do so?

Eighthly. Is it suitable to the sincerity of his providential dispensations, of which his dealings with men, by his revealed will towards them, make so great a part, to move them to the performance of their duty only by motives which he knows cannot work upon them without that farther aid he from eternity hath determined to deny them; or to *'call heaven and earth to witness that he had set before them life and death, good and evil, and therefore required them to chuse the good, and refuse the evil,'* when he beforehand knew it was impossible for most of them to do either; and after all to enquire *'what could he have done more to render them obedient, to ask why they would not be made clean? Or when this would once be? And to wonder at their unbelief, and upbraid them for their impenitence,'* and to complain that, after such engaging dispensations, and such judgments, *'they repented not, they turned not to him,'* or only did this feignedly? Or lastly, to send his messengers to them with this encouragement, *'it may be they will consider, it may be they will return from their evil ways, it may be they will reverence my Son?'* For what room can there be for any of these suppositions, where the effect depends on God's own immediate acting upon the heart, and not upon any hearing, or consideration of man without it; or upon any dispositions in them, or any means that they can use to move him to enable them to do it?

Or, *lastly,* Is it suitable to the same wisdom and sincerity to move such persons by promises to repent and believe, and to require them, *'having such promises to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God?'* For seeing to call men to faith and repentance, is to call men *'to believe to the salvation of their souls,'* and to repent that they may live and not die; and therefore to be seriously willing they should

be saved and not perish, and to pass antecedently a decree of preterition on the same men, is seriously to will they shall not be saved, but shall inevitably perish; what wit of man can shew how God can be serious in calling such men to faith and repentance, much less in his concern that they might do so, or in his trouble that they have not done so, and yet be serious and in good earnest in his antecedent decree to deny them that aid without which they never can believe or repent?

CHAP. II.

THE third and last objection respecting the state of Heathens, to whom the gospel either never hath been tendered, or who for many ages have been deprived of the knowledge of it, being of more importance, requires a more large consideration, and therefore in this chapter I shall offer what I can produce in the discussion of it.

OBJECTION. The difficulty, as it is abstracted from this controversy, is propounded by Dr. Sherlock, thus:^e “that since all men have immortal souls, and must be happy or miserable forever, God should for so many ages suffer the whole world, excepting the Jews, to live in ignorance, and in Pagan idolatry and superstition; that Christ came so late into the world to reveal the true God, and to publish the gospel to them; and that so great a part of the world still are Pagans and Mahometans, and that so little a part of the christian world retain the true faith and worship of Christ. This is ten thousand times a greater difficulty than any present evils and calamities; because the consequences of it reach to eternity.”

ANSWER. “But then the whole difficulty is no more than this,—that we know not what the condition of such men is in the other world, who lived in invincible ignorance of the true God, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ in this. This we confess we do not know; but believe so well of God, that we are verily persuaded, could we see what their state will be in another world, we should

^e Disc. of Providence, p. 120, &c.

see no reason to quarrel with God only because we know not how he deals with the ignorant Heathens in the other world. If we knew how God dealt with these men, and knew that he dealt hardly by them, as far as we could judge, this would be a difficulty: but what difficulty is there in knowing nothing of the matter? For if we know nothing of it, we can judge nothing of it. Now seeing we cannot look into the world to come, and cannot otherwise know any thing of the future state of ignorant Heathens but by revelation, that scripture which containeth all our revelations saying nothing of it; it follows that we can judge nothing of it certainly.

“ Some men, indeed, but without any authority from scripture, confidently affirm that ignorant Heathens shall suffer the same condemnation which Christ has threatened against wilful infidels and wicked christians; and then it may well be thought a great difficulty that God should as severely punish men for not knowing Christ, when he was never preached to them, and they had no other possible way of knowing him, as he will punish those who have had the gospel of Christ preached to them, but refused to believe in him, or have professed the faith of Christ, but lived very wickedly. But this is a difficulty of their own making, and it would be much more safe for themselves, and much more honourable for God; to confess their own ignorance of such matters, as they have no possible way to know, and to refer all such unknown cases to the wisdom, justice, and goodness of God, than to pretend to know what they cannot know, and thence to raise such objections as they cannot answer.”

I. As this objection respects this controversy, it run thus: “ that God seems to have dealt as severely with the Heathens, to whom the knowledge of his will and gospel hath never been revealed, as we can imagine him to have dealt with men according to the doctrine of absolute election and reprobation, and of special grace vouchsafed only to some few christians, whilst others are left to the defective rule of their own wills without sufficient grace to enable them to turn to God and to do works meet for repentance.” For,

First. It may be said, that we are “ forced to grant that the grace of conveying the gospel to any persons, and calling them to be his church and people, when other nations were left in darkness,

was of free grace without consideration of any worth in them to whom the gospel was vouchsafed above those who never had the knowledge of it. Now the vouchsafement of the means of grace being from such a free election, without consideration of any worth in the persons, it seems reasonable also to believe that the decree itself concerning the end, viz. the salvation tendered to us by the gospel, is also free; and that it is not always applied to them whom God foresaw would use it better than others, appears from these words of Christ, that *'if the mighty works which were done in Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented.'*^a

“Moreover seeing it is in fact certain, that the greatest part of mankind have been always left destitute of these means of grace which were vouchsafed to the Jew first, and after to the Gentile, we need not wonder why that God who freely communicates the knowledge of himself by the gospel to some nations, denying it to others, should hold the same methods with individuals that he doth with whole bodies. For the rejecting of whole nations by the lump for so many ages, is much more unaccountable than the selecting of a few to be infallibly conducted to salvation, and leaving others in that state of disability in which they shall inevitably fail of it.”—Now to this I reply,

ANSWER FIRST. That this objection doth by no means answer the chief arguments produced against these decrees; it saith, indeed, “that God may as well make such decrees, as leave the greatest part of mankind void of the means of grace;” which will be afterwards considered. But what is this to our chief arguments which are all taken from the inconsistency of these decrees with the truth and sincerity of his following declarations made in scripture, viz. with his commands to all to whom the gospel is vouchsafed, to repent, with his exhortations and desires that they would do so, with his threats of ruin to them if they do not, with the sending his messengers to persuade them to it, with his declarations that he used great patience and long-suffering to lead them to repentance, and did this out of a sincere desire that they might not perish, with all the promises, motives, and encouragements he hath spread before them to induce them to it, with his

^a Matthew xi, 21, 24.

enquiries why they would die, with his admiration at their continuance, after all his dealings, in their impenitence, and his upbraiding them for not repenting, with his questions *'when they would be made clean,'* with his declarations that *'he would have cleansed them, and they would not be cleansed; he would have gathered them and they would not be gathered,'* with his appeal to them *'what he could have done more'* than he had done to effect it, and innumerable things of the like nature, dispersed through the whole body of the scripture? When those of the contrary persuasion can shew the like inconsistency betwixt God's declarations touching the Heathen world and his dealings with them, then, and then only, will they shew this dispensation is obnoxious to the same difficulties which we object against these absolute decrees.

Secondly. I confess there is, and ought to be allowed in reason, a greater depth in the divine providence, and in his dispensations towards the sons of men, than we can fathom by our shallow reason; for *'he doth great things and unsearchable,'*^b and such whose footsteps we can never trace, *'his judgments are a great abyss, his greatness is unsearchable, his understanding is infinite.'* We therefore may put the question of Zophar the Naamathite to the pretended wise and prudent, and most sagacious enquirers into wisdom, *'Canst thou by wisdom find out GOD? Canst thou search out THE ALMIGHTY to perfection?'*^c Now from this very topick the apostle doth conclude that we are, in such cases as these are, even that of the rejection of his once beloved people, after all that we can say to vindicate his justice, and his goodness, to end in this divine apostrophe, *'Oh the depth of the wisdom, and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past finding out!'*^d But then as it would be in us an intolerable piece of insolence to say, against the plainest declarations of the scripture, that "God did not in wisdom make the world," because we are not able to discern the wisdom of all things framed in it; so must it be an equal insolence in us to say, "God doth not act in the preserving it, and in the ordering of affairs in it according to the measures of true goodness," because we who are unacquainted with the inward dispositions of men,

^b Psalm xxxvi, 6. cxlv, 3. cxvlii, 5.

^c Job xi, 7, 8, 9.

^d Romans xi, 33.

and see not the end, and cannot dive into the reasons of his dispensations, cannot discern the footsteps of that goodness in all his various transactions towards men. Now hence it clearly follows,

II. That what God hath plainly and frequently revealed concerning his goodness, ought firmly to be owned and believed, although we are not able to discern how it comports with those phenomena we have observed in the world: because from that of which we have no clear or comprehensive notion, we can make no clear and certain inferences, and so can have no certain evidence that such and such things are not well consistent with the love and goodness of God to mankind. But of things clearly and frequently taught concerning the divine philanthropy, we have a full and clear idea, which therefore we in reason stand obliged to own, though we are still unable to discern how the transactions of God in the world comport with our imperfect knowledge and weak notions of immense and boundless goodness, and perhaps false conceptions how it ought to act, “we need not,” saith an excellent writer, “trouble ourselves with that question which is made concerning the conversion of all, or not of all men, *si ea quæ clara sunt non de his quæ occulta sunt obscuremus,*” “if we do not obscure those things which are clear by those which are secret;” “that is,” saith Dr. Barrow, “if we do not obscure so clear a truth as that God is the Saviour of all men, by debating how his grace is imparted to them, and by labouring overmuch in reconciling of it with other dispensations of providence.”

Seeing then God hath so often and so clearly taught us that ‘*he is good to all, and that his tender mercies are over all his works, and that he careth for all alike, and the whole earth is full of his goodness; that he is abundant in goodness, and kind even to the unthankful and the wicked, that he would not the death of him that dies, but rather that he should be converted and live;*’ and hath confirmed this saying with an oath: seeing it is expressly said, ‘*that he is the Saviour of all men, though especially of them that believe; and that he would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*’ I say, seeing the revelations of this nature are clear and copious, and are to them who do believe

the scripture clear and certain demonstrations of divine goodness to the whole race of mankind, and all the instances propounded to the contrary in the objection depend upon our apprehensions of what this goodness would be apt in our conceits to do, in which we may be subject to great misapprehensions and mistakes; have we not reason to believe these clear and copious revelations, notwithstanding those little scruples which, from our fond ideas and imperfect notions of divine goodness, we do make against them? Now to apply these things to our subject,

First. We know from scripture how dreadful for quality, how endless for duration, will be the punishment of every christian who fails of the salvation tendered; and that as death leaves them, judgment will find them. But we know so little of the future state of heathens, from that scripture which can alone acquaint us with his dealings with them, that we are uncertain both as to the measure and the duration of their punishments. Yea, we have no assurance that providence may not put them into a better state, before their final doom, who have wanted any opportunity here to improve themselves better. St. Paul informs the Athenians that '*God overlooked the times of heathen ignorance, but now, by the promulgation of the gospel, he commands all men every where to repent, because he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness; and of this, πῶς παρέσχεν, HE GAVE THEM A PROOF by raising our Lord Jesus from the dead,*'^z—by which words he seems to intimate, that where there hath never been any call by prophet or apostle to repentance, or any assurance of a future judgment, there is like reason for his overlooking still those times of ignorance; for, *parium par ratio est.**

Secondly. We know that God hath made a tender of the covenant of grace upon conditions of faith and repentance to all that live under the gospel dispensation; and that these decrees of absolute reprobation, and of denying the help necessary to the performing these conditions, are inconsistent with that tender; whereas we know of no such tender made to the Heathen world, but rather that they are still '*strangers to the covenant of promise.*' Ephesians ii, 12.

Thirdly. We know not any promises God hath made to them, nor what are the conditions he requires in order to his acceptance

^z Acts xvii, 30, 31.

* 'The reason is similar in regard to things which are similar.' ED.

of them through Christ Jesus; but we know that according to these decrees God tenders his promises to the reprobate part of mankind only upon impossible conditions, and after he had passed upon them an act of preterition, and so had left them infallibly to fail of ever obtaining the blessings promised.

Fourthly. We know from scripture that the Heathens who never heard of Christ, and never had Christ preached to them, are not bound to believe in him; for '*how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard, or how shall they hear without a preacher?*' saith St. Paul, Rom. x, 14. But we know from the same scripture, that '*this is the command of God to all that have heard of Christ, that they believe in the Son of God;*'^a and yet we know, according to the doctrine of our adversaries, that he died not for them, and that they cannot, without that aid God hath decreed to withhold from them, believe unto salvation, and therefore must be damned for that unbelief, they, from the hour of their birth to the close of their days, were never able to prevent.

Fifthly. We know that God sent his prophets and messengers, apostles and evangelists, to move the Jews unto repentance, and those Gentiles to whom the gospel was offered, to embrace it; and that under both these dispensations he established an order of men to call all men indifferently to repentance, and to '*walk worthy of that vocation to which they were called;*' and we know this to be inconsistent with those decrees which others do contend for, unless God can seriously call them to repent and believe, whom he hath left under an impossibility of doing so. But we know not that any thing of this was done towards those Heathens to whom the gospel never hath been preached, nor ever any messenger or prophet sent, and so can make no like objections against his dealings with them. And thus I might dismiss this subject; but I farther add,

III. ANSWER SECOND. This objection supposeth it the same thing to be without a gospel-revelation, and to be without any means of grace at all; to be without those means the gospel tenders to the christian and the law tenders to the Jew, to do what is well-pleasing to God and is rewardable by his goodness, and to be without any means at all to do so; which supposition seems

^a Johu vi, 29.

plainly contrary to the declarations of the holy scripture touching the Heathen world, and contrary to the express declarations of the ancient Fathers, and also to be of dangerous consequence. And,

ARGUMENT FIRST. This supposition seems plainly contrary to many declarations made in scripture concerning the condition of the Heathen world; for as God plainly saith even in respect to their justification, that '*He is the God not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles,* (Rom. iii, 29,) and that '*He is the same Lord who is rich unto all that call upon him;*' (Rom. x, 12;) so has he also by St. Peter taught, that '*He is no respecter of persons, but that in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him.*' Acts x, 34, 35. Whence it appears,

First. That some of all nations owning the true God, as did Cornelius and his friends who gave occasion for these words, not only might, but actually did, '*fear God and work righteousness;*' for otherwise they very ill deserved the titles given to the *proselytes of the gate* belonging to all nations, (Acts ii, 10,) that they were '*pious and devout men, and such as feared God,*' as hath been shewed, note on Acts x, 2. Nor could St. Peter perceive that '*God was no respecter of persons*' on the account of a thing that never did or could happen; and though it be commonly said, that "there is no respect of persons *in gratuitis*, 'in thing freely given';" yet is that only true where no duty is required, and no service is demanded in order to that gift. Where therefore God requires under penalty that Heathens should do him such and such service, if he gives the grace necessary to the performance of that service to others in like circumstances, and not to them,—there he is a respecter of persons; and where he makes a promise of acceptance, or gives just reason to expect it, as he must do where he requires duty, since there can be no motive to perform that duty which will not be accepted, there the acceptance of one before another standing upon equal terms with him, is AN ACCEPTING OF PERSONS. Nor could St. Peter otherwise have proved from the example of Cornelius's alms accepted by God, that he was no respecter of persons, had not God some way obliged himself without distinction of persons or nations, to accept every one that '*worketh righteousness.*' It therefore is a

manifest absurdity to say that "God requires the same moral duty from Christians, Jews, and Heathens upon condition of reward, or under penalty, and yet is no respecter of persons," if under equal circumstances he affords grace sufficient to obtain that reward, and to avoid that penalty to one, and will not do it to another, since this most plainly is in matters of reward and punishment to have respect to one above another, without regard to the worthiness of the one, or the unworthiness of the other.

Secondly. Hence it appears that God accepts men not on the account of their descent or circumcision, or of his own decrees, but only because they '*fear God and work righteousness.*' Now the inference from this text is this,

COROLLARY. That those Heathens who have at any time attained to the knowledge of the true God, may in that state perform those righteous actions which shall be acceptable in his sight.

ARGUMENT SECOND. This may be gathered from these words of St. Paul, '*God who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways, nevertheless left not himself without a witness in that he did them good, and gave them rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, &c.*' Acts xiv, 16, 17. Where observe,

First. That God did not so far suffer them to walk in their own ways, as to allow of their manners, or to leave them without sufficient means to convince them of the error of their ways, or their idolatrous worship; for this he had done so effectually as to leave them '*without excuse, in that they did not worship him as God, nor were thankful*' for his benefits. Rom. i, 20, 21. But he so far permitted this, as that he sent them no prophet to instruct them better, and gave them no positive revelation of his will, no written instructions of that way in which he would be worshipped, as he had done unto the Jews.

Secondly. From verse the 17th it appears, (i.) that the giving rain in its season, and fruitful seasons of the year, is even to the Heathens a testimony of the divine providence. For this rain coming from the clouds of heaven, and those fruitful seasons depending so necessarily on the sun and moon, and the celestial influences, and being so constantly produced by them, demonstrate that they must derive them from, and owe them to, Him whose power and wisdom made the heaven and earth, and therefore that they

ought to worship, and be thankful to him for them. (ii.) These being good things and such as *'filled their hearts with food and gladness,'* and being conferred freely and constantly on them who daily provoked him by their idolatries and ingratitude, were also a clear testimony of his goodness to them, and therefore an assurance that if they, knowing him by these means to be God, would turn from their dumb idols, and worship him as God, they might find grace and favour in his eyes, who was so good to them even whilst they did continue to provoke him. Now the knowledge of that God who made heaven and earth as the only true God who is to be worshipped, and whose providence affords us all the blessings we enjoy, and the belief that he is well inclined to shew mercy to all that thus turn to him, and to reward all that thus fear him and are thankful to him, seems to be all that God expected from the Gentiles, as may be gathered from Romans i, 20, 21.

ARGUMENT THIRD. From those words of the same apostle, *'God that made the world and all things in it,—made all nations of one blood, and hath determined the times before appointed, (that is, the fixed seasons of the year,) and the bounds of their habitations, that they might seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him.'* Acts xvii, 24, 26, 27. Where we learn,

First. That God made the world with this design,—that men by contemplation of the power, wisdom, and goodness, visible in the creation of it, might *seek* after the author of it, and seeking *find* him; and therefore must have made it so as that it doth afford sufficient evidence that it was framed by his power and wisdom.

Secondly. That *'to seek after God'* in the scripture-phrase is so to *seek* him out that we may give him that worship which is due to him; as when the apostle saith, *'he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.'* Heb. xi, 6. *To find him,* is to obtain his grace and favour, or to find him good and propitious to them that seek him. For to what other end should men so solicitously seek after him, but to obtain his grace and favour? Or why should they desire to find him, but to obtain some benefit from him thus found? Is it not upon this account that all men come unto him, and do him service? And would any one do it if they expected no advantage by it? And in this sense God saith, *'if from*

thence thou shalt seek the Lord, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart, (Deut. iv, 29,) and if you seek him he will be found of you.' 2 Chron. xv, 2.

Thirdly. Observe that sinners cannot hope thus to seek or find God, unless they can expect to find him merciful in the pardon of those sins they confess and forsake. And that this hath been a principle embraced by all nations appears from the propitiatory sacrifices which did so generally obtain among them even from the beginning; and therefore all this must depend on this foundation, that God is the Maker of heaven and earth, and of all that therein is; and so it evidently doth. For,

1. That which made all things, must be itself unmade and so must be eternal; it also must have power over all things, and so must be almighty.

2. That which made all things must have power, to direct, govern, order, and dispose of all things as he pleases, and so his creatures must depend upon him for protection and the disposal of all their affairs.

3. That Being which made all things in such an excellent order and dependence on each other, in such constant and unchangeable vicissitudes, fitted with such faculties, adapted to such ends and uses, must have infinite wisdom, and must design things for those ends for which he hath thus fitted them.

4. He that hath made things so as that they constantly, in their respective seasons, produce things good and useful for the preservation and comfort of those creatures he hath made, filling their mouths with food, *'and their hearts with gladness,'* must be good to all, even to the unthankful and the wicked, and so *'his tender mercies must be over all his works.'*

5. He who vouchsafes such kindness to, and maketh such provisions for, those bodies which we have common with the brutes, must have made some provisions for that soul which is our better part, and which is more especially derived from him, they therefore must be capable of receiving blessings and favours from him. And if they be lapsed and sinful creatures, and made so as that they certainly will be subject to sin, they must be capable of finding mercy from him when they return from their iniquity. Now the plain inference hence is this,

COROLLARY. That men guided only by the light of nature may so acceptably seek God as to find him gracious and merciful towards them.

ARGUMENT FOURTH. This, Fourthly, may be proved from those words, '*he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him;*' Heb. ii, 6. where observe,

First. That to come to God, is to serve him, throughout the tenor of the scripture, and more especially in this epistle, where it signifies to come to his throne of grace by prayer, (iv, 16.) by the oblation of sacrifices, (x, 1.) by the performance of any other duty, (vii, 25, x, 22.) yea, from the context it appears that it is *εὐαρεσῆσαι*, '*to do what is well pleasing*' to him; '*for Enoch,*' saith St. Paul, '*received a testimony, εὐαρεσηκέναι, THAT HE DID WHAT WAS WELL PLEASING to God; but without faith it is impossible, εὐαρεσῆσαι, TO DO WHAT IS WELL PLEASING to him; for he that cometh (thus) to God must believe that he is.*' Now this is the title given to God's most eminent servants before and after the flood, that, *εὐαρέησαν τῷ θεῷ*, '*THEY PLEASSED GOD.*' To Enoch, Gen. v. 22, 24. To Noah, Gen. vi. 9. To Abraham, Gen. xxiv, 40. To Isaac, Gen. xlvi. 15. And all that God requires of Abraham to fit him for the blessings promised is, *εὐαγέησον ἐνώπιον ἐμοῦ*, '*walk before me and be thou perfect.*' Gen. xvii. 1.

Secondly. That all men may so seek God as to do what is well pleasing to him, if they diligently endeavour so to do; since otherwise it cannot be their duty to seek to please him, it being no man's duty to do that which he cannot do. He that denies this inference as to the Heathen world, exempts them from all obligations to seek that God whom they cannot please.

Thirdly. That if they do so they shall be rewarded by him, and so God must be willing that they should seek him, and that they should be rewarded for so doing. And,

Fourthly. That the Heathens may have grounds sufficient to believe that they shall be rewarded for serving him diligently according to the light which God had given them. Deny these two last inferences, and you deprive them of any motive to do that which is well-pleasing to him; this being that which Heathens by the light of nature saw,—that, "if piety and advantage, or profit, did not go together, piety could be preserved in none." The only inference which I think needful here to make is this,

INFERENCE. That Heathens may have faith in God, even that faith which is *'the expectation of things hoped for,'* and may encourage them to seek him diligently.

ARGUMENT FIFTH. This may be further evident from those words, *'the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;'*^b where observe,

First. That the apostle there is speaking of the Heathen world, of the Gentiles, verse 16, of them who *'changed the image of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man,* verse 23, and *worshipped the creature more than the Creator.'* Verse 25.

Secondly. Observe that this wrath of God was revealed from heaven, (i.) *'against their ungodliness,'* that is, against their impiety in robbing God of his honour, and giving it to them which by nature were no gods, and in being ungrateful to him who was the author of all their blessings, verse 21.—(ii.) For *'their unrighteousness,'* that is, the violation of the laws of justice, charity, and mercy towards one another, of which the Apostle speaks from verse 26 to the 30th.

Thirdly. Observe that they did this against sufficient evidence and manifestation of the truth delivered to them, *'holding the truth in unrighteousness;'* that is, by acting contrary to the notions they had, or might have learned from the law of nature, and by suppressing or corrupting the dictates of their own natural consciences. And this is still more evident from the reason of this wrath of God revealed against them, the apostle saying, (i.) that they were thus ungodly when God had shewed and made manifest to them, by his works, *'that which might be known of him'* by the light of nature, verses 19, 20. (ii.) That when they had these sufficient means of knowing God, and many of them by these means did know him, *'they did not glorify him as God, nor were they thankful'* to him for the blessings he had conferred upon them, verse 21; and so they robbed him of his glory, and the acknowledgement of his goodness, against that light which he had given them to discern these things, and that because *'they liked not to retain God in their knowledge,'* verse 23.—(iii.) That upon this account *'they were*

^b Romans i, 18.

ἀναπολόγητοι, 'without excuse.' For I think that interpretation of those words which makes this manifestation of himself to be given with this intention only *to render them inexcusable in their damnation*, unworthy of a confutation, it being to be rejected, as it is by Œcumenius, with an ἄπαγε, or with 'the utmost detestation;' this being the vilest imputation that can be cast upon our gracious God,—to say that "he vouchsafes the manifestation of himself to men, only to aggravate their condemnation and give himself a specious pretence to render them for ever miserable." It is therefore certain from the reason following, (*they were inexcusable, διότι, BECAUSE knowing God, they did not glorify him as God;*) that the true import of these words is this,—that God had so far manifested himself unto them by the works of his creation and his providence, that they who were not by these means induced to glorify him as God, and were not duly thankful to him for the benefits he alone had conferred upon them, were without any reasonable excuse for their neglect to do so. Now both the reason and suffrage of mankind proclaim this an excuse sufficient for not doing any thing,—that they had never power or sufficient means for the performance of it; and if they had this power, and these means, it is certain that these Heathens might have thus glorified God, and have been thankful, and that doing so they would have been free from the neglect of that which by this revelation God had made their duty.

Fourthly. Moreover, what is it 'to glorify him as God?' Is it not to own him as the only God; to give him the worship due from creatures to their great Creator; to obey his known commands; to submit to his good pleasure; to repent of all their wilful violations of his holy laws; and when they have deviated from them, to return to that obedience which they owe to him; to conform to all his imitable perfections; or, in the language of the Heathens, συζῆν, συμπολιτεύεσθαι, ὁμοιωθῆναι, ὁμογνωμονῆσαι τῷ θεῷ, 'to live the life of God, to converse still with him, to be like to, and of the same mind with him;' to call upon him who is the giver of all good things, and to depend upon him for all the blessings they did want? Is it not certain from the writings of the wiser Heathens, that they knew all this to be their duty? Or could they glorify him as God, if they neglected so to do?

Again, could they be thankful to him for his blessings, unless they acknowledged him the author of them, and owned their obligations to improve them to his honour, to love him for his bounty, and to live to him by whom they have lived?

Fifthly. Observe that the great reason of ‘*the wrath of God revealed against them*’ was this,—that they thus sinned against the knowledge and conscience of their duty, ‘*by holding the truth in unrighteousness,*’ as is more clearly delivered in these words, verse 32, that ‘*knowing τὸ δίκαιωμα, THE RIGHTEOUS SENTENCE of God, that they who did such things were worthy of death,* (they themselves passing this sentence upon those who denied the dignity or worship of their gods, and against many acts of unrighteousness here mentioned,) *they not only did the same, but took pleasure in them that did them.*’ Now hence the inference is this,

INFERENCE. That all the acts of ungodliness and unrighteousness, here mentioned as things too commonly practised in the Heathen world, were done against sufficient light and conviction; that they did these things against the natural light of their own consciences, and the knowledge of that duty which was due from them both to God and man.

ARGUMENT SIXTH. This also seemeth evident from what the apostle hath declared touching the Gentiles who had not the law; to wit, that God would judge them according to their works. Rom. ii, 6. For a righteous God will only judge and condemn them for the neglect of that which they knew to be their duty, and might have done, but did not; and for the doing that which they knew to be evil, and might have avoided, but did not: And both these things suppose they had sufficient grounds, even from the light of nature, to know, and might have by their sincere endeavours obtained sufficient help for the performance of it. “For,” as Origen well reasons, “if God condemned the Heathens for holding the truth in unrighteousness, and because when ‘*they knew God, they did not glorify him as God, neither were thankful,*’ it seems agreeable to reason to believe that had they done what they culpably neglected, and therefore might have done, that is, had they glorified him as God, and been thankful, they would have done that which was acceptable to God, and fit to be rewarded by his goodness.”

Secondly. When the Apostle adds, that *the Gentiles which knew not the law of Moses did by nature* (that is, by virtue of the law of nature written in their hearts,) *the things contained in the moral law;* he must insinuate that they had the natural principles of good and evil discovered to them by their own reason and discretion. Hence when they did that which was naturally evil, *their conscience, saith he, did accuse them for it.* verse 15. Whence it follows that they must have both the knowledge of the principles of natural religion, and an ability to perform them, and to avoid those sins against the light of nature for which their conscience did accuse them; for a conscience rightly informed will accuse no man for doing what he was not able to avoid. Again, when conscience in them is said, ἀπολογεῖν, ‘to apologize,’ or plead for them, since conscience plainly doth imply a knowledge of a rule by which our actions are to be directed, and that our actions have been done according to, or in repugnance to that rule, it cannot otherwise plead for them than by an inward sense that they have acted suitably to that rule, or to the knowledge of their duty towards God and man, they from the light of nature or the convictions of their reason had discovered. And so much for the testimonies of holy scripture.

IV. It seemeth also evident from reason, that if God would be worshipped, served, and obeyed by his rational creatures, he must have given them sufficient knowledge of that Being whom they are to serve, worship, and obey, and of those laws which he requires them to obey; and also must have given them abilities to do them as far as he requires this to their acceptance, and motives sufficient to induce them thus to serve and to obey him. For all men’s reason must convince them that a righteous God will not require any person in order to his acceptance of him, to do that good, or to avoid that evil which he hath given them no means to know, no ability to do, and no motive to perform; since what they cannot know to be their duty, or knowing cannot do, they cannot be obliged to do; and what they can have no motive to do or to avoid they can have no just ground or reason to do or to avoid. Now hence arise these useful corollaries,

COROLLARY FIRST. That they who say “the Heathens want sufficient means to know or to perform those natural duties which they owe to God or man,” so far destroy both natural religion and

morality, because they must absolve the Heathens from any obligations to perform them; and why then are they styled duties of natural religion or morality?

COROLLARY SECOND. That they who say “there are some precepts which the Heathens cannot perform at all, viz. ‘*thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,*’ &c. and, ‘*thou shalt not covet any thing which is thy neighbour’s,*” must either say “these are no duties of natural religion or morality, and that God therefore hath not required the Heathens to perform them;” or that “God doth require them, to whom he only hath vouchsafed the light of nature, to do that which can never be performed by them, who only have the guidance and direction of that light and of those secret influences which he affords them.”

COROLLARY THIRD. That they who say that “all those actions of the Heathens which are for the matter good, yet are formally sins, because they are not done out of love to God as the principle, and to God’s glory as the end,” must either say that “the Heathens cannot, by the light of nature, know they are to do them from such principles and to such ends,” and then they cannot be obliged so to do them; or else that “though they know they ought to do them from this principle and to this end, yet they want power so to do them;” and then they must affirm that “they lie under an absolute necessity of doing all their actions with these two essential defects, and so under an absolute necessity of sinning;” against the judgment of all antiquity, St. Austin not excepted,—that no man is to be judged or condemned as a sinner for that which he lies under a sad necessity to do or to omit. One would be tempted to conceive they who so confidently aver these things, had never read those sayings of the Heathens who place their confidence in this,—“that it shall be well with them both in life and death because they truly love God, and do endeavour to be as like him as they can, and that this is the best way of doing honour to him;”^a declaring as fully against doing those things out of vain glory,^b and chiefly to obtain applause

^a Socrat. Apol. p. 31, Cicero Tusc. q. 1, n. 82, Jamblic. Protrep. c. 13, p. 84.

^b Æquissimo animo ad honestum consilium per mediam infamiam tandem, nemo mihi videtur pluris aestimare virtutem, nemo illi magis devotus quam qui boni viri famam perdidit, ne conscientiam perderet, Seneca Ep. 81, p. 794. Famam occupare et, τὸ ἐνδοξον τῶν δικαίων, præponere, inane, stolidum, iniquum multoties pronunciant. Vide Catakter, in Anton. part. 1, p. 19, l. 4, p. 135, l. 43, l. 6, p. 229, 230, l. 7, p. 292, in § 73.

from men as christians do, and saying that they are to “do them out of respect to conscience, and ought even to lose their reputation to preserve it, and that^c to live according to nature, and, *πειθεσθαι τῷ θεῷ, καὶ ἑπεσθαι τὸν θεόν*, ‘to obey or follow the direction and example of God’ is the same thing; that in every thing, be it great or little, we are to have respect to God, and glorify him for ever and ever, and can do nothing well towards man unless we do it in respect to divine things:^d that God is to be revered above all things, to be owned, thought upon, and respected in all things, to be invoked that we may obtain them, and to be celebrated for them;” to omit many things of a like nature.

SECONDLY. If God hath given to all men immortal souls, it seemeth plainly hence to follow that he hath put them some way in a capacity of being happy after death, and hath not left them under an inevitable necessity of being always miserable. For since, according to our Saviour’s words, ‘*it had been better for such men that they had not been born,*’ and, according to right reason, “it is better not to be, than to be miserable:” and since all such men must be subject to a necessity of being miserable, only by being born into the world, that is, only by God’s own action in giving them life, and infusing a spiritual soul into them, and all their offspring must be miserable by that which God himself hath called his benediction on our first parents, by which they were enabled ‘*to increase and multiply;*’ I say, seeing these things are so, it follows that either we must deny the immortality of the souls of these Heathens, and say that “they will die with their bodies, and be liable to no account hereafter,” or allow that they are placed by divine providence in a capacity of avoiding the being ever miserable in that future state. And that God hath vouchsafed some means of grace and kindness even to the souls who by his providence have wanted that light which he imparted to the Jew and Christian, may be concluded from his goodness to them

^c Ὡς γὰρ φασιν οἱ Πυθαγορεῖοι τιμῆσεις τὸν θεὸν ἄριστα ἐὰν τῷ θεῷ τὴν διάνοιαν ὁμιώσης. Hierocl. in Carm. Pythag. p. 23, 24. Δεῖ μὲν πᾶν καὶ τὸ μικρότατον ἔτω ποιεῖν ἕτε γὰρ ἀνθρώπινον τί ἄνευ τῆς ἐπι τὰ θεῖα συναφορᾶς εὖ πράξεις. Antoninus l. 3, sec. 13. Hinc Thaletis monitum illud, εἰς τῆς αἰῶνως τῶν αἰῶνων δοξαζέσθαι τὸν θεόν. Apud Clem. Alex. Strom. 5, p. 594. D.

^d Vide Gatak, voce Dcus.

in things temporal. For since he is that God, *'who doth good to all, and whose tender mercies are over all his works, who giveth to all men liberally, filling their hearts with food and gladness;'* is it likely that he should wholly neglect their spiritual concerns, leaving their precious souls entirely destitute of help, and under a sad necessity of pining away in their iniquities, and being miserable for ever, and to be fatally exposed to eternal death, without affording them any means of redress? This, even to a Heathen, seemed a most unworthy apprehension, that God should be *'πρὸς μὲν τὰ φαῦλα καλῶς καὶ ἀφθόνως παρασκευόμενος, πρὸς δὲ τὰ κρεῖττω ἕπιπορος,'* *'liberal in bestowing mean things, and sparing in better things;'* why therefore should we Christians, who have clearer discoveries of the divine goodness, think that he who *'gives to all men life, breath, and all things,'* should utterly withhold from any the means of serving him acceptably? They surely might infer from his declarations that he *'is the Saviour of all men, and that all souls are his,* (which is plainly said to answer the complaints of those who thought he dealt hardly with them,) that *he is the God of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews; the same God who is rich unto all that call upon him; that he hath not left himself without a testimony of his goodness, that he made them to seek after him,'* in order to the finding him, and so far manifested himself to them that they might know him so as to *'worship him as God and to be thankful'* to him for his benefits: that, *Lastly,* he hath made them so as to *'be a law unto themselves,'* by virtue of that light of reason he hath implanted in them, so that they have an inward satisfaction in doing well, and an accusing conscience when they do that which is naturally evil; they, I say, may more rationally conclude he is not utterly deficient in communicating *interior assistances,* and promoting the good use and improvement of these talents, since otherwise they are not only bestowed in vain, and so as to produce no good effect, but are really unkindnesses, as being only apt to produce ill effects on those on whom they are conferred, viz. the aggravation of their sin, and consequently of their future punishment.

COROLLARY. Hence then it follows that no Heathen nations are wholly left without some means of knowing and some ability

of doing those things God hath made absolutely requisite to free them from his future wrath, since otherwise they must be born under an absolute necessity of being ever miserable.

V. *Thirdly*. I add that it cannot be consistent with divine equity and goodness to make that a condition of any man's happiness which he cannot know to be his duty, or, knowing, cannot do; since this must certainly subject him to an impossibility of being happy, and therefore to a certainty of being miserable; which, by the former proposition, must be repugnant both to the justice and the goodness of God.

COROLLARY. Hence it is evident that the knowledge of any revelation made to Jew or Christian, cannot be necessary to the happiness of the Heathens in general, and much less the practice of any purely christian duty; because it is morally impossible that many of them should come to the knowledge of these things: and therefore '*faith in Christ Jesus*' cannot be necessary to the salvation of as many of them as have never heard of him; '*for how,*' saith the apostle, '*shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?*' And to whom no preacher of Christ Jesus hath been ever sent; '*for how shall they hear without a preacher?*'

VI. *Fourthly*. This I think certain, that God will only judge men at the last for sinning against the means he hath vouchsafed them to know, and to perform their duty, and only by that law which he hath given them; for sin being only a '*transgression of a law,*' where God hath given no law forbidding any action, there can be no imputable transgression of it; and where he hath given no law commanding, there can be no neglect of duty.

COROLLARY. Hence it must follow, that those Heathens to whom the law of nature hath been only given, can be judged only for the violations of that law; that is, for the neglect of that which by that law they might discern to be their duty to perform, or their sin to commit; God's '*wrath being only revealed from heaven against them who held the truth in unrighteousness.*' And therefore, as almost all the theses laid down by *Vossius*, in his disputation *De Virtutibus Gentilium*, are absurd, so the first thesis which makes this a requisite of a good action, "that it be done according to the law of God," if he understands this of a written law,

of which the texts alledged by him only speak, is the first-born of absurdities; as requiring the Heathens to know the revealed will of God, (in order to their doing good,) without a revelation, and saying that a righteous judge will judge the Heathens by a law he never had revealed to them, and condemn them for not walking by that rule he never gave them for the direction of their actions. As absurd is his fifth thesis which requires this condition as necessary to render the actions of the Heathens profitable to them, *ut promiserit Deus remunerari se ea velle æternâ vitâ*, ‘that God should have promised to reward them with eternal life;’ this being to make it necessary in order to any motive they can have, that is, to any hope they should be better for any good they do, that they should have a promise of eternal life, who are ‘*strangers to the covenant of promise*,’ and are incapable of having it, no such promise being ever made to any without a revelation. Sure it is, from the words of the apostle, that if they have any motive to serve God, they must have reason to believe that ‘*he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him*,’ and so their service must be done in faith; but then what that reward will be, it being not of *debt* but *grace*, it is impossible for them to know without a promise. And this I think so far unnecessary to their good actions, that I rather incline to believe that they among them who endeavoured to live holily and righteously with respect to a recompence without a promise, on the account of divine goodness, and of his love to virtue wherever it was found, will find a suitable reward from God; and that he highly did approve that noble resolution of Socrates, that “being persuaded that good men living and dying should be happy, and bad men punished; I,” saith he, “bid adieu to the applauses of the world,^g καὶ σκοπῶ ὅπως ἀποφανῆμαι τῷ κριτῇ ὡς ὑγιεστάτην ἔχων τὴν ψυχὴν, καὶ πειράσομαι τῷ ὄντι ὡς ἂν δύναιμαι βέλτιστος ᾶν, καὶ ζῆν, καὶ ἐπειδὴν ἀποθνήσκω ἀποθνήσκειν, ‘and will make it my care how I may appear before my judge with a most pure soul, and how I may live and die the best of men:’” As also that of Scipio,^h who being told in a dream by Africanus, *certum esse in cælo et definitum locum ubi beati avo sempiterno fruuntur*, ‘that there was a certain place in heaven where the blessed lived for ever,’ and that “the way to it was that of piety

^g Plato Georg. p. 358.

^h Som. Scip. apud Cicer. n. 8.

and righteousness," enters into this serious resolution, "I have always had some regard to these things, *nunc autem tanto premio proposito enitar multo vigilantius*, 'but now in prospect of this high reward, I will pursue them with the greater diligence'."ⁱ

VII. FIFTHLY. God having laid down this method in the dispensation of his gifts, that 'he who is, ἐν ἐλακίσῳ πίστεος, FAITHFUL IN THE LEAST talent, shall have a suitable reward, and that to him that hath, so as to improve what he enjoys, shall more be given,' and vice versâ,—we may hence rationally conclude that he who diligently endeavours to do good according to that light he hath received, shall find some tokens of the favour of God; and that if any farther aid be requisite to enable the Heathens acceptably to perform their duty, the divine goodness will impart that also to them by those secret dispensations of his providence which we are not acquainted with. For as to idiots and infants, among christians, God's mercies are vouchsafed, and our Saviour's meritorious performances are applied in a manner not understood by us, without any capacity in them to know or believe any thing, so may God's grace be communicated to, and the merits of Christ avail for, ignorant Heathens, in a way unknown to and unsearchable by us. And therefore as the Heathens did acknowledge that the divine assistance was necessary to the performance of their duty, so did they accordingly expect it, and declare that *nullus unquam vir magnus fuit sine aliquo afflatu Divino*,^l 'no man ever was or could be excellent without some divine assistance;' and that by reason of men's proneness to vice, and the difficulty of a virtuous life, "they stood in need, θεῶν συλλήπτορος καὶ συναγωνισῆ,^m 'of God to be their helper and their co-adjutor.'" Whence we may argue, that where this was wanting, it is not for want of knowledge, or of power, but for their slothfulness, and the abusing of their talents, they shall be condemned.

VIII. And, LASTLY, We may reasonably conclude God will deal with them in respect both to the acceptation and reward of their good, and his displeasures against, and punishment of, their evil actions according to the measures of their ignorance and knowledge, the abilities, motives, and inducements

ⁱ N. 11, N. 18.^l Cic. de Nat. Deor. l. 2, n. 124, 125.^m Max. Tyr. Diss. 22, p. 218.

afforded to them to do or to avoid them; and that in these particulars,

First. That their good actions done upon less convictions, aids, and motives, may be more acceptable to God than the like actions done by christians upon much stronger evidence and better aids, and more powerful inducements to the same actions, because this shews a greater readiness to assent to the objects of our faith, and better inclination to the performance of our duty. Hence Christ speaks thus to Thomas, *'hast thou seen, and therefore believed? Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed.'*" From which words both interpreters and School-men gather that faith upon lesser evidence is of greater merit, because it shews a greater promptitude in the will to embrace, and a stronger affection to the objects of faith. And the Centurion's^o faith is commended above that of Israel, because he believed in Christ upon lesser evidence than they, who were acquainted with Moses and the Prophets, had; and upon those words of Christ to the Syro-phænician woman, *'O woman, great is thy faith,'*^p I have descanted thus, *'great is thy faith, that having no promise to rely upon, and suffering so many repulses, and such seeming contempt, thou still retainest so good hope of my kindness and mercy.'* The faith of those who firmly rely upon God's promise, and are not by great temptations and afflictions moved from their confidence, is praise-worthy. But highly excellent is their faith who depending only upon his goodness, do place their humble confidence in God, embracing the faith of Socrates as most certain truth, "that no evil could happen to a good man, living or dead, *nec unquam ejus res a diis immortalibus negligentur*, 'because the immortal gods could never neglect his affairs'.^q 'Whence we may learn that the faith of the Gentiles is not only pleasing to God, but sometimes more excellent than that of those to whom the promises belong, viz. when upon lesser motives it brings forth equal fruits.' Thus v. g. it is praise-worthy in a christian to *'take no thought for to-morrow,'* but to depend on the assurance Christ hath given him that he shall want neither food nor raiment; but it is more noble in a heathen, Epictetus,

^κ John xx, 29.

^ο Luke vii, 9.

^ρ Matthew xv, 28.

^q *Ἐν τῷ ἕν τῆτο διανοεῖσθαι δεῖ ἀληθείας.* Jamb. Protrept. p. 82, Socrat. apud Cicero.

to believe that “a servant of God should not be solicitous for the morrow;”^a and put the question thus, “φοβεῖται τις ἀνὴρ ἀγαθός, ‘Can any good man fear’ he may want food? Doth God so neglect his servants, and his witnesses of his care and providence?” It is a christian virtue to be contented, and to acquiesce in all God’s providences, even under all the comforts, the assistances, the promises, and hopes which christianity affords; but for a poor slave or servant, as Epictetus was, to be able thus to appeal to God, ‘Did I ever, Lord, accuse thee, or complain of thy government? Was I not always willing to be sick when it was thy pleasure that I should be so? Did I ever desire to be what thou wouldst not have me to be? Was I ever the less pleased upon that account? Am I not always ready to do what thou commandest? Did I ever transgress thy precepts, or abuse the faculties that thou hast given me? Wilt thou have me to quit the plays? I go from them full of thanks that thou admittest me to see thy works, and understand the administrations of thy providence. Wilt thou have me to continue here? I will freely do as thou wilt. Wouldst thou have me to depart hence? I will freely do it at thy command.’^b I have always had my will subject to that of God.^c Would he have me to be feverish? I would be so. To desire or attempt any thing? I will desire and attempt it. Would he not have me to enjoy it? I would not have it. Would he have me die? I am willing to die.^d Deal with me according to thy pleasure; I am always of the same mind with thee: I refuse nothing which thou art pleased to lay upon me; lead me whither thou wilt; cloath me as thou pleasest; I will be a magistrate, or private person; continue me in my country or in exile, I will not only submit to, but defend thy proceedings in all things.’ Let me see in christians a more entire submission to the will of God, that I may prefer their christian virtues before his *splendid sins*.

Secondly. The Heathens also may expect a reward upon performance of less duty; for as ‘*much will be required of them to whom much is given, so to whom less is given, of them less will be required,*’^f saith our Lord. We see it is thus in reference to all other

^a Apud Arrian. l. 1, c. 9, p. 108, l. 3, c. 36, p. 248, 350.

^b Apud Arrian. l. 3, c. 5, p. 273, 274.

^c l. 3. c. 24, p. 342.

^d Ibid. c. 26, p. 361, 362, vide p. 388, 401.

^e l. 2, c. 16, p. 217.

^f Luke xii, 48.

things of a like nature,—the less our substance is, the less charity is required from us; the less strength they have to perform it, the less service will be expected from a child or servant; the less time men can spare from their necessary labour, the less time will God require to be employed in his immediate service; and the weaker men's intellectual faculties are, the less measure of knowledge we require from them. And what reason have we to believe God will not deal with Heathens after the same gracious measures, abating somewhat of that duty which he requires towards their acceptance, because he hath afforded to them less means to know, less aid and motives to perform it?

Thirdly. The Heathens may reasonably expect that God should be more ready to pardon and pass by their transgressions, because there must be in them the more of ignorance, and so the less of contempt; and so the more of that which renders them excusable, and the less of that which aggravates transgression. And, saith good Salvian, *ignosci aliquatenus ignorantia potest, contemptus veniam non meretur*, 'ignorance may obtain pardon where contempt will not.'^g Hence our Lord prays thus for his murderers, though most of them were guilty of affected ignorance, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."^h St. Peter saith to them, "I know ye did it ignorantly, as did also your rulers. Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out."ⁱ St. Paul saith, that "being ignorant of him, and of the words of the prophets, they fulfilled them in condemning him;" whereas, "had they known him, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."^j And how much more may be said to mitigate the ignorance of Heathens, of whom St. Paul discourseth as of men left, *ψηλαφίζειν*, 'TO GROPE AFTER God, as in the dark, if haply they might find him; and who are often by him styled *darkness* and *children of darkness*, before the light of the gospel shone upon them, and therefore *these times of ignorance*,' saith he, 'God overlooked.' Acts xvii, 30.

Fourthly. They may expect that God should be more patient and long-suffering towards them before he punisheth, because the less the light is they enjoy, the less is their offence against it; *possunt esse vitia paria, sed in his vitiis necesse est peccata nostra*

^g De Gubern. Dei, l. 5, p. 155.

^h Luke xxiii, 34.

ⁱ Acts iii, 17, &c.

^k Acts xiii, 27.

^l I Corinthians ii, 8.

esse graviora,^m so that ‘where the vice may be equal, the sin,’ saith Salvian, ‘must be the greater,’ and so deserve a swifter vengeance. Thus God bore with the Amorites four hundred years, after his promise made to Abraham, ‘*that his seed should inherit their land, because the sins of the Amorites were not yet full,*’ⁿ there being then, doubtless, some good men among them, under the government of Melchisedeck, ‘*the Priest of the Most High God;*’ and probably among the confederates of Abraham, Eschol, Mamre, and Aner, and the subjects of king Abimelech; whereas, when the time came for their destruction, we find not one worthy to be saved from destruction, but Rahab, and she was a harlot. And when the old world was grown so generally and so prodigiously wicked, that ‘*the imaginations of their hearts were only evil, and that continually,*’ and there was not one good man left among them besides Noah, God still grants them one hundred and twenty years’ space for their repentance; and this is that time, as St. Peter saith, ‘*the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah;*’^p whereas Christ’s admonition to the churches of Ephesus and Smyrna runneth thus, ‘*repent, or I will come unto thee quickly.*’^q

IX. *Lastly.* It is also reasonable to conceive that God may be more gentle in the punishment of their iniquities, according to our Lord’s own Aphorism, “he that knew not his Lord’s will, and therefore did it not, shall be beaten with few stripes,”^r because his sin hath so much less of wilfulness; whereas “he that knew his Lord’s will, and yet did it not, shall be beaten with many stripes,” because he sins out of presumptuous contempt of known duty. Now, saith St. James, ‘*to him that knoweth to do good, and doth it not, to him it is sin,*’^s imputable to his condemnation. And here let it be noted, that, in the opinion of Origen, Tertullian and Salvian, “the person to be beaten with many stripes is the Jew, that knew the will of God; the person to be beaten with few is the Gentile, who knew it not.”^t We may pass a severe sentence on them, as if they were like brute beasts, *made to be destroyed*; but it would be more charitable to say with Salvian,

^m L. 4, p. 154.

ⁿ Genesis xv, 16.

^p 1 Peter iii, 20.

^q Revelations ii, 5, 16.

^r Luke xii, 47.

^s James iv. 17.

^t *Vapulabit multis, hic est Judæus; qui non cognovit Græcus, id est Gentilis, vapulabit paucis.* Orig. in Rom. 2, F. 156, D. Tertullian de Pœnit. c. 5, Salv. de Gubern. Dei, l. 5, p. 155.

qualiter in die judicii puniendi sunt, nullus potest scire nisi solus judex, ‘how they shall be hereafter punished, God only knows.’” However God exercises greater patience to them here, than towards us Christians, *cum sciat eos ea facere quæ nesciunt, nostros autem negligere quæ credunt*, ‘because they know not that which they do is evil, but we neglect what we know to be our duty.’ Hence Christ declares it will be “more tolerable for Sodom in the day of judgment, than for Capernaum; for Tyre and Sidon, than for Chorazin and Bethsaida; because had the mighty works Christ did in those days, been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented in sackcloth and ashes.” And this brings me to the consideration of the inference made in the objection from these words, viz.

“Hence it appears that the means of salvation are not always applied to them whom God foresaw would use them better.”

ANSWER. NOW to this inference I answer, that it is wonderful to hear those very men making this inference from these words, who when they are pressed with this plain inference from them,—that if the miracles Christ did in these cities to confirm that heavenly doctrine by which he called them to repentance had not been sufficient for that end, without that unfrustrable impulse which the event shews he was not pleased to afford them, he must not only have upbraided, but pronounced the heaviest judgments against those cities for not doing that which they had no sufficient means afforded them to perform; they answer that “these words do not shew that God foresaw these means would have had actually this effect on Tyre and Sidon, but only that in human probability they might have had this effect upon them, or that men might have reasonably expected this fruit from them.” Or, (ii.) that “these words do contain such an hyperbolical expression as Christ used in saying, ‘if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out;’” or which we use by saying, ‘this would make stones speak,’ ‘a blind man may see this,’ or ‘a child may understand it;’ and so these words serve only to shew the unreasonableness of the impenitency of those cities (without the divine impulse absolutely necessary to that end) but never were intended to intimate the sincerity of the repentance

^a De Gubern. Dei, l. 5, p. 154.

[^x Luke xix, 40.

these miracles would have wrought in Tyre and Sidon;" these subterfuges I have confuted in the note upon these words. Matt. xi, 24. To which I add these words of Mr. Thorndyke;^y 'I find 'no good reason to infer positively, as our Lord doth, that Chorazin and Bethsaida shall be tormented more than Tyre and Sidon, because, probably, Tyre and Sidon would have repented. 'The same I say to others who would have our Lord say 'only this, *that had these miracles been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented, but not from the heart,*^z because miracles are not able to convert any one to God from the heart; for 'in conscience is there any reason that Chorazin and Bethsaida 'should fare worse than Tyre and Sidon, because they would 'have repented as hypocrites, continuing no less sinners than if 'they had not repented? To say as others do, "that had God 'ordained those miracles to be done at Tyre and Sidon, he would 'have determined their wills by his immediate act to be converted," is to say that "our Lord, by a mental reservation, says that 'whereof he expresseth not the reason, and so cozens them who 'satisfy themselves with the reason which he doth express'."

When (*Secondly,*) they do in favour of these false interpretations add, that "it would be an act of cruelty in God to have denied them those means which he foresaw would have produced in them repentance to salvation," I reply three things,

1. That they here say more than can be necessarily inferred from Christ's words, who saith indeed that Tyre and Sidon would have repented in sackcloth and ashes, that is, with repentance at present true and sincere, and in which they persevering might have remained to those days. But so did Nineveh repent, at the preaching of Jonas, in sackcloth and ashes; and the text saith, '*God saw their works that they returned from their evil ways,*' but then they afterwards relapsed into them to their utter ruin. Philip converted the people of Samaria by miracles, but they were soon perverted again by the sorceries of Simon Magus; the stony ground "believed for a season, but in time of persecution fell away; and so did many of the Jews who had once truly owned the faith of Christ, so that '*it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they had known it,*

^y Epil. Part 2, p. 195.

^z Camero. in locum.

to depart from the holy commandment;^a and who can tell whether God might not foresee that the repentance of Tyre and Sidon, though for a season true, would not have ended in a like apostasy?

2. I add that it is most absurd to say "that God is cruel towards any person or nation, provided he apply not to them all the means his wisdom can discern to be effectual to bring them to repentance and salvation," this being to condemn our gracious God of cruelty in the whole course of his providence. For, doubtless, his infinite wisdom could have found out means, throughout all ages, to have converted more than actually were converted, yea to have turned the hearts of all mankind unto him. Even this of miracles might have been as effectual to any other people as it would have been to Tyre and Sidon, to the conversion of infidels in any age, as in the first ages of christianity. The appearance of Christ to them in the like miraculous manner as he did to Saul, might have been as effectual to convert any other Jew; and God in his infinite wisdom might have foreseen they would be so; must he be therefore cruel because in all ages, from the first degeneracy of mankind to this day, he did not always use these means for their conversion, and if he doth not still continue them whilst the world lasts? Who then can free his providential dispensations from this blasphemous charge? Surely, if means sufficient for the performance of that duty which God requires from any person or nation, and for neglect of which he will condemn them at the last, be all that can be requisite to exempt God from this charge of cruelty, even those of Tyre and Sidon had, or might have had, them; God sending his messages to them by his prophets, and they living in the land of Canaan, being not unacquainted with the miracles God wrought for his own people, Christ also being sometimes in their coast, and they being as able as others were to come from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon 'to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases.'^b And if other Gentiles had not such means, why was 'God's wrath revealed from heaven against that ungodliness and unrighteousness' which they had not sufficient means to avoid? And why doth God complain of the impenitent, the disobedient, and unbelievers, because they obeyed not his precepts, and hearkened not to his calls and invi-

^a 2 Peter ii, 21.

^b Luke vi, 17.

tations, and were not induced by his promises and threats, his patience and long-suffering, and all the other methods of his providence, to faith, repentance, and obedience? Why doth he marvel at, complain of, and upbraid them for, that which they had no sufficient means to alter or amend?

3. If means unfrustrably effectual be necessary on this account, who lay this odious charge upon God so evidently as they do who tell us he hath left the greatest part of all mankind under an absolute decree, not to afford them those means which he sees absolutely necessary for the performance of that duty without which they cannot be happy, or for avoiding that sin by which they shall inevitably be miserable to all eternity?

CHAP. III.

FOR a close I shall briefly add some testimonies of the Primitive Fathers concerning God's general goodness to the world throughout all ages, and more especially towards the Heathens.

I. FIRST CENTURY. Clemens Romanus, in his epistle to the Corinthians, speaks to them thus, "let us diligently inspect all ages, and we shall find that in all ages God gave place for repentance to all that would turn to him. This Noah preached to the old world, and Jonas to the Ninevites; and they repenting of their sins, ἐξιλιάσαντο τὸν θεὸν ἱκετεύσαντες, καὶ ἔλαβον Σωτηρίαν καὶ περ ἀλλότριον τῷ θεῷ ὄντες, 'appeased God by prayers, and obtained salvation, though they were aliens from God';" that is, not in covenant with him, as the Jews were.

SECOND CENTURY. Justin Martyr highly approves of that saying of Plato, "that they who seek to appease God by vows and sacrifices, ought, τὸ παύεσθαι καὶ μεταγινώσκειν ἐφ' οἷς ἡμαρτον, 'to repent of, and forsake their sins;' which, if they conceive God inflexible, they will never do, ἐδὲν ὄφελος ἐκ τῆς μετανόιας ἔξειν οἰόμενοι, 'as expecting to receive no benefit from their repentance:'"^a he adds that "wicked demons did persecute, τὰς σκωδῶντας, οἷον

^a Cohort. ad Gr. p. 23, B.

Σωκράτην, καὶ τῆς ὁμοίης, ‘the good, as Socrates, and those that were like him,’^b Heraclitus and Musonius, καὶ πάντας τῆς κἄν ὕποις δῆποτε κατα λόγον βίῳν σπῆδάζοντας, καὶ κακίαν φεύγειν, ‘and all who any way endeavoured to live according to reason, and eschew wickedness.’ That whatsoever the philosophers or law-givers found out or spake well, they found out, διὰ λόγου μέρος ὅς ἐστι Χριστός, ‘by participation of the Logos, which is Christ.’^c that God made all mankind with understanding and liberty of will, αἰρεῖσθαι τ’ ἀληθῆ καὶ εὐπράττειν, ‘to chuse the truth and do good;’^d so that they who neglect to do so are, ἀναπολόγητοι παρὰ τῷ θεῷ, ‘inexcusable before God.’ And that, οἱ μετὰ λόγου εἰώσαντες χριστιανοὶ εἶσι οἷον Σωκράτης καὶ Ἡράκλειτος, ‘they who live according to reason are christians, as was Socrates and Heraclitus;’^e on which place see the note of Langius.

Athenagoras saith “that God made them, εἰς τὴν αἰεὶ διαμονήν, ‘to live for ever,’ who bearing the image of God in themselves, did partipate of a mind and rational judgment;^f that knowing their Maker and his power and wisdom, νόμῳ τὲ συνεπόμεινοι καὶ δικῇ τέτοις δὲ συνδιαιωρίζωσιν ἀπονωσ οἷς τὴν προλαβῆσαν ἐχράττυνον ζωὴν, ‘that walking according to the law (of nature) and justice, they might live for ever in those things by which they had strengthened the life they formerly received.’”^g And again, “ἡ μὲν τῆς γενέσεως αἰτία πισθῆται τὴν εἰς αἰεὶ διαμονήν, ‘the cause of man’s production, confirms his perpetual duration,’ God having made him with an immortal soul, and given him, νῦν τὲ καὶ νόμον ἔμφυτον, ‘a mind and natural law’ to direct all his actions, and made him the spectator of his magnificence and wisdom in all things; καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς πρὸς διαμονήν ἐκόσμησεν, ‘and adorned him with all things necessary for that duration,’ according to his will and purpose, and the nature which he hath received.”

THIRD CENTURY. Clemens of Alexandria handles this subject fully, proving this from the title of God that he is the Lord and Saviour of all; “for,” saith he, “the Lord both of the Greeks and the Barbarians persuadeth all that are willing, but compels none, ἐξ αὐτῆ Σωτηρίαν λαβεῖν, ‘to receive salvation from him,’ because he may chuse it; for he that is Lord of all takes care of all as far as it belongs to him so to do, Σωτῆρ γὰρ ἐστὶ ἐχὶ τῶν μὲν,

* Apol. 1, p. 45, D. 46, C.

c Page 48, C.

d Apol. 2, p. 71, C.

e P. 83, C.

f De Resur. p. 55, B.

g P. 54, C.

τῶν δὲ ἑ, 'for he is the Saviour not of some only, and not of others;' but as every one is fitted for it, τὴν ἑαυτῆ διένειμεν ἔνεργεσιν καὶ Ἑλλησι, καὶ Βαρβάροις, 'he distributes his goodness both to the Greeks and the Barbarians.'^h He adds, "that the law from the beginning was this,—that whoever would, might chuse virtue; and therefore the precepts in the law, καὶ πρὸ τῆ νόμου τὸν μὲν ἐλόμενον ζωὴν αἰδίου, καὶ μακάριον γέρας λαμβάνειν ἔταξαν, 'and before the law, appointed every one that would to receive eternal life, and the blessed reward;'ⁱ πᾶσι γὰρ πάντα ἴσα κεῖται παρὰ τῆ θεῆ, καὶ αὐτὸς ἀμειψῆς, 'for all things are alike afforded by God, and he is blameless;'^k but let him chuse them that can, καὶ ὁ ἐβλήθεισ ἰσχύει, 'and he who is willing can do it.'ⁿ

To that inquiry of Celsus, "Why God doth not free all men from their vices?" Origen answers, "that God doth not always send correctors of them, οἱ γὰρ ἐπὶ τὰ βέλτιστα προκαλούμενοι λόγοι θεῆ. αὐτὰς δεδωκότος ἐσιν ἐν ἀνθρώποις; 'for the reasons which provoke men to chuse the best things, are by God put into the hearts of men.'^l To his enquiry "Why God after so many ages attempted to justify men?" Origen answers, "that, ἕκ ἐσιν ἕτ' ἐκ ἐβελήθη δικαιῶσαι τὸν ἀνθρώπων εἶον ὁ Θεός, 'there was no time when God was not willing to render the lives of men righteous;' for he was always regardful of this by giving them occasions of virtue, and the amendment of their lives."^m To that imputation of Celsus, "that Christians held that God neglecting all other men, took care only of them," (which, in the language of our adversaries, is true of the elect only among christians,) Origen answers, "that this doctrine was falsely imputed to Christians, they knowing from the scriptures that God loveth all men, and hateth nothing that he hath made; that the earth is full of his mercy, and that it reacheth to all flesh."ⁿ

FOURTH CENTURY. Nazianzen saith, "that there being many things for which God is to be celebrated or admired, yet is there, ἔδὲν ἅτως ὡς τὸ πάντων ἐνεργετῆ ἰδιώτατον, 'nothing so proper to him as to do good to all.'^o And Chrysostom speaks thus, "before the coming of Christ, ἐνῆν καὶ μὴ ὁμολογήσαντας τὸν Χριστὸν τότε σωθῆναι, 'they that believed not in Christ might be saved,' τότε μὲν γὰρ εἰς Σωτηρίαν ἤρκει τὸ τὸν θεὸν εἰδέναι μόνον;

^h Strom. 7, p. 702, C. D.
^m P. 165.

ⁱ Page. 704, D.
ⁿ P. 178.

^k P. 710, D.
^o Orat. 26.

^l Lib. 4, p. 164.

‘for then the knowledge of the true God, and freedom from idolatry was sufficient for salvation.’^p And this he proves from these words of the apostle, ‘glory, honour, and peace to every one that doth good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.’^q St. Jerom also saith, that “from those words of St. John concerning Christ, ‘He is the true light that enlighteneth every one that comes into the world;’ it is plain, *naturâ omnibus inesse Dei notitiam, nec quenquam sine Christo nasci, et non habere in se semina sapientiæ, et justitiæ, reliquarumque virtutum; unde multi sine fide et evangelio Christi, vel sapienter faciunt aliqua vel sancte;* ‘that the knowledge of God is by nature in all men, and that no man is born without Christ, or who hath not in himself the seeds of wisdom and justice, and of all other virtues, whence many, without faith and the gospel of Christ, perform some things either wisely or holily.’”^s

FIFTH CENTURY. The author of the treatise *De Vocatione Gentium* saith, “we firmly believe, and piously confess according to the scriptures, that the care of the divine providence was never wanting to mankind in general, who, though he chose to himself a peculiar people instructed by his laws, *nulli tamen nationi hominum bonitatis suæ dona subtraxit,* ‘yet hath he not withdrawn from any nation the gifts of his goodness,’ but let them receive the voices of the prophets, and of the law, *in testimoniis elementorum,* ‘in the evidence of the elements;’ (or, *first principles of natural religion;*) for he gives them his laws in their minds, *easque in cordibus eorum digito suo inscribit,* ‘and writes them with his finger in their hearts,’^t that they may obtain the knowledge of God, not by human reason, but by his instruction. And we believe that the help of the divine grace was never wholly withdrawn from any; for the eternal goodness of God doth not so withdraw itself from those men, *ut illos ad cognoscendum se atque metuendum nullis significationibus admoneret,* ‘as to admonish them by no intimations that they should know and fear him;’^u for the heaven and earth, and every creature is so ordered to the advantage of man, that by the contemplation of them, by the experience of so great goodness, and the receipt of so many gifts, *ad cultum et dilectionem sui imbuerentur auctoris, implente omnia*

^p In *Math. Hom.* 36, p. 248.

^s L. 1, c. 2.

^q *Romans* ii, 10.

^t *Cap.* 3.

^r In *Gal. c.* 1, f. 70, M.

^u *Cap.* 7.

Spiritu Dei, 'they may be instructed to worship and love that God whose Spirit filleth all things.'^w For," saith he, "*datur unicuique sine merito unde tendat ad meritum, et datur ante ullum laborem, unde quisque mercedem accipiat secundum suum laborem*, 'to every one is given that, without any worthiness, by which he may tend to what is worthy; and that is given, without his labour, from whence he may receive a reward according to his labour;'^x for the experience of all ages teaches us the just mercy of God, and his merciful justice, that he was never wanting in nourishing men's bodies, *nec docendis iuvandisque eorum mentibus defuisse*, 'or in instructing and assisting their minds;'^y for there was always exhibited to men a certain measure of teaching from above, in which, though the grace was more sparing and obscure, *sufficit tamen sicut Deus judicavit quibusdam ad remedium, omnibus ad testimonium*, 'was yet sufficient in God's account for a remedy to some, and for a testimony to all;'^z and they who never heard of the gospel were yet men, *quibus illa mensura generalis auxilii quæ desuper omnibus hominibus est præbita, non negatur*, 'to whom is not denied that general measure of aid which is afforded to all men from above,'^a the manifold and ineffable goodness of God so far consulting the good of all men, *ut neque ulli pereuntium suppetat excusatio de abnegato sibi lumine veritatis*, that none that perish shall be able to say in their excuse, that the light of the truth was denied them; seeing it may be proved that not only in the last days, but in all ages past, *gratiam Dei omnibus hominibus affuisse*, 'the grace of God was afforded to all men.'^b

^w Lib. 2, c. 1.^x Cap. 2.^y Cap. 3.^z Cap. 5.^a Cap. 9.^b Cap. 10.

Postscript.

WHEN I had put these papers to the press, I met with a treatise of the Rev. Doctor John Edwards, in which he hath done me the honour frequently to attempt the refutation of the expositions, given in my Annotations, of texts relating to these controversies; all which shall, by divine assistance, be fully vindicated from his exceptions in due time. But leaving that work to a farther opportunity, I shall at present only consider his weak attempts to free the doctrines he hath so zealously espoused, from the imputation of novelty; and to demonstrate, that not one of them was, in his sense, maintained before St. Austin's time, and that some of them were not owned by any Ecclesiastical writer for a long time after. And,

1. Whereas he absolutely denies that election to life and salvation is on the account of faith, or works foreseen, Vossius in his Pelagian History, declares, that "all the Greek Fathers always, and all the Latin fathers, who lived before St. Austin, held that they were predestinated to life whom God foresaw that they would live piously and righteously; or, as others say, whom he foresaw, would believe and persevere to the end."^a And this he proves from the testimonies of Justin M. Irenæus, Clemens of Alexandria, Chrysostom, Theodoret and others of the Greek Church. And among the Latins, from the testimonies of Tertullian, Hilary, St. Ambrose, Hilarius Diaconus, and St. Jerom.

Prosper, in his epistle to St. Austin, enquires of him how he may avoid this imputation of novelty; "for," saith he, "having had recourse to the opinions of almost all that went before me, concerning this matter, I find all of them holding one and the same

^a Græci patres semper, patrum Latinorum vero illi qui ante Augustinum vixerunt, dicere solent eos esse prædestinatos ad vitam, quos Deus pie recteque victuros prævidit, sive, ut alii loquuntur, quos prævidit credituros et perseveraturos. Lib. 6, Thes. 8, p. 538,—545. Vide etiam Petavium de Deo Lib. 9, cap. 3.

opinion, in which they have received the purpose and the predestination of God according to his prescience; that for this cause God made some vessels of honour, and others vessels of dishonour, because he foresaw the end of every one, and knew before how he would will and act under the aid of grace." ^b And, after this ingenuous confession, was this very Prosper fit to be produced by the Doctor as a witness of the antiquity of these doctrines? To what end also doth he cite St. Austin as a witness of their antiquity, who manifestly owns, that he was formerly of the other opinion? This his own words import, as you may see in Vossius, p. 545, 546, 547.

Again, is it not wonderful to find the Doctor saying so dogmatically, that "this election without the foresight of good works is asserted by that St. Jerom, who on that place of Malachy, '*Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated,*' saith, '*The love and hatred of God ariseth either from his foreknowledge of things future, or from works?*" ^d In his commentary on the Galatians, he brings in the Hereticks, that is, the Valentinians, Basilidians, and Manichees, disputing thus, "that a just man would not be chosen before he had done any good, nor would the sinner be hated before he had sinned, unless the nature of those that perish, and of those that are saved were different;" ^e and answers, "that this happeneth from the foreknowledge of God, who loves him whom he knows will hereafter be righteous, before he is born, and hates him whom he knows will be wicked, before he sins; not that there is iniquity in the love and hatred of God, but because he ought not to deal otherwise with them, whom he knows will be hereafter just or wicked." ^f And speaking of those words, '*God hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy,*' Eph. i, 4, he saith, "that this belongs to the foreknow-

^b Illud autem, qualiter diluatur, quæsumus patienter insipientiam nostram ferendo demonstras, quod retractatis priorum de hac re opinionibus pene omnium par invenitur et una sententia, qua propositum et prædestinationem Dei secundum præscientiam receperunt, ut ob hoc Deus alios vasa honoris, alios contumeliæ fecerit, quia finem uniuscujusque præviderit, et sub ipso gratiæ adjutorio in qua futurus esset voluntate, et actione, præseverit. Ed. Coloni Agrip. p. 886. c Page 503.

^d Porro dilectio et odium Dei, vel ex præscientia nascitur futurorum, vel ex operibus, aliquin novimus quod omnia Deus diligit, nec quicquam eorum oderit quæ creavit. F. 127, H.

^e Nunquam aut justus diligeretur, antequam aliquid boni faceret, aut peccator odiretur ante delictum, nisi esset pereuntium, et salvandorum natura diversa.

^f Ad quod potest simpliciter responderi, hoc ex Dei præscientia evenire, ut quem scit justum futurum, prius diligit quam oriatur ex utero, et quem peccatorem, oderit antequam peccet, non quod in amore, et in odio iniquitas Dei sit, sed quo non aliter eos habere debeat, quos scit vel peccatores futuros esse, vel justos. Com. in Galat. F. 70, L. 11.

ledge of God, to whom all future things are as already done, and to whom all things are known before they be done, even as St. Paul was predestinated in his mother's womb." And still more wonderful is it, that the Doctor should attempt to prove this was St. Jerom's sentiment from his first book against Ruffinus; when in the only place relating to that matter, he repeats the very words last cited, and immediately adds, *certe in expositione illâ nullum crimen*, 'surely there is no fault in that exposition'^h He, indeed, in that place rejects the opinion of Origen, that 'souls were elected before the foundation of the world, *propter sanctitatem, et nullum vitium peccatorum*, for their holiness, and freedom from all sin,' by this good argument, that "the text saith they were chosen, not because they were holy in another world, but that they might be holy in this." But then he adds, that he refers this election not to the original of souls, *sed ad Dei præscientiam*, 'to the foreknowledge of God.'

To proceed to his second article concerning free-will: here he asserts in the general, that "the opinion of several of the Fathers concerning man's free-will and God's grace, is the very same that he hath maintained."ⁱ Now to shew the manifest falsehood of this assertion, let it be noted,

First. That the freedom he allows to man's will in this matter is only a freedom from co-action,^k not such a freedom from necessity as consists in not being determined to one part: "whereas," saith Vossius, "the liberty of the will, according to the ancients, is a liberty not only from co-action, but from necessity; and almost all of them used this argument against the Manichees, (who doubtless held that man acted spontaneously, and not by compulsion,) that if man acted necessarily, there was no place left for precepts or prohibitions, for rewards or punishments."^l

The Doctor proceeds thus: "St. Basil in many places of his writings doth clearly and plainly assert the absolute necessity of

^g Quod autem electos nos ut essemus sancti, et immaculati coram ipso, hoc est Deo, ante fabricam mundi testatus est; ad præscientiam Dei pertinet, cui omnia futura facta sunt, et antequam fiant, universa sunt nota. Sicut et Paulus ipso prædestinatur in utero matris suæ. Com. Ephes. F. 90, C.

^h F. 73, Lit. H. M.

ⁱ Page 503.

^k Page 151, 152, 258.

^l Libertas arbitrii, secundum veteres, non solum est libertas a coactione, sed etiam a necessitate. Hist. Pelag. l. 7, Th. 1, p. 699. Absque hoc esset, rueret imperium paternum, herile, civile, quando ut homines sponte agant, tamen, si necessario agant, non mandato aut prohibitioni, non præmiis aut pœnis ullus sit relictus locus. Itaque hoc argumento patres plerique omnes adstruere solent arbitrii libertatem adversus Manichæos, qui et ipsi, sine dubio, sponte, nec coacte, hominem agere fatebantur sed necessario omnia agere credebant, p. 702.

the grace of the Holy Spirit, in order to the prosecution of good works acceptable to God, and he depresses the power of free-will. Gregory Nazianzen doth in some part imitate him in his fifty-eighth poem; and as these were the only men of the Greek fathers, so Cyprian is the first of all the Latin ones that speaks out concerning the degeneracy and infirmity of man, and the necessity of divine and supernatural grace. Lactantius is the next that plainly owns these.^m Now this is very artificially said upon several accounts:

1. Upon an account, too frequent with the Doctor, that it is nothing to the purpose; for no Remonstrant or Arminian that I know of, denies the necessity of divine grace in order to the prosecution of good works; none of them denies the degeneracy and the infirmity of man. The Doctor's assertions are, "that men unconverted have a will only to evil; for the liberty of the will to good was taken away from all men by Adam's fall." All the will and power he hath is to incline to evil, and to act it. Thus it is with every man whilst he is in his unregenerate state.^o In which assertions he was so convinced, that even his great patron St. Austin had declared the sound Catholick faith was against him, that in his citation from his forty-seventh epistle he fraudulently leaves out the words that do evince it. For thus they run, *'in fide sanâ Catholicâ perseverent, quæ neque liberum arbitrium negat,* (these words the Doctor left out^q) *sive in vitam malam, sive in bonam neque tantum ei tribuit ut sine gratiâ Dei aliquid valeat, sive ut ex malo convertantur in bonum, sive ut in bono perseveranter proficiat, sive ut ad bonum sempiternum perveniat.*^{p*} "The sound Catholick faith," saith St. Austin, "denies not the liberty of the will in order to a good life." ("The liberty of the will to good was taken away from all men by Adam's fall," saith the Doctor.)

2. It is also very artificially done to cite the names of Basil, St. Cyprian, and Lactantius, without citing either words or book. for I am very confident that Lactantius hath not one word to his purpose, and that Nazianzen saith only that human industry with-

^m Page 503, 504.

ⁿ Page 250.

^o Page 255.

^p Page 164.

^q Page 504.

* 'They may persevere in the sound Catholick faith, which neither denies the freedom of the will to an evil life or a good one, nor attributes so much to it as that it can avail any thing without the grace of God either to its conversion from sin to goodness, or to its continuance in good, or to its attainment of eternal blessedness.' ED.

out the assistance of God's grace and Holy Spirit, is not sufficient to resist temptations, or to enable us to perform our duty.^r St. Cyprian, notwithstanding all he is pretended to say concerning the Degeneracy of Man, proves that he still hath *credendi, vel non credendi libertatem in arbitrio positam*, 'a liberty of will to believe or not believe,' from Deut. xxx, 19. Isaiah i, 19; as also generally the Fathers, St. Austin not excepted, do. And in his epistle to Cornelius he adds,^s that "Christ said to his apostles, 'will you go away?' preserving the law by which man being left to his liberty, and to his own will, chuses to himself either death or salvation."

St. Basil doth not so far depress the power of free-will, but that in his commentary on these words, '*if you be willing and obedient, &c.*' Isaiah i, 19, "he," saith he, "here established the free-will of man, and that with reference to the preceding words, '*wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings, cease to do evil, learn to do well*;'"^t and then he truly reconciles this with the grace of God by ascribing the fruits of holiness to the Holy Ghost; but adding that "first we must will, and then our will shall be established." On the fourteenth chapter of Isaiah, verse 21, he saith "every man is able by his own choice, either to be a holy seed, or the contrary." Elsewhere he saith, "it depends on our own choice either to abstain from iniquity, or to be wicked."^u

St. Jerom is introduced "as a great and hearty opposer of free-will, as it imports a natural ability in ail men to chuse good, without the assistance of supernatural grace,"^y and what is that to us who only do assert it *sub ipso gratiæ adjutorio*, 'by the as-

^r Test. ad Quirinum, l. 3.

^s Servans scilicet legem qua homo libertati suæ relictus, et in arbitrio proprio constitutus, sibimet ipsi vel mortem appetit, vel salutem, Ed. 59, Ep. Oxon. p. 150, 151.

^t Τὸ αὐτεξέρισον ἐντεῦθεν παρισῶν μάλιστα τῆς τῶν ἀνθρώπων φύσεως πᾶσι γὰρ τοῖς προκειμένοις ἠγάμεθα τὴν ἐπαγωγὴν ταυτην, ἀρμόζειν. Το. 2, p. 56, C. πρότερον μὲν τοι θελήσαι δεῖ ἵνα τὸ ἐφ' ἡμῖν ἀκαταναγκασον ἦ. P. 57, B.

^u Δύναται ἢ ἕκαστος ἐκ τῆς ἐαυτοῦ προαιρέσεως ἢ σπέρμα ἅγιον εἶναι, ἢ τὸ ἐναντίον. P. 259, C.

^y Ἐκ τῆς ἡμετέρας προαιρέσεως ἤρτεται, ἐφ' ἡμῖν ὄντος ἢ ἀπέχεσθαι τῆς πονηρίας ἢ μοχθηροῖς εἶναι. Το. 1, p. 365, 366

^y P. 305.

sistance of that grace?' But let us hear St Jerom in his commentary on those words of Isaiah, 'If ye be willing, &c.' "he" saith the prophet, "preserves the liberty of the will to both parts, that the punishment or the reward may be not from the fore-judgment of God, but from the good works of every one."^z In his third book against the Pelagians, he speaks thus to Critobalus, "this is what I had told thee in the beginning, —that it is put into our power either to sin or not to sin, and either to extend our hand to good or evil, that the liberty of the will may be preserved."^a It is in the same book that he cites those words of Christ the Doctor insists on, 'no man can come unto me except my Father draw him;' where he adds these words, "where mercy and grace is, free-will in part doth cease, which consists only in this,—that that we will, and desire, and assent to the things proposed; but it is in the power of God that what we desire, labour after, or endeavour, by his aid and help, we may be able to fulfill;"^b to which we heartily subscribe. The Doctor in his citation from his second book against Jovinian,^c shews again his artifice in leaving out the preceding words, which plainly make against him, and beginning with an imperfect sentence. The whole sentence in St. Jerom runs verbatim thus, *liberi arbitrii nos condidit Deus, nec ad virtutes, nec ad vitia necessitate trahimur, alioquin ubi necessitas est, nec damnatio, nec corona est, sicut* (then follow the words cited) *in bonis operibus perfectior est Deus, non volentis neque currentis sed miserentis et adjuvantis Dei* (there they end) *ut pervenire valeamus ad calcem, sic in malis et peccatis, semina nostra sunt incentiva, et perfectio diaboli;*^d that is, 'God hath created us with free-will, nor are we drawn by necessity either to vice or virtue; for otherwise where there is necessity, there is neither (place for) condemnation nor reward. And as in good works, it is God that perfects them, for it is not of him that wills, or runs, (there is the office of the will,) but of God who sheweth mercy, and

^z Liberum servat arbitrium, ut in utramque partem non ex præjudicio Dei, sed ex meritis singulorum, vel pena, vel præmium sit. F. 4, G.

^a Hoc est quod tibi in principio dixerim, in nostra esse positum potestate vel peccare, vel non peccare, et vel ad bonum, vel ad malum extendere manum, ut liberum servetur arbitrium. Fol. 108, Lit. I.

^b Ubi autem misericordia et gratia est, liberum ex parte cessat arbitrium, quod in eo tantum positum est, ut velimus, et cupiamus, et placiti tribuamus assensum, jam in Domini potestate est ut quod cupimus, quod laboramus, et nitimur, ^hius ope et auxilio et implere valeamus. Ibid. Lit. D. E.

^c Page 505.

^d α. 2, adv. Jovinian. F. 26, Lit. I.

assists us to be able to bring our works unto perfection; so as to sins and evil actions, we have in ourselves the seeds of evil, inciting us to do them, but the devil perfects the work.' And that this is the true exposition of St. Jerom's words, is evident from himself; for having cited those words of the apostle, '*it is not of him that willeth, &c.*' he immediately adds, "hence we understand that it belongs to us to will and run; but that our will and running may be completed, belongs to the mercy of God: and so it comes to pass that in our willing and running, our free-will is preserved, and in the perfecting or consummation of our will and course, all things are left to the power of God."^e

Moreover in the same book against Jovinian he introduces our Lord speaking thus to his disciples, "in my Father's house are many mansions; I would have told you, I go to prepare a mansion for you," *si non unusquisque mansionem sibi non ex largitate Dei, sed ex propriis operibus præpararet, et ideo non est meum parare, sed vestrum*; that is, 'if every one did not prepare a mansion for himself, not from the bounty of God, but his own proper works, whence it is not my part, but yours to do it.'^f

And on Christ's answer to the petition of the sons of Zebedee, '*to sit on my right hand and my left, is not mine to give,*' he descants thus, "it is not of the Son to give, and how then is it of the Father to prepare?"^g Diverse mansions, saith Christ, are prepared in heaven for manifold and diverse virtues, *quas non personæ accipiunt sed opera*, 'which men receive not on account of their persons, but their works.' *Frustra ergo a me petitis, quod in vobis situm est*, 'you therefore in vain ask that of me which is in your own power to obtain,' which my Father hath prepared for them who, by their worthy virtues, are to ascend to so great a dignity."

"Prosper of Aquitain, who writ of grace and free-will, though," saith the Doctor, "he owns the latter, yet requires the former as absolutely necessary to the producing of any good work;" and so do we.

"St. Austin," saith he, "was as much for free-will as any father, as his books against the Manichees testify."^h But then

^e Ex quibus intelligimus nostrum quidem esse, velle, et currere, sed ut voluntas nostra compleatur, et cursus, ad Dei misericordiam pertinere, atque ita fieri ut et in voluntate nostra, et in cursu, liberum servetur arbitrium, et in consummatione voluntatis, et cursus, Dei cuncta potentia relinquantur. Lib. 1, contr. Pelag. F. 94; A.

^f F. 33, A.

^g Ibid.

^h Page 504.

this was the difference betwixt him and them, that they stood firm to all that they delivered on this subject; but he retracts almost all he had delivered in these books, with an irresistible evidence of reason and *as the voice of all mankind*, of which I have said sufficient under this head.

ART. THIRD. As for the antiquity of the irresistibility of grace, he hath only one, St. Austin, to produce against a hundred testimonies of the Fathers cited by Vossius, to prove that God laid no necessity upon men's will to act, as he must do, if he act irresistibly upon it, that being necessary *quod non potest aliter se habere*, 'which cannot be otherwise.' The citations of Vossius begin, Hist. Pelag. l. 7, p. 712; and end p. 716, with these words, "*sed tandem allegandi veteres finis esto, quando, non dico, si omnia omnium indicare velimus (quod ne possemus quidem) sed vel sola quæ possumus, nullus sit futurus finis.** Calvinⁱ saith that *voluntatem movet Deus non qualiter multis seculis traditum est, ut nostræ electionis sit motioni Dei obtemperare, vel refragari.†* And that this is true of the first four centuries I have fully proved."

ART. FOURTH. The fourth article concerning the extent of Christ's redemption, being that which draws all the rest after it, on which side soever the truth lies, the Doctor musters up all his strength to free his limited extent of it from the charge of novelty, but all in vain; he begins thus, "what some of the Fathers taught, concerning the limited extent of Christ's redemption is the same that I have delivered in one of the foregoing discourses."^k To which words I oppose the contrary assertion of Vossius in these words; *veteris ecclesiæ judicium fuit,—Christum pro culpa universalis hominibus providisse a remedio universalis, solvendo λότρον infiniti pretii, ne ejus defectu periret quispiam;*^l that is, 'it was the judgment of the ancient church, that Christ provided an universal remedy for the universal sin of man by paying a price of infinite value, that no man might perish for want of it.' And this he proves by plain testimonies from p. 658 to p. 670. The learned

* 'But at length let there be an end of quoting the ancients, since I do not say, that if we wish to mark *all* the passages in all of them, (which indeed we cannot,) but if we were to point out even those only which we are able to do, there would be no end to the labour.' ED.

‡ Instit. l. 2, c. 3, § 11.

† 'God moves the will, not in the manner described in the several preceding ages, that is, that it is in our own choice to obey or to resist the motion of God.' ED.

^k Page 506.

^l Hist. Pelag. l. 7, Part. 1, Th. 3, p. 756.

Dally* proves from about a thousand testimonies of one hundred and twenty Fathers the same doctrine, and concludes thus, *certe qui Christum pro solis electis mortuum absolute, et ut vulgo loquuntur, in terminis dixerit, octo primis Christianismi seculis invenio neminem*; ‘throughout eight centuries of christianity, I find not one single person who directly, and in terms saith, that Christ died only for the elect.’

“This doctrine,” saith Vossius, “the Fathers proved from all those places of scripture, which say Christ died for all, and especially for the unbelievers, impenitent, and those that perish. Nor did they think that those places which say Christ died for the church, or that the benefits of his death belonged only to believers, were repugnant to these testimonies; for these doctors of the church not obscurely taught that the death of Christ is considered two ways; *vel quod ad virtutem, et vim mortis, et tum Christi morientis, tum Patris eum mittentis voluntatem, quam antecedentem vocant*, ‘either as to the force and virtue of it, and as to the antecedent will both of Christ dying, and the Father sending him;’ and in this sense Christ died for, and redeemed all and singular without exception: or Christ’s death may be considered, *quod ad effectum, fructumque ex eâ, promanantem, et voluntatem Christi, et Patris quam dicunt consequentem*, ‘as to the effect and fruit accruing to men from it, and as to the consequent will of Christ, and of the Father;’ and in this respect it is confessed, that as the fruit of Christ’s death belongs not to all, that depending on the will of man applying Christ’s merits to himself, so neither can Christ be said to die for all;”ⁿ which words contain a full answer to all the Doctor hath offered from the Fathers on this head. And Dally doth particularly and copiously confute him in every Father that he hath alledged.

Thus to his citation from the letter of the church of Smyrna, which saith we can never forsake Christ, “who suffered for the salvation of the whole world of those that are saved,”^s Mr. Dally saith, “this is impertinent, as saying only what we all confess, but not denying that which is in controversy, viz. that Christ died also for them who are not actually saved, as almost all the ancients say he did: (and among them Polycarp himself, the person mentioned in this letter, who saith that God will require the blood of

^m Apol. Part. 4, p. 944, 945.

ⁿ Ibid. p. 656, 657.

^s Περὶ τῆς τῶ πάντοσ κόσμῳ τῶν σωζομένων σωτηρίας. § 15.

Christ, ° ἀπὸ τῶν ἀπειθῆντων αὐτῷ, ‘from those that have not believed in him,’ or have not obeyed him:’) he also adds, that Rufinus translated these very words, thus, *qui mortem pro totius mundi salute sustinuit*, ‘who suffered death for the salvation of the whole world.’ (Secondly.) He cites Origen saying, “there is a world of the saints, and a world of the wicked.”^p Now to shew the artifice of this citation let it be observed, that Origen there speaking of the world above the stars, saith “it is not subject of corruption, *sanctorum quippe est, et ad liquidum perfectorum mundus ille*, ‘for that is the world of the saints made completely perfect,’ *et non impiorum sicut ille noster*, ‘and not as is that in which we live, the world of the wicked.’” Now whether it be fair dealing to use such citations, let the learned judge. In his second citation he sends us to Origen’s commentary on St. John, which contains four hundred and twenty-two pages; but the place referred to is in p. 147, 148, where he doth not positively say that John i, 29, 1 John ii, 2, are to be interpreted of the church only, but by way of enquiry saith, ἡμεῖς δὲ ζητῶμεν, εἰ κατὰ τὸ ἴδιον ὁ ἀμνὸς τῆ θεῆ ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἁμαρτιαν τῆ κόσμου, κόσμον νοητέον ὑγίως τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, that is, ‘but we enquire whether in that saying, *Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world*, by the world we can rightly understand the church.’ Nor doth he give us the least hint that by the church he only understands the elect, and not the universal church. Let us now hear his true exposition of these words, which we find in the same commentary, ἐπὶ τὸ γὰρ αἴρειν ἐνεργεῖ ἀπὸ ἐνὸς ἐκάστου τῶν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ, ‘he labours to take it away from every man in the world, that sin may be took from the whole world.’^q Now let the Doctor understand this either of the guilt or the dominion of sin, it is all one, for Christ delivers no man from the dominion of sin, whom he delivers not also from the guilt of sin. What he thought of the other place, we learn from his own words but a little before the place referred to, viz. that “this Lamb of God was sacrificed, ἵνα ἄρῃ ἁμαρτίαν ἐκ ὀλίγων, ἀλλὰ ὄλεε τῆ κόσμου περὶ ἧ καὶ πέπονθε,” ‘that he might take away the sins, not of some few only, but of the universal world for which he suffered;’ for if any man sin we have an advocate, &c. not for our sins only, but for the whole world;” so Origen. Again, in the same commentary, he saith, “Christ died, ὑπερ

πάντος λογικῶς, 'for every thing that had reason,' the stars not excepted;" (whom he thought not only to have reason, but also a capacity of sinning;) and this he proves from the words of the apostle, 'he tasted death for every one.' Heb. ii, 9. See many other texts of the like nature cited from Origen by Dally, from p. 765, to 768.

Thirdly. His citation from St. Ambrose is both mistaken and impertinent. It is mistaken, for the author of the book, *De Vocatione Gentium*, is not St. Ambrose, but either PROSPER as Dally, or P. LEO as Quesnel seemeth to have proved. It is also cited falsely; for in the author the whole words run thus, *habet ergo populus Dei plenitudinem suam (et quamvis magna pars hominum salvantis gratiam aut repellat, aut negligat) in electis tamen et præscitis, et ab omnium generalitate discretis, specialis quædam censetur universitas, ut de toto mundo totus mundus liberatus, et ab omnibus hominibus, omnes homines videantur assumpti.** But the Doctor cites them thus, *habet populus plenitudinem suam, in electis enim et præscitis, &c.*, leaving out the words in the parenthesis, which plainly shew that "a great part of men resist and neglect the grace of that God who would save them." Moreover, he is still unhappy in making this citation from this author, who, in the very next chapter, not only asserts Universal Redemption, but declares it to be the doctrine of the universal church. For having cited these words of the apostle, 'that God would have all men to be saved;' he adds, *quam particulam verborum apostoli ita integre pleneque suscipimus, ut nihil ei de præcedentibus, sive subjectis, quæ ad eam pertinent, subtrahamus,^b* that is, 'which portion of the words of the apostle we so entirely and fully do embrace, as to subtract nothing from it relating to the precedent words (requiring us to make supplications for all men) or the words following:' (relating to kings and all that are in authority:) then repeating all the apostle's words, which conclude thus, 'there is one Lord Jesus Christ who gave himself a ransom for all,' he proceeds thus, "Of this rule of the apostolical doctrine, *quæ ecclesia universalis imbuatur,* 'with which the universal

^s Page 58.

^a Lib. 1, c. 3.

* The people of God therefore possess his fulness; and although a great portion of men reject or neglect the grace of Him who would save them, yet in the elect and those who are foreknown and distinguished from the generality of all men, a certain special universality is perceived, so that all the world seem to be liberated from all the world, and all men taken away from all men. ED.

^b Cap. 4.

church is furnished,' let us enquire, *quid in ipsâ universalis ecclesia sentiat*, 'what was the sense of the universal church about it?' For we cannot doubt what was her sense of the precept, when we know what was the obedience she paid to it. Now the apostle's precept," saith he, "is this, that prayers, and supplications, and giving of thanks should be made for all men; which law of supplications the devotion of all the priests and faithful so uniformly receives, that there is no part of the world in which such prayers are not celebrated by the christians.

"The church therefore every where prays to God not only for the saints, and the regenerate in Christ, but also for all infidels and enemies of the cross of Christ; for all idolaters, all the persecutors of Christ's members, for the unbelieving Jews, for Hereticks, and Schismaticks; and what doth she desire for these but that, *ab erroribus suis convertantur ad Deum, accipiant fidem, accipiant charitatem, et de ignorantia tenebris liberati in agnitionem veniant veritatis?* that is, 'that they might be converted from their errors to God, might have faith and charity, and being delivered from the darkness of ignorance, might come to the acknowledgment of the truth.' And thus," saith he, "our merciful and just God requires that prayer should be made to him for all men?" Now could the whole church thus beg these blessings peculiar to saints, and the redeemed of the Lord, for all infidels, all enemies of the cross of Christ, and all persecutors of Christ's members, unless she believed that Christ died for the salvation of them all, at least intentionally? Or could God require her thus to pray for all men, if he were not willing they should be saved?

As for the true St Ambrose, let him consult the learned Dally,^c and he will find no less than twenty-eight passages cited from him to this effect, that "the Lord Jesus came, *omnes salvos facere peccatores*, 'to save all sinners,' and therefore was not to pass by even the traitor Judas, that all men might take notice that in the election of this traitor, *salvandorum omnium insigne prætendit*, 'he holds forth an indication that he would have all men to be saved;' that God shews all men, *ut quod in eo fuit omnes voluit liberare*, 'that, as far as in him lies, he would deliver all men from perishing.' And that if any one perish he therefore doth so, *quia*

c From page 799, to page 807.

curari noluit cum remedium haberet quo posset evadere, 'because he would not be cured when he had a remedy by which he could escape ruin.'"

Fourthly. He cites, as from St. Jerom, a passage from a commentary on Job xxxviii, which as it is wholly impertinent, as proving nothing but that the actual benefit of Christ's death belongs only to the faithful; so all scholars know it to be a spurious piece: and cites, from his commentary on St. Matthew xx, 28, these words, "that when Christ took upon him the form of a servant, that he might shed his blood for the world, he said not that he gave his life a redemption for ALL, but for MANY, *hoc est pro iis qui credere voluerunt*, that is for them who would believe." Now this is said agreeable to that which Vossius observed, "that as to the will of Christ, and of the Father sending him, that was general, that all men should be saved; but as to the effect,—that depending on the will of man, he died not for all, but for many; because many refused the benefit offered to them by Christ" That this is indeed the mind of St. Jerom, is evident from his own words, "*vult Deus salvari omnes, et in agnitionem veritatis venire, sed quia nullus absque propria voluntate salvatur, liberi enim arbitrii sumus, vult nos bonum velle, ut cum voluerimus, velit in nobis et ipse suum complere consilium.*"* It therefore was, according to St. Jerom, the will and counsel of God that all should be saved; but so as that, having free-will, they should be willing to be saved, because no man is saved without his own will. In his commentary on Isaiah lxiii, having cited these words of St. John, '*God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that every one that believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;*' he adds, "if the prudent reader enquire why all men are not saved, if our Saviour loved them and redeemed them by his blood, the cause plainly follows in these words, *ipsi autem noluerunt*, 'but they would not.' God therefore would have saved them who desired to be saved, and provoked them to be saved that their will might be rewarded, *sed illi credere noluerunt*, 'but they would not believe.'" In his epistle to Oceanus, he saith, "John Baptist must lie, when he said, Behold the Lamb

d Com. in Ep. 91, L.

* 'God wills that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth: But since no man is saved against his own consent, (for we are endowed with freedom of choice) he is desirous of our willing what is good that, after we have willed it, he also may himself fulfil his counsel in us.' ED.

e F. 105, L.

of God who taketh away the sins of the world, *si sunt adhuc in seculo quorum Christus peccata non tulerit*, ‘if there be any yet living for whose sins Christ did not suffer.’”^f See ten other passages to the same effect in Dally, from p. 821, to 825.

Fifthly. Whereas he brings in St. Chrysostom expounding those words of Christ, ‘*I lay down my life for my sheep,*’ by *the people of God, foreknown and predestinated by him,*”^g as if he made the predestinated only to be the same as Christ’s sheep; here again the Doctor imposes upon the reader; for Chrysostom there is not interpreting the word *sheep*, but these words, verse 14, ‘*I know and am known of mine;*’ “and this,” saith he, “is like to that of St. Paul, *God hath not cast off his people whom he foreknew, and the Lord knoweth who are his.*” Both which places he interprets of “God’s foresight of their faith and fitness to be the objects of his favour, or of their stability in truth and righteousness;”^h and so the import of the words of Chrysostom is plainly this, that our Lord foreknew who would be humble, meek, tractable, who would own him as the true Shepherd, and hear his voice, and laid down his life for them, and for them only in the sense explained by Vossius: of PREDESTINATION I find not one word. Moreover both in that and the foregoing homily he plainly says, “that Christ suffered for the salvation of the world, and that God gave up his Son to the death for us all.”ⁱ And indeed it is somewhat surprising to find Chrysostom produced for an opinion which in twenty-two places cited by Dally,^k he so plainly contradicts, declaring, “that God made the creation, and all us, that he might save us, and delivering us from error, might give us the fruition of his kingdom; that God had prepared a kingdom even for them that shall be damned; that Christ died for all men to do his part to save all men; that he offered his sacrifice, *ὑπερ πάσης τῆς φύσεως*, ‘for the whole nature’ of man;” with many other things of a like nature.

Sixthly. Whereas the Doctor introduceth St. Austin interpreting these words, ‘*God would have all men to be saved;*’ *de generibus singulorum, et non de singulis generum*, that is, ‘not of all men in general, but of some of all kinds;’ that is, as Vossius,^l and Dally,^m in his *Ἐπίκρισις*, hath fully proved, against the pla-

^f Ep. 85, tom. 2, f. 113, M.

^g Page 509.

^h Τὸν λαὸν ὃν προέγνω τέττασι ὃν ἴδει σαφῶς ἐπιτήδειον εἶναι καὶ πᾶν δεξιόμενον. Tom. 5, p. 157, vide Tom. 4, p. 351.

ⁱ Hem. 59, 60.

^k Page 806, ad p. 818.

^l Page 634.

^m Cap. 6.

meaning of the text. This only can be hence inferred, that St. Austin did not think this place a just proof of the doctrine of the Universal Redemption of all mankind, as all the Greek Scholiasts did. His second citation from St. Austin is very artificially produced; for, whereas the words of St. Austin are, "*universa utique hoc dicit ecclesiæ, quam plerumque ipsam mundi nomine appellat:*"* he cites them thus, *ecclesiam plerumque etiam ipsam mundi nomine appellat.* †

Moreover, that St. Austin held the doctrine of Universal Redemption is evident from his own words, that, *omnes utique mortui sunt in peccatis, nemine prorsus excepto, et pro omnibus mortuis vicus mortuus est unus,* 'all men, none at all excepted, are dead in sin; and for all that were dead, one that liveth died.' And this he largely proves from those words of the apostle, 'for if one died for all, then were all dead; and he died for all, that they who live might not live to themselves, but to him that died for them.' 2 Cor. v, 14. In this argument he triumphs over the Pelagians, that all without exception being dead, either in original or actual sins, infants must be so; and Christ dying for all that were dead, must die for them. So *De Civit. Dei*, l. 20, c. 6, p. 1202. *Ed. Basil. contra Julianum Pelagianum*, l. 6, c. 4, p. 1109, c. 1, 5, p. 1121. P. C. c. 5. p. 1121, P. c. 13, p. 1142. B. See above forty places cited by Dally from St. Austin, to the same effect, from p. 829, to p. 843.

Seventhly. As for Prosper Aquitanus, that he asserted copiously the same doctrine, Dally proves by testimonies contained in his works from p. 854, to p. 879: and in particular, whereas, some Gallican Divines had objected as matter of reproach to St. Austin, that he maintained, *quod non omnes homines vult Deus salvos fieri, sed certum numerum prædestinatorum, et quod non pro totius mundi redemptione Salvator sit crucifixus, item quod non pro totius mundi salute, et redemptione Dominus noster Jesus Christus sit passus,** that is, that he held the same doctrine which Dr. Edwards does; as, by objecting these doctrines as reproaches to him, these divines sufficiently shew that in their judgments the doctrine of the church was contrary to these sentiments; so Pros-

a Tom. 9, tr. 67, in Johan. p. 457.

* 'He speaks this of the Universal Church, which he most frequently calls by the name of the world.' ED.

† 'He also generally calls the church itself by the name of the world.' ED.

* 'That God wills that none should be saved except a certain number of the predestinated, and that the Saviour was not crucified for the redemption of the whole world, and also that our Lord Jesus Christ did not suffer for the salvation and redemption of the whole world.' ED.

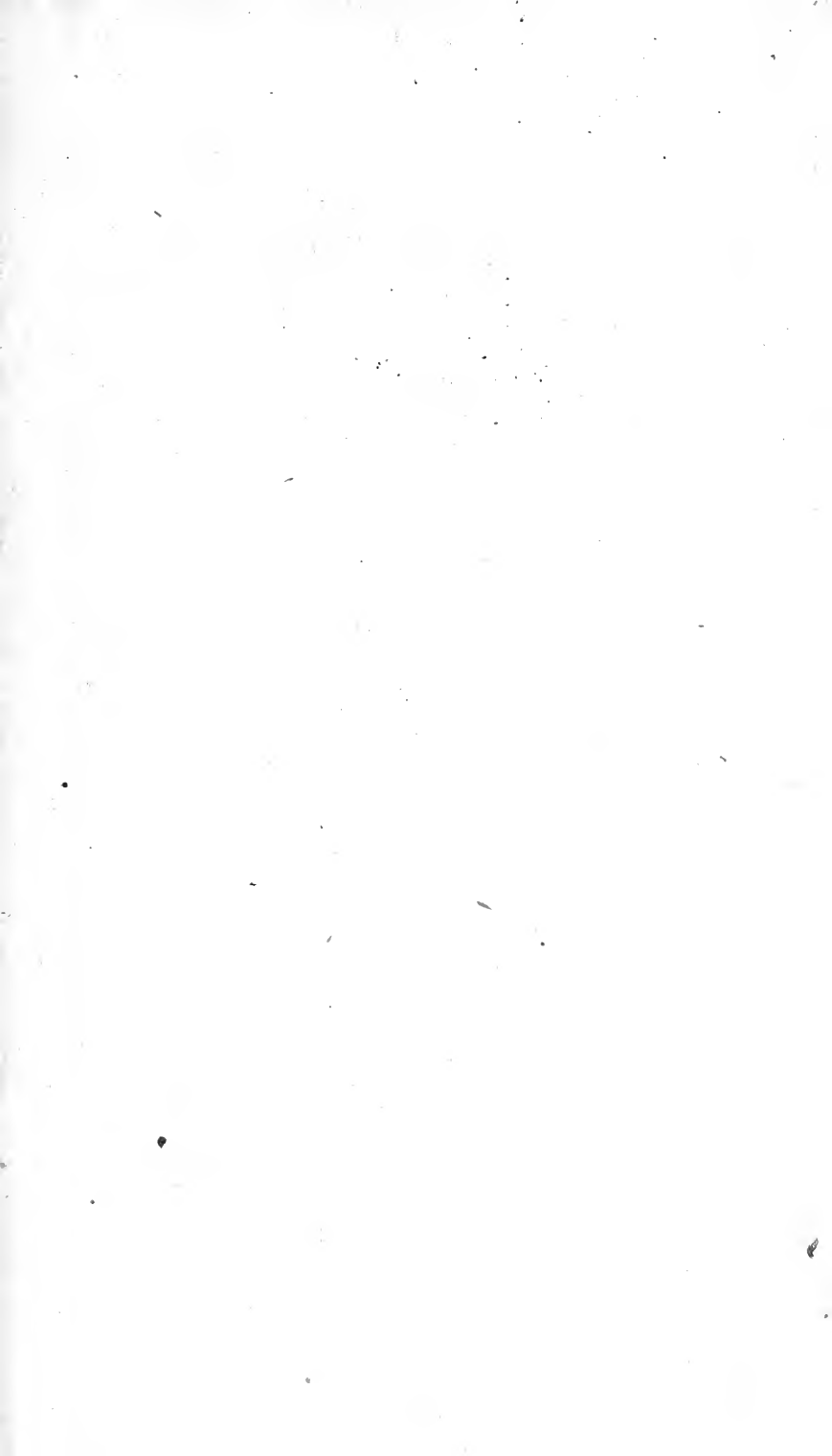
per, by declaring so expressly that these accusations were unjust reproaches, invented to blast the memory of Austin, that "they were prodigious and blasphemous lies," that they objected to him "impious and profane opinions, not one of which ever came into the heart of St. Austin," sufficiently shews that neither he nor St. Austin ever held any of those doctrines, and that he looked upon them as impious and profane opinions. See Dally, p. 856.

Lastly. As for the article of the Saints' final perseverance, the Doctor had not the confidence to cite one Father for it, Vossius having so expressly told him, "that all antiquity impugned the indefectibility of the saints, and that they only could deny the contrary to be the common doctrine of antiquity, *qui in antiquitate plane sunt hospites*, 'who are mere strangers to it.' (Hist. Pelag. l. 6. p. 566.) Now from what hath been thus established, two things do evidently follow, viz.

1. That all the members of the Church of England, are obliged, by the express precept of the Church of England, not to teach or propound to the people, as an article of faith, any of those doctrines which Dr. Edwards hath so zealously maintained in his late book upon these Five Articles, they being such as the Catholic Fathers and ancient Bishops did never gather from the holy scriptures.^o For that the generality of the Fathers taught the contrary to these doctrines from the holy scriptures, hath been fully proved.

2. Whereas it hath hitherto been thought, and by the divines of the Church of England religiously maintained, and to have been the glory of the Church of England, that both in her doctrine and discipline she kept close to the sentiments of primitive antiquity: if these doctrines, which I have shewed to have been the common sentiments of the church of Christ, do contradict her avowed doctrines, it must be owned that in these doctrines she hath departed from the common sentiments of the best antiquity.

^o Imprimis vero videbunt (episcopi) ne quid unquam doceant pro concione (concionatores) quod a populo religiose teneri, et credi velint, nisi quod consentaneum sit doctrina veteris et novi testamenti; quodque ex illa ipsa doctrina catholici patres, et veteres episcopi collegerint, Canones, Edit. A. D. 1571, cap. Concionatores.



J. H. H. H.

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