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A N S W E R

T O T H E

Rev. Mr. TOPLADY'S

"VINDICATION of the DECREES," &c.

By the AUTHOR of the CHECKS.

"The" [*absolute*] "predestination of some to LIFE, &c. cannot be maintained without admitting the" [*absolute*] "reprobation of some others to DEATH, &c. and all who have subscribed the said article" [*the XVII. in a calvinian sense*] "are bound in HONOUR, CONSCIENCE, and LAW to defend" [*calvinian, absolute*] "reprobation, were it only to keep the XVIIth article" [*taken in a calvinian sense*] "UPON ITS LEGS." "The Rev. Mr. Toplady's *Historic Proof of Calvinism*, p. 574.

L O N D O N:

Printed and sold at the New Chapel, City-Road; and at the Rev. Mr. WESLEY'S Preaching-Houses in Town and Country. 1788.

RB23 a 8984



I N T R O D U C T I O N.

WHEN the Author of *Pietas Oxoniensis* took his temporary leave of me, in his *Finishing Stroke*, he recommended to the public the book which I am going to answer. His recommendation runs thus: "whosoever will consult the Rev. Mr. Toplady's last publication, intitled, *More Work for Mr. J. Wesley*, [or, *A Vindication of the Decrees, &c.*] will there find a full answer to all those cavils which Papists, Socinians, Pelagians, Arminians, and Perfectionists bring against those doctrines commonly called Calvinist, as if they tended to promote licentiousness, or to make God cruel, unjust, and unmerciful, and will see every one of their objections retorted upon themselves in a most masterly manner." *Fin. Stroke*, page 33. Soon after Mr. Hill had thus extolled Mr. Toplady's performance, I was informed that many of the Calvinists said, that it was an unanswerable defence of their doctrines. This raised in me a desire to judge for myself; and when I had sent for, and read this admired book, I was so far from being of Mr. Hill's sentiment, that I promised my readers to demonstrate, from that very book, the inconclusiveness of the strongest arguments, by which Calvinism is supported. Mr. Hill, by unexpectedly entering the lists again, caused me to delay the fulfilling of my promise. But having now

completed my answer to his fictitious creeds, I hasten to complete also my *Logica Genevensis*.

Did I write a book entitled *Charitas Genevensis*, I might easily shew from Mr. Toplady's performance, that "the doctrines of grace" [so called] are closely connected with "the doctrines of free wrath." But if that gentleman, in his controversial heat, has forgotten what he owed to Mr. Wesley and to himself, this is no reason why I should forget the title of my book, which calls me to point out *bad arguments* of our opponents, and not their *ill humour*. If I absurdly spent my time in passing a censure upon Mr. Toplady's spirit, he would with reason say, as he does in the *Introduction* to his *Historic proof*, page 35, "After all, what has my pride or my humility to do with the argument in hand? whether I am haughty or meek, is of no more consequence either to that, or to the public, than whether I am tall or short." Besides, having again and again, myself, requested our opponents not to wire-draw the controversy, by personal reflections, but to weigh with candour the arguments which are offered, I should be inexcusable if I did not set them the example. Should it be said, that Mr. Wesley's character, which Mr. Toplady has so severely attacked, is at stake, and that I ought purposely to stand up in his defence: I reply, that the personal charges which Mr. Toplady interweaves with his arguments, have been already fully answered* by Mr. Olivers, and by that these

* See "A Letter to the Rev. Mr. Toplady," by Mr. Olivers.
charges

charges being chiefly founded upon Mr. Toplady's logical mistakes; they will, of their own accord, fall to the ground, as soon as the mistakes on which they rest shall be exposed. If *Logica Genevensis* is disarmed, *Charitas Genevensis* will not be able to keep the field. If *good sense* takes the former prisoner, the latter will be obliged to surrender to *good nature*. Should this be the case, how great a blessing will our controversy prove to both parties! The conquerors shall have the glory of *vindicating truth*: and the conquered shall have the profit of retiring from the field, with their judgments better informed, and their tempers better regulated! May the God of truth and love grant, that if Mr. Toplady has the *honour* of producing the *best* arguments, I [for one] may have the *advantage* of yielding to them! To be conquered by *truth* and *love*, is to prove conqueror over our two greatest enemies, *error* and *sin*.

Madeley, Oct. 1775.

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A N S W E R

T O

The Rev. Mr. TOPLADY'S "*Vindication
of the Decrees,*" &c.

SECTION I.

Shewing that, upon the calvinian scheme, it is an indubitable truth, that some men shall be saved DO WHAT THEY WILL, till the efficacious decree of calvinian election NECESSITATE them to repent and be saved; and that others shall be damned DO WHAT THEY CAN, till the efficacious decree of calvinian reprobation NECESSITATE them to draw back, and be damned.

THE doctrinal part of the controversy between Mr. Wesley and Mr. Toplady, may, in a great degree, be reduced to this question: if God, from all eternity, absolutely predestinated a fixed number of men [called *the elect*] to eternal life, and absolutely predestinated a fixed number of men [called *the reprobate*] to eternal death, does it not *unavoidably* follow, that "*The elect shall be saved, DO WHAT THEY WILL;*" and that "*The reprobate shall be damned, DO WHAT THEY CAN;*" Mr. Wesley thinks that the consequence is undeniably true: Mr. Toplady says, that it is absolutely false, and charges
Mr.

Mr. Wesley with "*coining blasphemous propositions,*" yea, with "*hatching blasphemy, and then fathering it on others,*" [page 7, 8.] and, in a note upon the word *blasphemous*, he says, "This epithet is not too strong. To say that any shall be *saved, DO WHAT THEY WILL*; and others *damned, DO WHAT THEY CAN*, is, in the *first* instance, blasphemy against the HOLINESS of God; and, in the second, blasphemy against his GODLINESS:" and again, p. 34, after repeating the latter clause of the consequence, viz. "*The reprobate shall be damned, do what they can,*" he expresses himself thus: one would imagine, that none *but* a reprobate could be capable of advancing a position so execrably shocking. Surely it must have cost even Mr. Wesley much, both of time and pains, to invent the idea, &c. Few men's invention ever sunk deeper into the despicable, launched wider into the horrid, and went farther in the prophane. The satanic guilt of the person, who could excogitate, and publish to the world, a position like that, baffles all power of description, and is only to be exceeded (if exceedable) by the satanic shamelessness which dares to lay the back position at the door of other men.—Let us examine, whether any thing, occurring in *Zanchius*, could justly furnish this wretched defamer with materials for a deduction so truly infernal." Agreeably to these *spirited* complaints, Mr. Toplady calls his book, not only "*More Work for Mr. J. Wesley,*" but also "*A Vindication of the Decrees and Providence of God, from the DEFAMATIONS of a late printed paper entitled, 'The consequence proved.'*" I side with Mr. Wesley for the consequence; guarding it against cavils by a clause, which his love for *brevity* made him think needless. And the *guarded consequence*, which I undertake to defend, runs thus: from the doctrine of the absolute and unconditional predestination of some men to eternal life, and of all others to eternal death,

death, it necessarily follows, that some men shall be *saved*, DO WHAT THEY WILL, till the *absolute* and *efficacious* decree of election actually *necessitate* them to obey, and be saved; and that all the rest of mankind shall be damned, DO WHAT THEY CAN, till the *absolute* and *efficacious* decree of reprobation *necessitate* them to sin, and be damned.

An illustration will, at once, shew the justness of this consequence to the unprejudiced reader. Fifty fishes sport in a muddy pond, where they have received life. The skilful and almighty power of the pond has absolutely decreed, that *ten* of these fishes, properly marked with a shining mark, called *Election*, shall absolutely be caught in a certain net, called a *gospel-net*; on a certain day, called *the day of his power*; and that they shall, every one, be cast into a delightful river, where he has engaged himself, by an eternal covenant of particular redemption, to bring them without fail. The same omnipotent Proprietor of the pond has likewise absolutely decreed, that all the rest of the fishes, namely *forty*, which are properly distinguished by a black mark, called *Reprobation*, shall never be caught in the *gospel-net*; or that, if they are intangled in it at any time, they shall always be drawn out of it, and so shall necessarily continue in the muddy pond, till on a certain day, called *the day of his wrath*, he shall sweep the pond with a certain net, called a *law-net*, catch them all, and cast them into a lake of fire and brimstone, which he has engaged himself, by an everlasting covenant of non-redemption; to bring them all without fail, that they may answer the end of their predestination to death, which is to shew the goodness of his *law-net*, and to destroy them for having been bred in the *muddy pond*, and not for having been caught in the *gospel-net*. The owner of the pond is wise, as well as powerful. He knows, that, absolutely to

secure:

secure the END to which his fishes are absolutely predestinated, he must also absolutely *secure* the MEANS, which conduce to that end; and therefore, that none may escape their happy, or their unfortunate predestination, he keeps night and day his hold of them all, by a strong hook, called *necessity*, and by an invisible line, called *divine decrees*. By means of this line and hook it happens, that, if the fishes, which bear the mark *election*, are ever so loth to come into the gospel-net, or to stay therein, they are always drawn into it in a day of powerful love; and if the fishes which bear the mark of *reprobation*, are, for a time, ever so desirous to wrap themselves in the gospel-net, they are always drawn out of it in the day of powerful wrath. For, though the fishes *seem* to swim ever so freely, yet their motions are all *absolutely fixed* by the owner of the pond, and determined by means of the above-mentioned line and hook. If this is the case, says Mr. Wesley, *ten* fishes shall go into the delightful river, let them *do what they will*, let them plunge in the mud of their pond ever so briskly, or leap towards the lake of fire ever so often, while they have any liberty to plunge or to leap. And all the rest of the fishes, *forty* in number, shall go into the lake of fire, let them *do what they can*, let them involve themselves ever so long in the gospel-net, and leap ever so often towards the fine river, before they are absolutely necessitated to go, through the mud of their own pond, into the sulphurous pool. The consequence is undeniable, and I make no doubt but all unprejudiced persons see it as well as myself: as sure as two and two make four, or, if you please, as sure as *ten* and *forty* make fifty, so sure *ten* fishes shall be finally caught in the gospel-net, and *forty* in the law-net.

Should

Should Mr. Toplady say, that this is only an illustration, I drop it, and roundly assert, that if two men, suppose *Solomon* and *Abfalom*, are *absolutely* predestinated to eternal life: while two other men [suppose Mr. Baxter and Mr. Wesley] are *absolutely* predestinated to eternal death: the two elect shall be saved *do what they will*, and the two reprobates shall be damned *do what they can*. That is, let *Solomon* and *Abfalom* worship the abomination of the *Zidonians*, and of the *Moabites*, in ever so public a manner; let them, for years, indulge themselves with heathenish women collected from all countries: if they have a mind, let them murder their brothers, defile their sisters, and imitate the incestuous *Corinthian*, who took his own father's wife: yet, they can never really endanger their finished salvation. The indelible mark of *unconditional election to life* is upon them: and forcible, victorious grace shall, in their last moments, if not before, draw them irresistibly and infallibly from iniquity to repentance. Death shall unavoidably make an end of their *indwelling sin*; and to heaven they shall unavoidably go. On the other hand, let a *Baxter*, and a *Wesley*, astonish the world by their ministerial labours: let them write, speak, and live in such a manner, as to stem the torrent of iniquity, and turn thousands to righteousness: with *St. Paul* let them take up their cross daily, and preach and pray, not only with tears, but *with the demonstration of the spirit of power*; let unwearied patience, and matchless diligence carry them with increasing fortitude through all the persecutions, dangers, and trials, which they meet with from the men of the world, and from false brethren: let them hold on in this wonderful way to their dying day; yet [if the indelible mark of *unconditional reprobation to death* is upon them] necessitating, victorious wrath, shall, in their last moments, if not before,

before, make them *necessarily* turn from righteousness, and *unavoidably* draw back to perdition: so shall they be fitted for the lake of fire, the end to which [if God calvinistically passed them by] they were absolutely ordained through the predestinated medium of *remediless* sin and *final* apostacy.

This is the true state of the case: to spend time in proving it, would be offering the judicious reader as great an insult, as if I detained him to prove, that the *north* is opposed to the *south*. But what does Mr. Toplady say against this consequence, "*if Calvinism is true, the reprobates shall be damned do what they can?*" He advances the following warm argument.

ARGUMENT I. Page 55, "Can Mr. Wesley produce a single instance of any one man, who did all he could to be saved, and yet was lost? if he *can*, let him tell us who that man was, where he lived, when he died, what he did, and how it came to pass he laboured in vain.—If he *cannot*, let him either retract his consequences, or continue to be posted for a shameless traducer."

I answer: (1) To require Mr. Wesley to shew a man who did all he could, and yet was lost, is requiring him to prove that calvinian reprobation is *true*;—a thing this, which he can no more do, than he can prove that God is *false*. Mr. Wesley never said, that any man was damned after doing his best to be saved: he only says, that, *if Calvinism is true*, the reprobates shall all be damned, though they should all do their best to be saved, till the EFFICACIOUS *decree* of their absolute reprobation necessitates them to draw back and be damned.

(2) As Mr. Toplady's bold request may impose upon his inattentive readers, I beg leave to point out its absurdity by a short illustration. Mr. Wesley says, *if there is a mountain of gold*, it is heavier than

than a handful of feathers, and his consequence passes for true in England: but a gentleman, who teaches logic in mystic Geneva, thinks that it is absolutely false, and that Mr. Wesley's "*forehead must be petrified, and quite impervious to a blush*" for advancing it. Can Mr. Wesley, says he, shew us a mountain of gold which is really heavier than a handful of feathers? If he *can*, let him tell us what mountain it is, where it lies, in what latitude, how high it is, and who did ever ascend to the top of it.—If he cannot, let him either retract his consequences, or continue to be posted for a *shameless traducer*.

Equally conclusive is Mr. Toplady's challenge! By such cogent arguments as these, thousands of professors are bound to the chariot-wheels of *modern orthodoxy*, and blindly follow the warm men, who *drive as furiously* over a part of the body scripture-divinity, as the Son of Nimshi did over the body of cursed Jezebel.

SECTION.

SECTION II.

Calvinism UPON ITS LEGS, or a FULL view of the arguments by which Mr. Toplady attempts to reconcile Calvinism with God's HOLINESS:—a note upon a letter to an Arminian teacher.

SENsible that Calvinism can never rank among the doctrines of *holiness*, if “the elect shall be saved do what they will,” and if the “reprobate shall be damned do what they can;” Mr. Toplady tries to throw off, from *his* doctrines of grace, the deadly weight of Mr. Wesley’s consequence. In order to this he proves that Calvinism ENSURES the *holiness* of the elect, as the NECESSARY MEANS of their *predestinated salvation*: but he is too judicious to tell us that it ENSURES also the *wickedness* of the reprobate, as the *necessary means* of their *predestinated damnation*. To make us in love with his orthodoxy, he presents to our view with one leg, on which she contrives to stand, by artfully leaning upon her faithful maid, *Logica Genevensis*. Her other leg is prudently kept out of sight, so long as the trial about her *holiness* lasts. This deserves explanation.

The most distinguishing and fundamental doctrines of Calvinism are *two*: and therefore they may with propriety be called *the legs* of that doctrinal system. The *first* of these fundamental doctrines, is the personal, unconditional, absolute *predestination*, or *election* of some men to eternal life; and the *second* is the personal, unconditional, absolute *predestination* or *reprobation* of some men to eternal death. Nor can Mr. Toplady find fault with my making his doctrine of grace stand upon *her legs*, *calvinian election* and *calvinian reprobation*: for, supposing that our church speaks in her 17th article of calvinian, absolute pre-
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destination

destination to eternal life, he says himself, in his *Historic proof*, page 574, "The PREDESTINATION of some to LIFE, asserted in the 17th article, cannot be maintained without admitting the REPROBATION * of some others to DEATH, &c. and all

* Our opponents are greatly embarrassed about the doctrine of absolute, unconditional *reprobation*: though in an happy moment, where *candor* prevailed over *shame*, Mr. Toplady stood up so boldly for calvinian reprobation: the reader, as he goes on, will smile, when he sees the variegated wisdom, with which that gentleman disguises, exculpates, or conceals, what he so rationally and so candidly grants here.

The truth is, that as scriptural election is necessarily attended with an answerable reprobation; so absolute calvinian election unavoidably drags after it absolute calvinian reprobation:—a black reprobation this, which *necessitates* all who are personally written in the book of death to sin on and be damned. But some Calvinists are *afraid* to see this doctrine, and well they may, for it is horrible: others are *ashamed* to acknowledge it: and not a few, for want of rational sight, obstinately deny that it is the main pillar of their gospel; and with the *right* leg of their system they unmercifully kick the *left*. Among the persons who are guilty of this absurd conduct, we may rank the author of *A Letter to an Arminian teacher*; an imperfect copy of which appeared in *The Gospel Magazine* of August, 1775, under the following title, *A Predestinarian's real thoughts of Election and Reprobation, &c.* This writer is so inconsistent, as to attempt cutting off the *left* leg of Calvinism. He, at first, gives us reprobation. "The word *reprobation*" [says he] "is never mentioned in all the scripture" [no more is the word *predestination*.] "nor is the scriptural word *reprobate* ever mentioned as the consequence of election, or as [its] *opposite*."—This is a great mistake, as appears from the two first passages quoted by this author, Jer. vi. 30. and Rom. i. 28. where *reprobate silver* is evidently opposed to *choice silver*, and where a *reprobate mind* is indubitably opposed to *the mind which is after God's own heart*—i. e. to the mind which God *approves* and *chuses* to crown with evangelical praises and rewards. Our author goes on:

"There is no immediate connection between election to salvation and reprobation to damnation." What an argument is this! Did we ever say that there is any *immediate connection* between two things, which are as contrary as Christ and Belial.—Oh! but we mean that "*they have no necessary dependance on each other.*"—The question is not whether they have a "*necef-*

all who have subscribed to the said article, are bound in HONOUR, CONSCIENCE, and LAW to defend REPROBATION, were it only to keep the

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17th

fair dependence on each other;” but, whether they have not a *necessary opposition* to each other; and that they have, is as clear as that *light* is opposed to *darkness*.—“They proceed from very different causes.”—True: for election proceeds from *free-grace*, and calvinian reprobation from *free-wrath*.—“The sole cause of *election* is God’s free love, &c. The sole cause of *damnation* is only sin.”—Our author wants candor or attention. Had he argued like a candid logician, he would have said, “The sole cause of the *reprobation* which ends in unavoidable damnation is only sin:” but if he had fairly argued thus, he would have given up Calvinism, which stands or falls with *absolute* reprobation; and therefore, he thought proper to substitute the word *damnation* for the word *reprobation*, which the argument absolutely requires. These tricks may pass in Geneva; but in England they appear inconsistent with fair reasoning. It is a common stratagem of the Calvinists to say, “Election depends upon God’s love only, but damnation depends upon our sin only:” break the thin shell of this sophism, and you will find this bitter kernel; “God’s distinguishing love elects some to unavoidable holiness and finished salvation; and his distinguishing wrath reprobates all the rest of mankind to remediless sin and eternal damnation.” For, the moment the sin of reprobates is necessary, remediless, and ensured by *the decree of the means*, it follows, that *absolute reprobation* to necessary remediless sin, is the same thing as *absolute reprobation* to eternal damnation; because such a damnation is the *unavoidable* consequence of *remediless sin*.

When the letter-writer has absurdly denied calvinian reprobation, he insinuates, p. 5, that “*everlasting torment*,” and “*being unavoidably damned*,” are not the necessary consequences of the decree of calvinian election; “*nor [says he] can they be fairly deduced from the decree of reprobation.*”—So now, the secret is out! Our author, after denying reprobation, informs us that there is a calvinian *decree of reprobation*. But if there is such a decree, why did he oppose it, p. 2? And if there is no such decree, why does he mention it, p. 5; where he hints that ensured damnation *cannot be fairly deduced from it*? Now, if he, or any Calvinist in the world, can prevent that, *upon the calvinian plan*, among the thousands of Calvin’s reprobates, who are yet in their mother’s wombs, *one* of them can, any how, avoid finished damnation, I solemnly engage myself before the public, to get my Checks burnt, at Charing-cross, by the common

17th article," [or rather, the calvinian sense which Mr. Toplady fixes to that article] "UPON ITS LEGS."

Agreeably to Mr. Toplady's charge, Calvinism shall stand UPON ITS LEGS. He takes care to show the *right leg*, in order to vindicate God's holiness upon the calvinian plan; and I shall set forth the *left leg*, in order to show that the honour of God's holiness is as incompatible with Calvinism, as light with darkness. Mr. Toplady's arguments are produced under No. 1, with the number of the page in his book, where he advances them. In the opposite column; under No. 2, the reader will find my ANSWER, which is nothing but Mr. Toplady's own arguments, retorted in such a manner as to

hangman, on any day which Mr. Hill, Mr. Toplady, and Mr. M'Gowan will please to appoint. But if the Calvinists cannot do this, and if the *calvinian decree of reprobation* ensures the necessary, remediless sin, and the unavoidable, finished damnation of one and all the reprobates of Calvin, born or unborn; Mr. M'Gowan, and Dr. Gill, whom he quotes, insult common sense, when they intimate, that ensured damnation "*cannot be fairly deduced from the decree of reprobation.*" How much less candid are the letter-writer and Dr. Gill, than Mr. Toplady and Zanchinus, who fairly tell us, p. 75, "*The condemnation*" [i. e. the damnation] "*of the reprobate is necessary and irresistible!*"

The letter-writer tells us, p. 6, "what ensures holiness, must ensure glory; election" [i. e. calvinian election] "doth so, and glory must follow." This is the *right leg* of Calvinism: let her stand upon the *left leg*, and you have this "doctrine of grace:" *what ensures remediless sin must ensure damnation; calvinian reprobation doth so, and damnation must follow.* I would as soon bow to Dagon, as to this doctrine of remediless sin and ensured wickedness. O ye controversial writers of the *Gospel Magazine!* if you will confirm "*Arminian teachers*" in their attachment to the holy election and righteous reprobation preached by St. Paul, and their detestation for the antinomian election and barbarous reprobation which support your doctrinal peculiarities, only vindicate your election as *inconsistently* as Mr. M'Gowan, and your reprobation as *openly* as Mr. Toplady.— [See two other notes on the same performance; the one under the Arg. xxxviii. and the other under the Arg. lxxvii.]

defend

defend the second gospel-axiom, which Calvinism entirely overthrows: No. 1, displays the unguarded manner in which Mr. Toplady defends the first gospel-axiom. To form No. 2, I only make his arguments stand upon the other leg, and by this simple method I shew the lameness of Calvinism, and the infamy which she pours upon God's holiness and goodness, under fair shows of regard for these adorable attributes.

THE RIGHT LEG of Calvinism, or the calvinian doctrine of election and NECESSARY holiness.

ARG. II. No. 1. [page 17.] "I affirm with scripture, that they [the elect] cannot be saved without sanctification and obedience. Yet is not their salvation precarious: for, the very decree of election, by which they were nominated and ordained to eternal life, ordained their intermediate renewal after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness. Nay, that renewal is itself the dawn and beginning of actual salvation."

RIGHT LEG.

ARG. III. No. 1. [page 17.] "The elect could no more be saved without personal

THE LEFT LEG of Calvinism, or the calvinian doctrine of reprobation and NECESSARY wickedness.

ANSWER. No. 2. I affirm with Calvinism, that the reprobates cannot be damned without wickedness and disobedience. Yet is not their damnation precarious: for, that very decree of reprobation, by which they were nominated and ordained to eternal death, ordained their intermediate conformity to the image of the devil, in sin and true wickedness. Nay, that conformity is itself the dawn and beginning of actual damnation.

LEFT LEG.

ANSWER. No. 2. The reprobates could no more be damned without personal

personal holiness, than they could be saved without personal existence. And why? because God's own decree secures the MEANS as well as the END, and accomplishes THE END BY THE MEANS. The same gratuitous predestination, which ordained the existence of the elect, as men; ordained their purification, as saints: and they were ordained to BOTH, in order to their being finally and completely saved in Christ with eternal glory."

sonal wickedness, than they could be damned without personal existence. And why? because God's own decree secures the MEANS as well as the END, and accomplishes THE END BY THE MEANS. The same gratuitous predestination which ordained the existence of the reprobates, as men; ordained their pollution, as sinners: and they were ordained to BOTH, in order to their being finally and completely damned in Adam with eternal shame.

Before I produce the next argument, I think it is proper to observe, that *the election of grace*, which St. Paul defends, is not, as Calvin supposes, an *absolute* election to eternal life, through *necessitated* holiness: an election to this, which, in the very nature of things, drags after it an *absolute* reprobation to eternal death, through *remediless* sin. But the Apostle means a gratuitous election to the privileges of the best covenant of peculiarity,—a most gracious covenant this, which is known under the name of *Christianity*—*the gospel of Christ*, or simply *the gospel*, by way of eminence. For, as, by a partial election of distinguishing favour, the Jews were once chosen to be God's *peculiar people*, [at which time the Gentiles were reprobated, with respect to Jewish privileges; being left under the *inferior* gospel dispensation of reprieved Adam, and spared Noah,] so, when the Jews provoked God to reject them from being his peculiar people, he elected the
Gentiles

Gentiles to whom he sent the *gospel of Christ*: he *elect*ed them, I say, and *called* them to believe *this* precious gospel, and to be *holy* in all manner of *conversation*, as becomes *christians*. But, far from absolutely electing these Gentiles to eternal salvation, through unavoidable holiness calvinistically imposed upon them, he charged them by his messengers to make their *CHRISTIAN calling and election sure*, lest they should be cut off, as the Jews had been, for not making their *JEWISH calling and election sure*. In short, the *election of grace* mentioned in the scriptures, is a gratuitous election to run the *christian* race with Paul, Peter, and James; rather than the *jewish* race with Moses, David, and Daniel; or the race of *gentilism* with Adam, Enoch, and Noah. It is a *gracious* election, which implies no *merciless, absolute* reprobation of the rest of mankind. And the Calvinists are greatly mistaken, when they confound *this* election, with our *judicial* election to receive the crown of life, a rewarding crown this, the receiving of which depends, (1) On the *grace* of God, in Christ, and (2) On the *voluntary* obedience of faith; and will be judicially bestowed according to the *impartiality* of justice; and not according to the *partiality* of grace. This will be demonstrated in an *Essay on the election of GRACE, and the election of JUSTICE*, where the reader will see the *true* meaning of the passages, which Mr. Toplady has so plausibly pressed into the service of the following arguments.

RIGHT LEG.

ARG. IV. No. 1. [page 18.] "God the Father hath chosen us in *Christ*; before the foundation of the world, that we should [not "be SAVED, do

LEFT LEG.

ANSWER. No. 2. God the Father hath reprobated us in *Adam*, before the foundation of the world, that we should [not be DAMNED, do what we

do what we will;" but] BE HOLY AND WITHOUT BLAME before him in love, Eph. i. 4. *Election* is always followed by *regeneration*, and *regeneration* is the source of all good works."

we will; BUT BE UNHOLY AND FULL OF BLAME before him in *malice*. *Reprobation* is always followed by *apostacy*; and *apostacy* is the source of all bad works.

RIGHT LEG.

ARG. V. No. 1. [page 18.] "We [the elect] are his subsequent workmanship, created anew in *Christ Jesus* unto GOOD WORKS, which God hath FORE ORDAINED, that we should walk in them. Consequently it does not follow from the doctrine of absolute predestination, that "the *elect* shall be *saved*, do what they will." On the contrary, they are *chosen* as much to HOLINESS as to *heaven*; and are fore-ordained to walk in GOOD WORKS, by virtue of their *election* from eternity, and of their *conversion* in time."

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ARG. VI. No. 1. [page 18, 19.] "Yet again, God hath from the beginning

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ANSWER. No. 2. We [the Reprobates] are his subsequent workmanship, created anew in *Adam* unto BAD WORKS, which God hath FORE ORDAINED, that we should walk in them. Consequently it does not follow from the doctrine of absolute predestination, that "the *reprobates* shall be *damned*, do what they will." On the contrary, they are *reprobated* as much to WICKEDNESS as to *hell*, and are fore-ordained to walk in BAD WORKS, by virtue of their *reprobation* from eternity, and of their *perversion* in time.

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No. II. ANSWER. Yet again, God hath from the beginning [i. e. from evening

ning [i. e. from everlasting, &c.] CHOSEN you to Salvation through SANCTIFICATION of the spirit, and BELIEF of the truth; 2 Theff. ii. 13. All therefore, who are chosen to salvation, are no less unalterably destined to holiness and faith in the mean while. And, if so, it is giving God himself the lie to say, that "the elect shall be saved, do what they will." "For the elect, like the blessed person who redeemed them, come into the world not to do their own will, but the will of him that sent them: and this is the will of God concerning them, even their sanctification. Hence they are expressly said to be elect unto obedience. Not indeed chosen because of obedience, but chosen unto it: for works are not the foundation of grace, but streams flowing from it. Election does not depend upon holiness, but holiness depends upon election. So far, therefore, is predestination from being subversive

everlasting] REPROBATED you to damnation through POLLUTION of the spirit, and disbelief of the truth. All, therefore, who are reprobated to damnation, are no less unalterably destined to wickedness and unbelief in the mean while. And, if so, it is giving God himself the lie to say, that "the reprobate shall be damned do what they will." For the reprobate, like the blessed person who rejected them, come into the world not to do their own will, but the will of him that sent them: and this is the will of God concerning them, even their wickedness. Hence they are expressly said to be reprobated unto disobedience. Not indeed reprobated because of disobedience, but reprobated unto it: for works are not the foundation of wrath, but streams flowing from it. Reprobation does not depend upon wickedness, but wickedness depends upon reprobation. So far, therefore, is predestination from being subversive of bad works; that predestination to death is the

versive of <i>good</i> works; that predestination is the PRIMARY CAUSE of all the GOOD works, which have been and shall be wrought, from the beginning to the end of time."	the PRIMARY CAUSE of all the BAD works, which have been and shall be wrought, from the beginning to the end of time.
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Dreadfully-crooked as the *left* leg of Mr. Toplady's system is, it perfectly agrees with the *right* leg: i. e. with his crooked election, and his bandy predestination. He may deny it as absolutely as prisoners at the bar deny what is laid to their charge: but their denial goes for nothing: the witnesses are called in, and I produce two, who are capital, and to whom I suppose Mr. Toplady will hardly object. The first is *Zanchius*, and the second is his ingenious translator, who says in his translation, p. 50, "He [man] fell in consequence of the divine decree."—*Observ.* p. 7. "Whatever comes to pass, comes to pass BY VIRTUE of this absolute, omnipotent will of God."—"Whatever things come to pass, come to pass NECESSARILY."—*Ibid.* "Whatever man does, he does NECESSARILY."—Page 15. "ALL THINGS turn out according to divine PREDESTINATION; not only the works we do outwardly, but even the thoughts we think inwardly.—P. 7. The will of God is the PRIMARY and supreme CAUSE of ALL things.—P. 11. The SOLE CAUSE why some are saved and others perish, proceeds from his WILLING the salvation of the former, and the perdition of the latter.—P. 15. We can ONLY do what God from eternity WILLED and foreknew we SHOULD.—P. 7. NO FREE WILL of the creature can resist the will of God.—P. 19. The purpose or decree of God signifies his everlasting appointment of some men to life, and of others to death: which appointment flows ENTIRELY from HIS OWN free and

and sovereign WILL.—P. 57. If between the elect and the reprobate, there was not a great gulph fixed, so that neither CAN BE OTHERWISE than THEY ARE, then the will of God (which is the ALONE CAUSE why some are chosen and others not) would be rendered of no effect.—P. 56. Nor would his word be true with regard to the non-elect, if it was POSSIBLE for them to be saved.—P. 15. The condemnation of the reprobate is NECESSARY and IRRESISTIBLE.—P. 25. God worketh ALL things in ALL men, even WICKEDNESS in the wicked.”

On these propositions [the most unguarded words of which I have produced in capitals] I rest the *left* leg of Calvinism; and taking my leave of the translation of Zanchius, I return to the *Vindication of the Decrees*, and continue to make Mr. Toplady's doctrine of grace stand “on *its legs*,” that is, on *absolute reprobation* to death, as well as on *absolute election* to life.

RIGHT LEG.

ARG. VII. No. 1. [page 19] “Reason also joins with scripture, in asserting the indispensable necessity of *sanctification* upon the footing of the most absolute and irrelative ELECTION: or, in other words, that the certainty of the END does not supersede, but ENSURE the intervention of the MEANS.”

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ANSWER. No. 2. Reason also joins with scripture, in asserting the indispensable necessity of *wickedness*, upon the footing of the most absolute and irrelative REPROBATION: or, in other words, that the certainty of the END does not supersede, but ENSURE the intervention of the MEANS.

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ARG. VIII. No. 1.
 [Page 21, 22.] "It was necessary that, as sinners, they [the elect] should not only be *reprobated from punishment, and entitled to heaven*; but endued moreover with an internal meetness for that inheritance.—This internal meetness for *heaven* can only be wrought by the *restoring* agency of God the *Holy Ghost*, who *graciously* engaged and took upon himself, in the covenant of *peace*, to *renew and sanctify* all the *elect* people of God; saying, *I will put my law in their minds.*—*Elect, &c.* through *sanctification of the spirit unto obedience.*—*Elect*ion, though productive of good works, is not founded upon them: on the contrary, they are one of the *glorious ENDS*, to which they are *chosen*. *Saints* do not bear the *root*, but the *root* them. *Elect* UNTO *obedience.*—They who have been *elect*ed, &c. shall experience the *Holy Spirit's sanctification*, in beginning

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ANSWER. No. 2. It was necessary that, as holy, they [the reprobate] should not only be *appointed to punishment, and entitled to hell*; but endued moreover with an internal meetness for that inheritance.—This internal meetness for *hell*, can only be wrought by the *perverting* agency of [the Manichean] God the *unholy ghost*, who *efficiously* engaged, and took upon himself, in the covenant of *wrath* to *pervert and defile* all the *reprobate* people of God; saying, *I will put my law in their minds.*—*Reprobate, &c.* through *pollution of the spirit unto disobedience.*—*Reprobation*, though productive of bad works is not founded upon them: on the contrary, they are one of the *inglorious ENDS*, to which they are *reprobated*. *Sinners* do not bear the *root*, but the *root* them. *Reprobate* UNTO *disobedience.*—They who have been *reprobated, &c.* shall experience the *wicked spirit's pollution*, in beginning, advancing, and per-

ning, advancing, and perfecting the work of *grace* in their souls.—

The *elect*, &c. are MADE to OBEY the commandments of God, and to imitate *Christ*, &c. I said, MADE to *obey*. Here perhaps the *unblushing* Mr. Wesley may ask, are the *elect* then mere machines? I answer, no. They are made WILLING in the day of God's power." *

perfecting the work of *sin* in their souls.—The *reprobates*, &c. are MADE to disobey the commandments of God, and to imitate *Satan*, &c. I said, MADE to *disobey*. Here perhaps the *blushing* Mr. Wesley may ask, are the *reprobates* then mere machines? I answer, no. They are MADE WILLING in the day of God's power.

RIGHT LEG.

ARG. 9. No. 1. [page 23, 24.] "God decreed to bring his *elect* to glory, in a way of *sanctification*, and in no other way but that. If so, cries Mr. Wesley, "They shall be *saved*, whether they are *sanctified* or no" "What, notwithstanding their *sanctification* is, itself, an essential branch of the decree concerning them? The man may as well

LEFT LEG.

ANSW. No. 2. "God decreed to bring his *reprobate* to hell in a way of *sinning*, and no other way but that. If so, cries Mr. Wesley, "they shall be *damned*, whether they *sin* or no." "What, notwithstanding their *sinning* is, itself, an essential branch of the decree concerning them? "The man may as well affirm, that *Raul* might have preached

* Here Mr. Toplady adds, "and, I believe, no body ever yet heard of a *willing machine*." But he is mistaken; for all *moral* philosophers call *machine*, whatever is fitted for free motions, and yet has no power to begin and determine its own motions. Now *willing* being the motion of a *spirit*, if a spirit cannot *will* but as it is *necessarily made to will*, it is as void of a self-determining principle, as a fire-engine, and of consequence it is [morally speaking] as mere a *machine*.

well affirm that *Abraham* might have been the progenitor of nations, though he had died in infancy, &c. Equally illogical is Mr. Wesley's impudent slander, that "the *elect* shall be *saved* do what they will," i. e. whether they be *holy* or not."

preached the gospel, *viva voce*, in fifty different regions, without travelling a step!" P. 23. Equally illogical is Mr. Wesley's impudent slander, that "the *Reprobate* shall be *damned*, do what they will." i. e. whether they be *wicked* or not.

RIGHT LEG.

ARG. 10. No. 1. [page 20.] "Paul's travelling, and Paul's *utterance*, were as certainly, and as necessarily included in the decree of the MEANS, as his *preaching* was determined by the decree of the END."

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ANSW. No. 2. The rich glutton's gluttony, and his *unmercifulness*, were as certainly and as necessarily included in the decree of the MEANS, as his being *tormented* in hell was determined by the decree of the END.

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ARG. 11. No. 1. [page 28, 29.] "Love when [calvinistically] predicated of God, signifies his eternal *benevolence*: i. e. his everlasting will, purpose and determination, to *deliver*, *bless* and *save* his [*elect*] people."—"In order to the eventual accomplishment of that *salvation* in the next world, *grace* is given them in this, to preserve

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ANSW. No. 2. *Hate* when calvinistically predicated of God, signifies his eternal *ill-will*: i. e. his everlasting will, purpose, and determination, to *inthrall*, *curse* and *damn* his [*reprobated*] people.—In order to the eventual accomplishment of that *damnation* in the next world, *wickedness* is given them in this, to preserve them (and preserve

preserve them (and preserve them it does) from doing the *evil* they otherwise would.—This is all the *election* which Calvinism, &c. contends for: even a predestination to HOLINESS and HEAVEN.”

serve them it does) from doing the *good* they otherwise would.—This is all the *reprobation* which Calvinism contends for; even a predestination to WICKEDNESS and HELL.

RIGHT LEG.

ARG. 12. No. 1. [page 33.] “Now, if it be the Father’s will, that *Christ* should lose *none* of his *elect*; if *Christ* himself, in consequence of their covenant-donation to him, does actually give unto them eternal *life*, and solemnly avers, that they shall never *perish*; If God be so *for* them, that none can hinder their *salvation*, &c. if they cannot be *condemned*, and nought shall separate them from the *love* of *Christ*; it clearly and inevitably follows, that, Not one of the *elect* can *perish*; but they must all necessarily be *saved*. Which *salvation* consists as much in the *recovery* of moral rectitude *below*, as in the *enjoyment* of eternal *bleſſedneſs* *above*.”

LEFT LEG.

ANSW. No. 2. Now, if it be the Father’s will, that *Satan* should lose *none* of his *reprobate*; if *Satan* himself, in consequence of their covenant-donation to him, does actually give unto them eternal *death*, and solemnly avers, that they shall never *escape*; if God be so *against* them, that none can hinder their *damnation*, &c. if they cannot be *justified*, and nought shall separate them from the *hate* of *Christ*; it clearly and inevitably follows, that, Not one of the *reprobate* can *escape*; but they must all necessarily be *damned*. Which *damnation* consists as much in the *being stripped* of moral rectitude *on earth*, as in the *enduring* of eternal *torments* *in hell*.

By such wrested texts, and delusive arguments as these, it is, that Mr. Toplady has vindicated God's holiness upon calvinian principles. Now as he requests that Calvinism may stand UPON ITS LEGS, that is, upon *absolute election* and *absolute reprobation*; I appeal to all the unprejudiced world, have I not made the Diana of the Calvinists stand straight? Have I not suffered her to rest upon her left leg, as well as upon the right? If that leg terminates in an horribly-cloven foot; is it Mr. Wesley's fault, or mine? Have we formed the doctrinal image, which is set up in mystical Geneva? Is the quotation produced in my motto forged? Is not *absolute reprobation* one of "the doctrines of grace" [so called] as well as *absolute election*? May I not shew the full face of Calvinism, as well as her *fide* face? If a man pays me a guinea, have I not a right to suspect that it is false, and to turn it, if he that wants to pass it, will never let me see the reverse of it in a clear light? Can Mr. Toplady blame me for holding forth calvinian *reprobation*? Can he find fault with me for *shewing* what he says, I am not only bound to *shew*, but to "DEFEND?" If Calvinism is "*the doctrine of grace*," which I must engage sinners to espouse, why should I serve her as the soldiers did the thieves on the cross? Why, at least, should I break one of her legs. If ever I bring her into the pulpit, she shall come upon BOTH "HER LEGS." The chariot of my *Diana* shall be drawn by the biting serpent, as well as by the silly dove; I will preach calvinian *reprobation*, as well as calvinian *election*. I will be a man of "conscience and honour."

And now, reader, may I not address thy *conscience* and *reason*, and ask; if all the fallen angels had laid their heads together a thousand years, to contrive an artful way of *reproaching the living God—the HOLY ONE of Israel*, could they have done it more effectually than by getting myriads of

of protestants [even all the Calvinists] and myriads of papists [even all the Dominicans, Jansenists, &c.] to pass the false coin of *absolute election* and *absolute reprobation*, with this deceitful, alluring inscription; *Necessary holiness unto the Lord*, and this detestable Manichean motto on the reverse, *Necessary WICKEDNESS unto the Lord?* And has not Mr. Toplady presumed too much on thy credulity, in supposing, that thou wouldst never have wisdom enough to look at the black reverse of the shining medal, by which he wants to bribe thee into Calvinism?

SECTION III.

An answer to some appeals to SCRIPTURE and REASON, by which Mr. Toplady attempts to support the ABSOLUTENESS and HOLINESS of the calvinian decrees.

LET us see if Mr. Toplady is happier in the choice of his scriptural and rational illustrations, than in that of his arguments. To shew that God's decrees, respecting man's life and salvation, are absolute, or [which is all one] to shew that the decree of the *end* necessarily includes the decree of the *means*, he appeals to the case of *Hezekiah*, thus :

ARG. XIII. [page 20.] "God resolved that *Hezekiah* should live fifteen years longer than *Hezekiah* expected, &c. It was as much comprized in God's decree, that *Hezekiah* should eat, drink, and sleep, during those fifteen years: and that he should not jump into the sea, &c. as that fifteen years should be added to his life."——

From this quotation it is evident, that Mr. Toplady would have us believe, that *none* of God's decrees are *conditional*; that when God decrees the *END*, he does it always in such a manner, as to *ENSURE* the *MEANS* necessarily in order to bring about the *END*; and that *Hezekiah* is appealed to, as a proof of this doctrine. Unfortunate appeal! if I had wanted to prove just the contrary, I do not know where I should have found an example more demonstrative of Mr. Toplady's mistake: witness the following account. *Hezekiah was sick unto death: and Isaiah came to him and said, Thus saith [thus DECREES] the Lord, Set thy house in order: for thou shalt DIE, and NOT LIVE.*

II. xxxviii.

Is. xxxviii. 1. Here is an explicit, peremptory decree:—a decree where no condition is expressed:—a decree which wears a *negative* aspect, *Thou shalt NOT LIVE*; and a *positive* form, *Thou shalt DIE*. The MEANS of executing the decree was already upon *Hezekiah*: he was *sick unto death*. And yet, so far was he from thinking, that the decree of the *end* ABSOLUTELY included that of the *means*, that he set himself upon praying for *life and health*; yea, upon doing it as a Jewish perfectionist. Then *Hezekiah* turned his face towards the wall, and prayed, *Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee with a PERFECT heart, &c. and Hezekiah wept sore. Then came the word of the Lord to Isaiah, saying, Go, and say to Hezekiah, Thus saith [thus decreeth] the Lord, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold I will add unto thy days fifteen years,* ver. 2. 5. From this account it is evident, that *Hezekiah* might have easily have reversed the decree about his LIFE, by *stabbing* or *drowning* himself, as he reversed the decree about his DEATH, by *weeping* and *praying*: and that Mr. Toplady has forgotten himself as much in producing the case of *Hezekiah* in support of Calvinism, as if he had appealed to our Lord's sermon on the mount, in defence of the lawless gospel of the day.

A kind of infatuation attends the wisest men, who openly fight the battles of error. In the end, their swords, like that of the champion of the Philistines, do their cause more mischief than service. Mr. Toplady will perhaps afford us another instance of it. After producing *Hezekiah* to establish the *absoluteness* of God's decrees, he calls in the first Jewish hero. *Joshua* is brought to demonstrate, that the decree of the *end* always binds upon us an *unavoidable* submission to the decree of the *means*: or, to speak more intelligibly, that God's decrees to bless or to curse, are always
absolute,

absolute, and *necessitate* us to use the *means* leading to his blessing or his curse.

ARG. XIV. [Page 23.] "Prior to the taking of Jericho, it was revealed to Joshua, that he should certainly be master of the place. Nay, so PEREMPTORY was the DECREE, and so expresses the revelation of it, that it was predicted as if it had already taken effect: *I have given into thy hand Jericho, &c.* This assurance, than which nothing could be more absolute, did not tie up Joshua's hands from action, and make him sit down without using the MEANS, which were NO LESS appointed than the END. On the contrary," &c.—Here we are given to understand, that *Joshua* and the Israelites could never cross any of God's gracious *decrees* by neglecting the *means* of their accomplishment; because they were *necessitated* to use those means. Thus is *Joshua* pressed into the service of calvinian *necessity*, and the *absoluteness* of God's decrees: *Joshua*, who of all the men in the world, is most unlikely to support the tottering ark of calvinian necessity. For when he saw in the wilderness the carcases of several hundred thousand persons, to whom God had promised the good land of Canaan with an oath, and who nevertheless *entered not in because of unbelief*, he saw several hundred thousand proofs, that God's promises are not *absolute*: and that when he deals with rewardable and punishable agents, the decree of the *end* is not *unconditional*, and does by no means include an *irresistible* decree which binds upon them the *unavoidable* use of the means.

But, consider we the peculiar case of *Joshua* himself. *The Lord spake unto Joshua, saying, There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life;—I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, Josh. i. 5.* Now this peremptory decree of the END, far from necessarily including the MEANS, actually failed by a single flaw in the use

use of the MEANS. The disobedience of *Achan* reversed the decree: for he disregarded the *means* or *condition* which God had appointed: *turn not to the right or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest*, Josh. i. 7. Hence it is, that, when *Achan* had turned to the left, the decree failed, and we find *Joshua prostrate before the ark: a whole day, with his clothes rent, and dust upon his head; lamenting the flight of Israel before Ai, and wishing that he had been content, and had dwelt on the other side Jordan.* Nor do I see in God's answer to him, the least hint of Mr. Toplady's doctrine. *Why liest thou upon thy face? Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant:—for they have even taken of the accursed thing.—Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies,—because they were accursed: neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed thing*, Josh. vii. 1. 13.

Hence it appears, that, when Mr. Toplady appeals to *Joshua* in defence of the *absoluteness* of God's decrees, he displays his skill in the art of logic, as much as if he appealed to the *peremptoriness* of the famous decree, *Yet forty days, and [ungodly] Nineveh shall be destroyed: and yet PENITENT Nineveh was spared: so unscriptural is the assertion, that the decree of the end-ENSURES the use of the means, when God tries moral agents in the day of salvation, in order to punish or reward them according to their works, in the day of judgment!*

Mr. Toplady supports these unfortunate appeals to *scripture*, by the following appeal to *reason*.

ARG. XV. [Page 24.] "Suppose it was infallibly revealed to an army, or to any single individual, that the former should certainly gain such a battle, and the latter certainly win such a race, would not the army be mad to say, *Then we will not fight a stroke?* would not the racer be insane to add, *Nor will I move so much as one of my*

my feet, &c. Equally illogical is Mr. Wesley's impudent slander, that *The elect shall be saved do what they will, &c.*—Either he is absolutely unacquainted with the first principles of reasoning; or he offers up the knowledge he has, as a whole burnt-sacrifice on the altar of malice, calumny, and falsehood."

This severe censure will appear calvinistically gratuitous, if we consider, that it is entirely founded upon the impropriety of the illustrations produced by Mr. Toplady. If he had exactly represented the case, he would have said, "Suppose it was infallibly revealed to an army, that they should certainly gain such a battle; that they could do nothing towards the victory by their own fighting; that the battle was fought, and *absolutely* won for them 1700 years ago; that if they refused to fight to-day, or if they ran away, or were taken prisoners, their triumph would not be less certain; and that putting their bottle to their neighbour's mouths, and defiling their wives, instead of fighting, would only make them sing victory louder, on a certain day called *a day of power*, when omnipotence would sovereignly exert itself in their behalf, and put all their enemies to flight:—suppose again it was revealed to a racer, that he should certainly win such a race, and receive the prize, whether he ran *to-day* backward or forward; because his winning the race does not at all depend upon *his own* swift running, but upon the swiftness of a great racer, who yesterday ran the race for him, and who *absolutely* imputes to him his swift running, even while he gets out of the course to chase an ewe-lamb, or visit a Delilah;—that the covenant, which *secures* him the prize, is *unconditionally* ordered in all things and sure; that, though he may be unwilling to run *now*, yet in a day of irresistible power he shall be made willing to fly and receive the prize; and that his former loitering will only
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set off the greatness of the power, which is *absolutely* engaged to carry him, and all elect racers, quite from Egypt to Canaan in one hour, if they have loitered till the eleventh hour ;”——suppose, I say, Mr. Toplady had given us such a *just* view of the case, who could charge the soldiers with “ *madness,*” and the racer with “ *being insane*” if they agreed to say, “ We will neither *fight* nor *run,* but take our ease and indulge ourselves, *TILL* the day of power come, in which we shall *irresistibly* be made to gain the battle, and to win the race ?

From these *rectified* illustrations, it appears, if I am not mistaken, (1) that, when Mr. Wesley advanced his consequence, he neither “ *shewed himself absolutely unacquainted with the first principles of reasoning ;*” nor “ *offered up the knowledge he has, as a whole burnt-sacrifice on the altar of malice, calumny, and falsehood ;*”——and (2) that, when Mr. Toplady’s appeals to *scripture* and *reason* are made *fairly* to stand upon their legs, they do his doctrine as little service as his limping arguments.

SECTION

SECTION IV.

An answer to the arguments, by which Mr. Toplady endeavours to reconcile calvinian reprobation with divine JUSTICE.

WE have seen how unhappily the translator of Zanchius has reconciled his doctrines of *grace and absolute election* with God's HOLINESS: let us now see if he has been more successful in reconciling his doctrines of *wrath and absolute reprobation* with divine JUSTICE.

ARG. XVI. [Page 35.] "*Justice consists in rendering to every man his due.*"—Mr. Toplady gives us this narrow definition of justice to make way for this argument: God owes us no blessing, and therefore he may *gratuitously* give us an everlasting curse. He does not owe us heaven, and therefore he may justly appoint that *eternal sin and damnation* shall be our *unavoidable* portion.—But, is not a king *unjust* when he PUNISHES an *unavoidable* fault with uninterrupted torture, as well as when he refuses to pay his just debts?

ARG. XVII. [*Ibid.*] "God is not a debtor to any man."—True, [strictly speaking:] but, (1) Does not God *owe to himself*, to behave *like himself* [that is, like a *gracious and just* Creator] towards every man?—(2) When God, by his promise has engaged himself *judicially* to render to every man *according to his works*, is it just in him to *necessitate* some men to work righteousness, and others to work iniquity, that he may reward the former, and punish the latter, according to arbitrary decrees of absolute election to life, and of absolute reprobation to death?—and (3) Do not the sacred writers observe,

observe, that God has condescended to *make himself* a debtor to his creatures by his gracious promises? did Mr. Toplady never read, *He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord, and look, what he layeth out it shall be paid him again?* Prov. xix. 17. When evangelical Paul hath fought a good fight, does he not look for a crown from the *just judge*, and declare that *God is not unrighteous to forget our labour of love?* and if we confess our sins, is not God bound by his *justice*, as well as by his *faithfulness*, to forgive and cleanse us? 1 John i. 9.

ARG. XVIII. [*Ibid.*] "If it can be proved, that He [*God*] owes salvation to every rational being he has made; then, and then only, will it follow, that God is *unjust* in not paying this debt of salvation to each, &c.—What shadow of injustice can be fastened on his conduct, for, in some cases, withholding what he does not owe?"—This argument is produced by Mr. Toplady in a variety of dresses. The flaw of it consists in supposing, that there can be no medium between denying eternal salvation, and appointing to eternal damnation; and that, because God may absolutely elect as many of his creatures as he pleases to a crown of glory, he may *absolutely* reprobate as many as Calvinism pleases to eternal sin and everlasting burnings. The absurdity of this conclusion will be discovered by the reader, if he looks at it through the glass of the following illustrations. Mr. *Toplady* is not obliged, by any rule of justice, to give Mr. Wesley an hundred pounds, because he owes him no money; and therefore Mr. T. may give Mr. Wesley an hundred gratuitous stripes, without breaking any rule of justice. The king may without injustice gratuitously give a thousand pounds to one man, ten thousand to another, an hundred to a third, and nothing to a fourth; and therefore the king may also, without injustice, gratuitously give an hundred stabs to one man, a thousand to another, and ten thousand to a third; or, he may

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necessitate

necessitate them to offend, that he may hang and burn them with a *show* of justice.

ARG. XIX. [Page 36.] "I defy any man to shew in what single respect the actual limitation of happiness itself is a jot more just and equitable (in a Being possessed of infinite power; than the decreitive limitation of the persons who shall enjoy that happiness."—The question is not whether God can justly *limitate the HAPPINESS of man*, or the *number of the men*, whom he will raise to *such and such heights of happiness*. This we never disputed: on the contrary, we assert with our Lord, that when God gives degrees of happiness, *as a Benefactor*, he may *do what he pleases with his own*; he may give *five talents to one man*, or to *five thousand men*; and *two talents to two men*, or to *two millions of men*.—Wherein then does the fallacy of Mr. Toplady's argument consist? In this most irrational and unjust conclusion: God may, *without injustice*, LIMIT THE HAPPINESS of his human creatures, and the NUMBER of those, who shall enjoy *such and such a degree of HAPPINESS*; and therefore, he may also *without injustice* absolutely reprobate as many of his unborn creatures as he pleases, and decree to protract their infernal torments to all eternity, after having first decreed their *necessary* fall into sin, and their *necessary* continuance in sin, as *necessary* MEANS in order to their *necessary* END, which is *eternal damnation*. Is not this an admirable *Vindication of Calvin's decrees*? Who does not see that the conclusion has no more to do with the premises, than in the following argument: the Lord Chancellor may without injustice present Mr. T. to a living of fifty pounds or to one of two hundred pounds, or he may reprobate Mr. T. from all the crown-livings; and therefore the Lord Chancellor may, *without injustice*, sue Mr. T. for fifty pounds or two hundred pounds whenever he pleases. What name shall we give to the Logic which deals in such arguments as these?

ARG.

ARG. XX. [Page 37.] "He [*man*] derives his existence from God, and therefore [says Arminianism] "God is bound to make their existence *happy*." I would rather say, God is bound both by the rectitude of his nature, and by the promises of his gospel, not to reprobate any man to remediless sin and eternal misery, till he has actually deserved such a dreadful reprobation, at least by one bad thought, which he was not absolutely predestinated to think. But Calvinism says, that God absolutely reprobated a majority of men, before they thought their first thought, or drew their first breath. If Mr. Toplady had stated the case in this plain manner, all his readers would have seen his doctrine of wrath without a veil, and would have shuddered at the sight.

ARG. XXI. [*Ibid*] "If God owes salvation to all his creatures *as such*, even the workers of iniquity will be saved, or God must cease to be just." —I never heard any Arminian say, that God owes *salvation*, i. e. *heavenly glory*, to all his creatures *as such*; for then all hoists, being God's *creatures as well as men*, would be taken to heaven: but we maintain, that God will never mediate entail *necessary, remediless sin* upon any of his creatures, that he may infallibly punish them with eternal damnation. And we assert, that, if God had not graciously designed to replace all mankind in a state of initial salvation from sin and hell, according to the various dispensations of his redeeming grace, he would have punished Adam's *personal sin* by a *personal* damnation. Nor would he have suffered him to propagate his fallen race, unless the second Adam had extended the blessing of redemption so far as to save from eternal misery all who die in their infancy, and to put all who live long enough to act as *moral agents*, in capacity of avoiding hell by *working out their own ETERNAL salvation* in the day of their temporary salvation:—a day this, which inconsistent Calvinists call "*the day of grace*."

Mr. Toplady, after decrying *our* doctrine of grace, as leading to gross iniquity, indirectly owns, that the *conditionality* of the promise of *eternal* salvation guards *our* gospel against the charge of Antinomianism,—a dreadful charge this, which falls so heavily on Calvinism. Conscious that he cannot defend his *lawless, unconditional* election to eternal life, and his *wrathful, unconditional* reprobation to eternal death, without taking the *conditionality* of eternal salvation out of the way, he attempts to do it by the following dilemma.

ARG. XXII. [Page 38.] “Is salvation due to a man that does *not* perform those *conditions*? If you say, YES; you jump, hand over head, into what you yourself call *Antinomianism*.—If you say, that salvation is not due to a man, unless he *do fulfil the conditions*; it will follow, that man's own performances are *meritorious* of salvation, and bring God himself into debt.”

We answer (1.) To show the tares of Calvinism, Mr. Toplady raises an artificial night by confounding the *sparing salvation* of the Father—the *atoning salvation* of the Son—the *convincing, converting, and perfecting salvation* of the Spirit. Yea, he confounds *actual salvation* from a thousand temporal evils—*temporary salvation* from death and hell—*initial salvation* from the guilt and power of sin—*present salvation* into the blessings of Christianity, Judaism, or Gentilism—*continued salvation* into these blessings—*eternal salvation* from death and hell—and *eternal salvation* into glory and heaven:—he confounds, I say, ALL these degrees of *salvation*, which is as absurd as if he confounded all degrees of life—the life of an embryo—of a sucking child—of a school-boy—of a youth—of a man—of a departed saint—and of an angel. When he has thus shuffled his cards, and played the dangerous game of *confusion*, what wonder is it if he wins it, and makes his inattentive readers believe, that what can be affirmed with truth of *salvation*

INTO

INTO HEAVENLY GLORY, must be true also, when it is affirmed of *salvation* FROM EVERLASTING BURNINGS; and that because God does not own *heaven* and *angelical honours* to unborn children, he may justly reprobate them to *hell* and to *fatanical, remediless wickedness* as the way to it.

(2) Distinguishing what Mr. Toplady confounds, we do not scruple to maintain, that though God is not bound to give *existence*, much less *heavenly glory*, to any creature; yet, all his creatures, who never *personally* offended him, have a *right* to expect at his hands *salvation from everlasting fire*, till they have deserved his *eternal and absolute reprobation* by committing some **PERSONAL, and AVOIDABLE** offence. Hence it is, that all mankind are born in a state of inferior *salvation*: for they are all born out of eternal fire; and to be out of hell is a considerable *degree of salvation*, unless we are suffered to live *unavoidably* to deserve everlasting burnings, which is the case of all Calvin's imaginary reprobates.

(3) Mr. Toplady "throws out a barrel for the amusement of the whale, to keep him in play, and make him lose sight of the ship"—the *fire-ship*. For, in order to make us lose sight of *absolute reprobation, remediless wickedness, and everlasting fire*, which [if Calvinism be true] is the *unavoidable* lot of the greatest part of mankind even in their mother's womb; he throws out this ambiguous expression **SALVATION DUE**: just as if there were no medium between *salvation due*, and **CALVINIAN reprobation due!** whereas it is evident, that there is the medium of *non-creation*, or that of *destruction in a state of seminal existence*.

(4) The flaw of Mr. Toplady's argument will appear in its proper magnitude, if we look at it through the following illustration. A whole regiment is led to the *left* by the colonel; whom the general wanted to turn to the *right*. The colonel, who is *personally* in the fault, is pardoned; and

five hundred of the soldiers, who by the overbearing influence of their colonel's disobedience, were *necessitated* to move to the *left*, are appointed to be hanged for not going to the right. The general sends to Geneva for *Tertullus*, who vindicates the *justice* of the execution by the following speech. "*Preferment* is NOT DUE to *obedient* soldiers, much less to soldiers who have *necessarily disobeyed* orders; and therefore your gracious general acts consistently with *justice*, in appointing these five hundred soldiers to be hanged, for, as there is no medium between *not promoting* soldiers and *hanging* them, he might justly have hanged the whole regiment. He is not bound, by any law, to give any soldier a captain's commission; and therefore he is perfectly *just*, when he sends these military reprobates to the gallows." Some of the auditors clap *Tertullus'* argument: P. O. cries out that it is "*most masterly*:" but a few of the soldiers are not quite convinced, and begin to question whether the holy service of the *mild Saviour of the world*, is not preferable to the antinomian service of the *absolute Reprobator* of countless myriads of unborn infants.

(5) The other flaw of Mr. Toplady's dilemma consists in supposing that *gospel-worthiness* is incompatible with the *gospel*; whereas all the doctrines of *justice*, which make *one half* of the *gospel*, stand or fall with the doctrine of *evangelical worthiness*. We will shout it on the walls of mystic Geneva: they that follow Christ, shall *walk with him in white*, rather than they that follow antichrist; for they ARE [MORE] WORTHY.—*Watch and pray always, that you may be counted WORTHY to escape, and to stand rewardable before the son of man.—Whatever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, &c. knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the REWARD OF THE INHERITANCE.—For he will say, in the great day of retribution, Come, ye blessed, INHERIT the kingdom,*
&c.

&c. for I was hungry and ye gave me meat, &c.—Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, &c. for I was hungry and ye gave me no meat, &c.—The doctrine of pharisaic merit we abhor: but the doctrine of rewardable obedience we honour, defend, and extol. Believers, let not Mr. Toplady beguile you of your REWARD through voluntary humility.—If ye live after the flesh ye shall die: but if ye, through the spirit, mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.—Whatsoever a man soweth, THAT shall he also reap.—For we shall all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he has done, whether it be good or bad. Look to yourselves, that ye lose not the things which ye have wrought.—So fight, that you may not be reprobated by remunerative justice.—So run, that you may [judicially] obtain an incorruptible crown.—Remember Lot's wife.—By patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory: and God, according to his gracious promises, will render you eternal life: for he is not untrue, to break his evangelical promise, nor unrighteous, to forget your work that proceedeth from love. Your persevering obedience shall be graciously rewarded by a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the RIGHTEOUS JUDGE, shall give you at that day; and then great shall be your reward in heaven. For Christ himself hath said, Be faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life.—My sheep follow me, and I give unto them eternal life in glory. For I am the author of ETERNAL salvation to them that OBEY me. What can be plainer than this gospel! Shall the absurd cries of Popery! Merit! &c. make us ashamed of Christ's disciples; of Christ's words; and of Christ himself! God forbid! Let the scriptures—let GOD be true, though Mr. Toplady should be mistaken.

ARG. XXIII. [Page 38.] “If he [God] be not obliged, in justice, to save mankind, then neither is he unjust in *passing by* some men: nay he *might*, had he so pleaded, have *passed by* the whole of mankind,

mankind, without electing any one individual of the fallen race; and yet have continued holy, just and good."

True: he might have *passed them by* without fixing any blot upon his justice and goodness, if by *passing them by* Mr. T. means leaving them in the wretched state of *seminal* existence, in which state his vindictive justice found them after Adam's fall. For then, an *unknown* PUNISHMENT *seminally* endured, would have borne a just proportion to an *unknown* SIN *seminally* committed. But if, by *PASSING some men BY*, this gentleman means, as Calvinism does, "absolutely predestinating some men to *necessary, remediless* sin, and to unavoidable, eternal damnation;" we deny that God might JUSTLY *have passed by the WHOLE* of mankind:—we deny that he might JUSTLY have passed by *one* single man, woman, or child.—Nay, we affirm, that, if we conceive Satan, or the evil Principle of *Manes*, an exerting, creative power, we could not conceive him worse employed, than in forming an *absolute* reprobate in embryo: that is, "a creature unconditionally, and absolutely doomed to remediless wickedness, and everlasting fire."

As the simple are frequently imposed upon by an artful substituting of the harmless word *passing by*, for the terrible word *absolutely reprobating to death*, I beg leave to shew, by a simile, the vast difference there is between these two phrases. A king may without injustice *pass by* all the beggars in the streets, without giving them any bounty; because, if he does them no good in thus *passing them by*, he does them no harm. But suppose he called two captains of his guards, and said to the *first*, If you see me *pass by* little, dirty beggars without giving alms, throw them into the mire, or if their parents have cast them into the dirt, keep them there: then let the *second* captain follow with his men, and take all the dirty beggars who have thus been *passed by*, and throw them,

them, for being dirty, into a furnace hotter than that of Nebuchadnezzar:—suppose, I say, the king *passed* his little, indigent subjects *by* in this manner, would not his decree of *preterition* be a more than diabolical piece of cruelty? I need not inform my judicious readers, that the *passing by* of the king represents calvinian *passing by*, that is, *absolute reprobation to death*;—that the *first* captain, who throws little beggars into the dirt, or keeps them there, represents the *decree of THE MEANS*, which *necessitates* the reprobate to *sin*, or to *continue* in sin;—and that the *second* captain represents the *decree of THE END*, which *necessitates* them to go to everlasting burnings.

ARG. XXIV. [Page 39.] Mr. Toplady endeavours to reconcile calvinian reprobation with divine justice by an appeal “to God’s providential dealings with men in the present life.” His verbose argument, stripped of its Geneva dress, and brought naked to open light, may run thus: “If God may without injustice, absolutely place the sons of Adam in circumstances of temporary misery, he may also without injustice reprobate them to eternal torments: but he may justly place the sons of Adam in circumstances of temporary misery: witness his actually doing it: and therefore he may without injustice reprobate them to eternal torments and to remediless sin, as the way to those torments.”—The flaw of this argument is in the first proposition, and consists in supposing, that, because God can justly appoint us to suffer *a light affliction, which [comparatively-speaking] is but for a moment, and which [if we are not perversely wanting to ourselves] will work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,* 2 Cor. iv. 17; he can also justly appoint us to remediless wickedness and eternal damnation. This conclusion is all of a piece with the following argument. A father may justly punish his disobedient child with a rod, and give his sick child

child a bitter medicine; and therefore he may justly break all his bones with a forge-hammer, and daily drench him with melted lead. To produce such absurd consequences without a mask, is sufficiently to answer them. See farther what is said upon p. 42.

ARG. XXV. [Page 40.] Mr. Toplady is, if possible, still more abundantly mistaken, while, to prove the justice of calvinian reprobation he appeals to *the real INEQUALITY of providential distributions below.*—We cannot “pronounce the great Father of all UNJUST, because he does not make all his offspring EQUALLY rich, good, and happy:” and therefore, God may JUSTLY reprobate some of them to *eternal misery*; just as if *inferior degrees of goodness and happiness* were the same thing as *remediless wickedness, and eternal misery!*

ARG. XXVI. [*Ibid.*] “The devils may be cast down to hell to be everlastingly damned, and be appointed thereto; and it gives no great concern. No hard thoughts against God arise: no charge of cruelty, injustice,” &c. Indeed if Dr. Gill, whom Mr. Toplady quotes, insinuated, that God had *absolutely* predestinated myriads of angels to everlasting damnation, through the *appointed* means of *necessary* sin; and that God had made this *appointment* thousands of years before most of those angels had any personal existence, it would give us *great concern*, both for the honour of God’s justice, and for the angels so cruelly treated by free-wrath. But as matters are, the case of devils gives us no great concern, because they fell *knowingly, wilfully, and without necessity.* To the end of the day of their visitation they personally rejected God’s gracious counsel towards them: and, as they obstinately refused to subserve the *judicial display* of his *remunerative BOUNTY*, it is highly agreeable to reason and equity, that they should subserve the *judicial display* of his *vindictive JUSTICE.*

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ARG. XXVII. [Page 41.] "The king of Great Britain has unlimited right of peerage, &c. Will any body be so weak and perverse as to charge him with Tyranny and Injustice, only because it is not his will, though it is in his power, to make all his subjects noblemen?"—This is another barrel thrown out to the whale. This illustration does not touch, but conceal the question. For the *similar* question is not whether the king is *unjust* in leaving gentlemen and tradesmen among the gentry and commonalty, but whether he could, without *injustice* and *tyranny*, pretend, that, because he has an *unlimited right of PEERAGE*, he has also an *unlimited right of* [what I beg leave to call] FELONAGE,—a calvinian right this, of appointing whom he pleases to rob and murder, that he may appoint whom he pleases to a cell in *Newgate*, and a swing at *Tyburn*. This is the true state of the case. If Mr. T. has cast a veil over it, it is a sign that he is not destitute of the feelings of *justice*, and that if he durst look at his Manichean picture of God's Sovereignty, without a veil, he would turn from it with the same precipitancy, with which he would start back from the abomination of the Moabites, or from the grim idol to which mistaken Israelites sacrificed their children in the valley of *Hinnom*.

ARG. XXVIII. [Page 42.] "Misery, though endured but for a year, &c. is in its own nature, and for the time being, as truly misery, as it would be if protracted ever so long, &c. And God can no more *cease* to be *just* for a year, or for a man's life-time, than he can cease to be just for a century, or for ever. By the same rule that he can, and does, without impeachment of his moral attributes, permit *any* one Being to be *miserable* for a *moment*; he may permit that Being to be miserable for a *much longer* time: and so on, *ad infinitum*:"—that is, in plain English, FOR EVER. The absurdity of this argument may be

be sufficiently pointed out by a similar plea. A surgeon may, without injustice, open an imposthume in my breast and give me pain for an hour, and therefore he may justly scarify me, and slay me alive ten years.—A judge may, without impeachment of his justice, order a man to be burnt in the hand for a moment, and therefore his justice will continue unstained, if he orders red-hot irons to be applied to that man's hands and feet, back and breast, "*ad infinitum.*" I hope that when Mr. Toplady threw this scrap of Latin over the nakedness of his *Diana*, his good-nature suggested, that she is too horrible to be looked at without a veil. But could he not have borrowed the language of mother-church, without borrowing a maxim which might shock any inquisitor, and might have put *Bonner* himself to a stand?

ARG. XXIX. [Page 44.] "He [God] permits, and has for near 6000 years permitted the reign of *natural* evil. Upon the same-principle, might he not extend its reign to—a never-ending duration?"

—HE MIGHT, if a never-ending line of MORAL EVIL *personally* and *avoidably* brought on by FREE-AGENTS *upon themselves*, called for a never-ending line of *penal* misery: and our Lord himself says, that HE WILL: *these* [the wicked, who have *finally* hardened themselves] *shall go away into EVER-LASTING punishment—where their worm DIETH NOT, and the fire is NOT QUENCHED*, Matt. xxv. 46. Mark ix. 48.

ARG. XXX. [*Ibid.*] "But still the old difficulty [a difficulty which Arminianism will never solve] &c. the old difficulty survives; how came moral evil to be PERMITTED, when it might as easily have been hindered, by a Being of infinite *goodness, power* and *wisdom*?"——Page 39. Mr. T. speaks partly the same language; giving us to understand as openly as he dares, that God worketh all things in all men, even wickedness in the wicked. His pernicious, though guarded
insinuation

insinuation runs thus: "you will find it extremely difficult, (may I not say, *impossible*?) to point out the difference between *permission* and *design*, in a being possessed (as God most certainly is) of unlimited WISDOM and unlimited POWER."—

Hence we are given to understand, that, because God does not *absolutely hinder* the commission of sin, "it would non-plus all the sagacity of man, should we attempt clearly to shew wherein the difference lies," between God's *permitting* sin, and his *designing* or *decreeing* sin; or [to speak with more candor] between God's placing free-agents in a state of probation with a strict charge not to sin, and between his being the author of sin. Is not this a "most masterly" "*Vindication of the decrees and providence of God;*" supposing you mean by *god*, the *sin-begetting* deity worshipped by the Manichees? This antinomian blow at the root of divine holiness is dangerous: I shall therefore ward it off by various answers.

(1) When God placed man in paradise, far from *permitting* him to sin, he *strictly forbid* him to do it. Is it right then in Mr. T. to call God "*the Permitter of sin,*" when the scriptures represent him as *the Forbidder of it*? Nay is it not very wrong to pour shame upon the holiness of God, and absurdity upon the reason of man, by making a calvinistic world believe, that *forbidding* and *threatening* is one and the same thing with *permitting* and *giving leave*; or at least, that the difference is so trifling, that "*all the sagacity of man will find it extremely difficult; not to say impossible, clearly to point it out?*"

(2) I pretend to a very little share of *all the sagacity of man*; and yet, without being non-plus'd at all, I hope to shew by the following illustration, that there is a prodigious difference between NOT HINDERING, and DESIGN, in the case of the entering in of sin.

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A general

A general wants to try the faithfulness of his soldiers, that he may REWARD those who WILL fight, and PUNISH those who WILL go over to the enemy: in order to DISPLAY, before all the army, his love of bravery, his hatred of cowardice, his remunerative goodness, and his impartial justice. To this end, he issues out a proclamation, importing that all the volunteers, who shall gallantly keep the field in such an important engagement, shall be made captains; and that all those who shall go over to the enemy shall be shot. I suppose him endued with infinite wisdom, knowledge, and power. By his *omniscience* he sees that some WILL desert: by his *omnipotence* he COULD indeed hinder them from doing it: for he COULD chain them all to so many posts stuck in the ground around their colours: but his *infinite wisdom* does not permit him to do it; as it would be a piece of madness in him, to defeat by forcible means his design of *trying* the courage of his soldiers, in order to REWARD and PUNISH them according to their *gallant* or *cowardly* behaviour in the field. And therefore, though he is persuaded that many will be shot, he puts his proclamation in force; because, upon the whole, it will best answer his wise designs. However, as he does not *desire*, much less *design*, that any of his soldiers should be shot for desertion, he does what his wisdom permits him to do to prevent their going over to the enemy; and yet, for the above-mentioned reason, he does not *absolutely hinder* them from doing it. Now, in such a case, who does not see that the difference between *not absolutely hindering* and *designing*, is as discernible as the difference between *reason* and *folly*;—or between *wisdom* and *wickedness*? By such dangerous insinuations as that, which this illustration exposes, the simple are imperceptibly led to confound *Christ* and *Belial*; and to think, that there is *little difference* between the celestial Parent of *good*, and the Manichean

Manichean Parent of *good and evil*;—the *Janus* of the fatalists, who wears two faces, an angel's face, and a devil's face; a mongrel, imaginary god this, whose fancied ways are, like his fancied nature, full of *duplicity*.

(3) To the preceding illustration I beg leave to add the following argument. No unprejudiced person will, I hope, refuse his assent to the truth of this proposition. A world, wherein there are RATIONAL *free-agents*, like angels and men;— IRRATIONAL *free-agents*, like dogs and horses;— NECESSARY *agents*, like plants and trees;—and DEAD *matter*, like stones and clods of earth.— Such a world, I say, is as much superior in perfection to a world, where there are only *necessary agents*, and *dead matter*; as a place inhabited by *learned men* and *curious beasts*, contains more wonders than one, which is only stocked with *fine flowers* and *curious stones*. If this is granted, it necessarily follows, that *this world* was the most perfect which God could create, to display his INFINITE *power* and MANIFOLD *wisdom*.— Now, in the very nature of things, RATIONAL FREE-AGENTS, being capable of knowing their Creator, owe to him gratitude and obedience; and to one another, assistance and love; and therefore they are *under a law*, which [AS FREE-AGENTS] they may *keep or break*, as they please.

“ But, *could not God NECESSITATE FREE-AGENTS to keep the law they are under?* ”

Yes, says Calvinism, for he is endued with *infinite power*: but scripture, good sense, and matter of fact, say No: because, although God is endued with *infinite power*, he is also endued with INFINITE WISDOM. And it would be as absurd to CREATE FREE-AGENTS in order to NECESSITATE them, as to *do a thing in order to undo it*. Besides [I repeat it] God's *distributive justice* could never be displayed, nor could *free obedience* be paid by rationals, and crowned by the *Rewarder and Judge of all the earth*,

unless rationals were *FREE-willing* creatures. And therefore, the moment you absolutely *NECESSITATE* them, you destroy them *as FREE-agents*, and you rob God of two of his most glorious titles, that of *REWARDER*, and that of *JUDGE*. Thus we account for the origin of evil in a scriptural and rational manner, without the help of Fatalism, Manicheism, or Calvinism. Mr. Toplady replies :

ARG. XXXI. [Page 44, 45.] "Oh, but—God himself is a *FREE-agent*, though his will is *NECESSARILY, unchangeably, and singly* determined to good, and to *GOOD ONLY*. So are the elect angels. So are the glorified souls of saints departed, &c. and so might Adam have been, had God so pleased to have so created him."

This is the grand objection of President *Edwards*, which I have answered in the *Scripture-Scales*, p. 278, &c. I shall, however, make here a few remarks upon it,—(1) If "*God worketh all things, &c. even WICKEDNESS in the wicked*," as the consistent predestinarians directly or indirectly tell us; it is absurd in them to plead, that he is *SINGLY* determined to good, and to *GOOD ONLY*: for every body knows that the god of Manes is full of *duplicity*: having an *evil* principle, which *absolutely predestinates, and causes* all the *WICKEDNESS*; and a *good* principle, which *absolutely predestinates and causes* all the *VIRTUE* in the world. As for the God of christians, he is not so *necessitated* to do that which is good, but he might, *IF HE WOULD*, do the most astonishing act of injustice and barbarity: for he might, *if he would*, absolutely doom myriads of unborn infants to *remediless wickedness and everlasting fire*, before they have deserved this dreadful doom, so much as by the awkward motion of their little finger. Nor need I tell Mr. *Toplady* this, who believes, that God has actually done so.

(2) God is not in a state of *probation* under a superior Being, who calls himself the *Rewarder*,
and

and who says, *Vengeance is mine, and I will repay*: nor shall he ever be tried by one who will judicially render to him according to what he hath done, whether it be GOOD or BAD.

(3) If faithful angels are unchangeably fixed in virtue, and unfaithful angels in vice, the fixedness of their nature is the consequence of the good or bad use, which they have made of their liberty; and therefore their confirmation in good, or in evil, flows from a JUDICIAL election or reprobation, which displays the distributive justice of their Judge, Rewarder, and Avenger.

(4) Nothing can be more absurd than to couple absolute necessity with moral free-agency. Angels and glorified souls are necessitated to serve God and love one another, as a good man is necessitated not to murder the king, and not to blow his own brains out. Such a necessity is far from being absolute: for, if a good man would, he might gradually overcome his reluctance to the greatest crimes. Thus David, who was, no doubt, as chaste and loving once as Joseph, overcame his strong aversion to adultery and murder.

Should it be said, What? Can glorified saints and angels fall away? I reply: they will never fall away, because they are called off the stage of probation, stand far above the reach of temptation, and have HENCEFORTH crowns of righteousness laid up for them, which the Lord, the RIGHTEOUS JUDGE, shall give them at that day. In the mean time, they rest from their [probatory] labours, and their works follow them. But still, in the nature of things, they are as able to disobey, as Joseph was to commit adultery, he had set his heart upon it: for, if they had no capacity of disobeying, they would have no capacity of obeying, in the MORAL sense of the word: their obedience would be as necessary, and as far from morality, as the passive obedience of a leaden ball, which you drop, with an absurd command to tend towards the centre. If I am not mistaken,

these answers fully set aside Mr. T's argument taken from the NECESSARY *goodness* of God, angels, and glorified saints.

ARG. XXXII. [Page 45.] "God is, and cannot but be, inviolably *just*, amidst all the sufferings of fallen angels and fallen men, involuntary beings as they are. And he will continue to be *just* in all they are yet to suffer."—That God is, and will be, *just*, in all that fallen angels and men have suffered, and may yet suffer, is most true, because they are VOLUNTARY Beings [Mr. Toplady says, "INVOLUNTARY Beings"] and FREE-agents [Mr. Toplady would say, NECESSARY agents] who personally deserve what they suffer; or who, if they suffer without *personal* offence, as infants do, have in Christ a rich cordial, and an efficacious remedy, which will cause their *temporary* sufferings to answer to all eternity the most admirable ends for themselves, if they do not reject God's gracious, castigatory, probatory; or purificatory counsels towards them, when they come to ACT as *free-agents*. But that God is and will be JUST in absolutely ordaining "*involuntary beings*" to sin and be damned, is what has not yet been proved by one argument which can bear the light. However, Mr. Toplady, with the confidence which suits his peculiar logic, concludes this part of his subject by the following triumphal exclamation:

ARG. XXXIII. [*Ibid.*] "And if so, what becomes of the objection to God's decree of *preterition*" [a soft word for *absolute reprobation to remediless sin and eternal death,*] "*drawn from the article of INJUSTICE?*"

Why it stands in full force, notwithstanding all the arguments which have yet been produced. Nay, the way to shew that an objection is *unanswerable*, is to answer it, as Mr. Toplady has done; that is, by producing arguments which equally shock reason and conscience, and which are crowned with this new paradox: "*fallen angels, and fallen men, are*

INVOLUNTARY

INVOLUNTARY *Beings*." So that the last subterfuge of moderate Calvinists is now given up. For when they try to vindicate God's *justice*, with respect to the damnation of their imaginary reprobates, they say, that the poor creatures are damned as *voluntary* agents. But Mr. Toplady informs us that they are damned as "*involuntary Beings*," that is, as *excusable* Beings:—and might I not add, as *sinless* Beings? For [evangelically speaking] is it possible that an *involuntary Being* should be *sinful*? Why is the murderer's sword *sinless*? Why is the candle, by which an incendiary fires your house, an *innocent* flame? Is it not because they are *involuntary Beings*, or mere tools used by other Beings? A cart accidentally falls upon you, and you *involuntarily* fall upon a child, who is killed on the spot. The father of the child wants you hanged as a *murderer*: but the judge pronounces you perfectly *guiltless*. Why? Truly because you was in *that case*, an "*involuntary Being*" as well as the cart. When therefore Mr. Toplady asserts that we are INVOLUNTARY *Beings*, and insinuates that God is *just* in absolutely predestinating us to *sin necessarily*, and to be *damned eternally*, he proves *absurdum per absurdius*—*injustum per injustius*—*crudeliter per crudelius*. In a word, he gives a finishing stroke to God's *justice*; and his pretended "*vindication*" of that tremendous attribute proves, if I may use his own expression, a public, though [I am persuaded] an undesigned "*defamation*" of it.

SECTION

SECTION V.

An Answer to the arguments, by which Mr. Toplady endeavours to reconcile calvinian REPROBATION with divine MERCY.

IF it is impossible to reconcile calvinian reprobation with divine *justice*, how much more with divine *MERCY*! This is however the difficult task which Mr. T. sets about next. Consider we his arguments.

ARG. XXXIV. {Page 45.} "As God's forbearing to *create* more worlds than he has, is no impeachment of his *omnipotence*: so his forbearing to *save* as many as he *might*, is no impeachment of his infinite mercy."—The capital flaw of this argument consists in substituting still the phrase "*not saving*," for the phrase *absolutely reprobating to remediless sin and everlasting burnings*. The difference between these phrases, which Mr. Toplady uses as equivalent, is prodigious. No body ever dreamt that God is *unmerciful* because he does not take stones into heaven, or because he *does not save* every pebble from its opacity, by making it transparent and glorious as a diamond; for pebbles suffer nothing by being *passed by*, and *not saved* into adamantine glory. But, if God made every pebble an organised, living body, capable of the keenest sensations; and if he appointed, that most of these "*involuntary* [sensible] *beings*," should be absolutely opaque, and should be cast into a lime-kiln, there to endure everlasting burnings, for not having the transparency, which he decreed they should never have; would

it

it be impossible to reconcile his conduct to the lowest idea we can form even of Bonner's mercy?

Having thus pointed out the sandy foundation of Mr. Toplady's argument, I shall expose its absurdity by a similar way of arguing. I am to prove that the king may without impeachment of his mercy put the greatest part of his soldiers in such trying circumstances as shall *necessitate* them to desert, and be shot for desertion. To do this, I learn logic of Mr. T. and say, "As the king's forbearing to *create* more lords than he has, is no impeachment of his unlimited right of peerage; so his forbearing to raise as many soldiers as he might is no impeachment of his great *mercy*." So far the argument is conclusive. But if by *not raising* soldiers I *artfully* mean *absolutely appointing and necessitating them to desert and be shot*, I vindicate the king's mercy as logically, as Mr. T. vindicates the *mercy* of *Manes'* god.

ARG. XXXV. [Page 46.] "If therefore the decree of" [*calvinian*] "*reprobation* be exploded, on account of its imaginary incompatibility with divine *mercy*, we must, upon the same principle, charge God with want of goodness in almost every part of his relative conduct."—If this *dark* argument is brought to the *light*, it will read thus: "God is *infinitely good* in himself, though he *limits* the exercise of his goodness in not forming so many Beings as he *might*, and not in making them all so glorious as he *could*; and therefore he is *infinitely merciful*, though he *absolutely appoints* millions of unborn creatures to remediless sin and everlasting fire." But what has the *conclusion* to do with the *premise*? What could Mr. T. think of me, if I presented the public with the following sophism? "No body can reasonably charge the king with want of *goodness*, for not enriching and ennobling every body: and therefore, no body can reasonably charge him with want of *mercy*, for decreeing

decreeing, that so many of his new-born subjects shall *necessarily* be trained up in absolute rebellion, that he may legally throw them into a fiery furnace, for *necessarily* fulfilling his *absolute* decree concerning their rebellion." Nevertheless, this absurd argument contains just as much truth and mercy, as that of Mr. Toplady.

ARG. XXXVI. [*Ibid.*] "There is no way of solidity, &c. justifying the ways of God with men, but upon this grand *Datum*, That the exercise of his own infinite mercy, is regulated by the *voluntary* determination of his own most wise and sovereign pleasure. Allow but this rational, scriptural, &c. proposition, and every cavil, grounded on the chimerical unmercifulness of non-election ceases even to be plausible."—The defect of this argument consists also in covering the *left leg* of Calvinism, and in supposing, that calvinian *non-election* is a bare *non-exertion of a peculiar mercy* displayed towards some; where it is a positive act of barbarity. We readily grant that God is *infinitely merciful*, though his infinite wisdom, truth, and justice do not suffer him to shew the same mercy to *all*, which he does to *some*. But it is absurd to suppose, that, because he is not bound to *shew mercy* to all those, who have *personally* and *unnecessarily* offended him [or indeed to any one of them] he may *shew injustice and cruelty* to unborn creatures, who never *personally* offended him so much as by one wandering thought, and he may *absolutely* doom myriads of them to *sin* without *remedy*, and to be *damned* without *fail*.

ARG. XXXVII. [Page 48.] After all his pleas, to shew that God can, without impeachment of his *holiness, justice, and mercy*, absolutely appoint his unborn creatures to remediless wickedness and everlasting torments; Mr. Toplady relents, and seems a little ashamed of calvinian reprobation. He tells us, that "*Reprobation is, for the most part, something purely negative,*" and "*has, so far as God*

is concerned, more in it of negation than positivity." But Mr. Toplady knows that the unavoidable END of absolute reprobation is DAMNATION, and that the MEANS conducive to this fearful end, is unavoidable wickedness; and he has already told us, p. 17, that "God's own decree SECURES the MEANS as well as the ends, and ACCOMPLISHES the END by the means." Now SECURING and ACCOMPLISHING a thing, is something ALTOGETHER POSITIVE. Hence it is, that, p. 83, Mr. T. calls the decrees by which the reprobates sin, not only *permissive*, but "EFFECTIVE;" and tells us, p. 77, that "God EFFICACIOUSLY permitted" horrible wickedness. And herein exactly follows Calvin, who, in his comment on Rom. ix. 18, says, "*Indurandi verbum, quum Deo in scripturis tribuitur non solum permissionem (ut volunt diluti quidam moderatores) sed divinæ quoque iræ ACTIONEM significat.*"—"The word HARDEN, when it is attributed to God in scripture, means not only PERMISSION, [as some wasby, compromising divines would have it] but it signifies also the ACTION of divine wrath."

Besides, something *negative* amounts, in a thousand cases, to something *positive*. A general, for example, denies gun-powder to some of his soldiers, to whom he owes a grudge; he hangs them for *not firing*, and then exculpates himself by saying, "My not giving them powder was *a thing purely NEGATIVE.*" "I did nothing to them to hinder them from firing: on the contrary, I bad them fire away." This is exactly the case with the Manichean god and his imaginary reprobates. He bids them repent or perish—believe or be damned—do good works or depart into everlasting fire. And yet, all the while, he keeps from them every dram of true grace, whereby they might savingly repent, believe, and obey. Is it not surprising that so many of our gospel-

gospel-ministers should call preaching *such* a doctrine, *preaching* THE GOSPEL, and *EXALTING* Christ!
—But Mr. Toplady replies:

ARG. XXXVIII. [Page 48.] “If I am acquainted with an indigent neighbour, and have it in my power to enrich him, but do it not; am I the author of that man’s poverty, only for resolving to permit him, and for actually permitting * him, to *continue* poor? Am I blameable for his poverty, because I do not give him the utmost I am able? Similar is the case now in debate. Ever since the fall of Adam mankind are by nature spiritually poor.”

Mr. T.

* Not unlike this argument is that of the Letter-Writer, on whom I have already bestowed a note, Sect. II.

“Divine justice [*says he*, p. 4, 5.] could not condemn, till the law was broken.”—True: but calvinian Free-wrath *reprobated* from all eternity, and consequently before the law was either broken or given.—“Therefore condemnation did not take place before a law was given and broken.”—This author trifles; for, if calvinian reprobation took place before the creation of Adam, and if it *necessarily* draws after it the uninterrupted breach of the law, and the condemnation consequent upon that breach, calvinian reprobation differs no more from everlasting damnation, than *condemning* and *necessitating* a man to commit murder, that he may *infallibly* be hanged, differs from *condemning* him to be hanged.—But, “suppose that out of twenty found guilty, his Majesty King George should pardon ten, he is not the cause of the other ten being executed. It was his clemency that pardoned any: it was their breaking the laws of the kingdom that condemned them, and not his Majesty.”—Indeed it was his Majesty who condemned them, if in order to do it without fail, he made (1) Efficacious and irresistible decrees of the *means*, that they should necessarily and unavoidably be guilty of robbery; and (2) Efficacious and irresistible decrees of the *end*, that they should unavoidably be condemned for their necessitated *crimes*, and inevitable *guilt*. The chain by which the god of Manes and Calvin drags poor reprobates to hell, has three capital links: the first is *Absolute, unconditional reprobation*; the second is *necessary, remediless sin*; and the third is *ensured, eternal damnation*.

Mr. T. is greatly mistaken when he says, "SIMILAR is the case now in debate." To show that it is entirely *dissimilar*, we need only make his partial illustration stand fairly "upon its legs." If you know that your neighbour, who is an industrious tenant of yours, must work or break; and if, in order to make him *break*, according to your decree of THE END, you make a decree of THE MEANS— an *efficacious* decree, that his cattle shall die, that his plow shall be stolen, that he shall fall sick, and that no body shall help him; I boldly say, You are "the author of that man's poverty."—And if, when you have reduced him to fordid want, and have, by this means, clothed his numerous family with *filthy rags*, you make another *efficacious, absolute* decree, that a majority of his children shall never have a

Now although the *middle* link intervenes between the *first* and the *last* link, it is only as a necessary connexion between them: for says Mr. Toplady [p. 17.] "God's own decree secures the means as well as the end, and accomplishes the end by the means." That is, [when this doctrine is applied to the present case] The first link, which is *calvinian reprobation*, draws the middle diabolical link, which is *remediless wickedness*, as well as the last link which is *infernal and finished damnation*. Thus Calvin's god "accomplishes" damnation by means of *sin*; or, if you please, he draws the *third* link by means of the *second*. Who can consider this and not wonder at the prejudice of the Letter-Writer, who boldly affirms, that, upon the calvinian scheme, God is no more the author and cause of the damnation of the reprobates, than the king is the cause of the condemnation of the criminals whom he does not pardon! For my part, the more I consider Calvinism, the more I see, that the decree of the absolute reprobation, which is inseparable from the decree of absolute election, represents God as the *sure author of sin*, in order to represent him as the *sure author of damnation*. The horrible mystery of *absolute reprobation, necessary sin, and ensured damnation*, is not less essential to Calvinism, than the glorious mystery of *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, is essential to Christianity: and yet, Calvinism is "the Gospel!—the doctrines of Grace!"

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good garment, and that at whatsoever time the constable shall find them with the only ragged coat, which their bankrupt father could afford to give them, they shall all be sent to the house of correction, and severely whipt there, merely for not having on a certain coat, which you took care they should never have; and for wearing the *filthy rags*, which you decreed they should *necessarily* wear; you show yourself as *merciless* to the poor man's children, as you shewed yourself *ill-natured* to the poor man himself. To prove that *this* is a just state of the case, if the doctrine of absolute predestination is true, I refer the reader to Section II. where he will find Calvinism ON ITS LEGS.

Upon the whole, if I mistake not, it is evident that the arguments by which Mr. Toplady endeavours to reconcile calvinian reprobation with divine *mercy*, are as inconclusive as those, by which he tries to reconcile it with divine *justice*; both sorts of arguments drawing all their plausibility from the skill with which *Logica Genevensis* tucks up the *left leg* of Calvinism, or covers it with deceitful buskins, which are called by a variety of delusive names, such as *passing by, not electing, not owing salvation, limiting the display of goodness, not extending mercy infinitely, not enriching, &c.* just as if all these phrases together conveyed one just idea of calvinian reprobation, which is an *absolute, unconditional dooming* of myriads of unborn creatures, to live and die in *necessary, remediless wickedness*, and then to *depart into everlasting fire*, merely because Adam, according to divine predestination, necessarily sinned; obediently fulfilling God's absolute, irreversible, and efficacious *decree of the MEANS [SIN.]* An antinomian decree this, by which, if Calvinism is true, God *secured and accomplished the decree of the end*, that is, THE REMEDILESS SIN AND ETERNAL DAMNATION OF THE REPROBATE: for, says Mr. T. [p. 17.] "*God's own decree*

decree SECURES the MEANS as well as the END, and ACCOMPLISHES the END by the MEANS."

And now, candid Reader, say if Mr. T. did not act with a degree of partiality, when he called his book *A VINDICATION of God's Decrees, &c. from the DEFAMATIONS of Mr. Wesley*;—and if he could not, with greater propriety, have called it, *An unscriptural and illogical Vindication of the HORRIBLE DECREE, from the scriptural and rational exceptions made against it by Mr. Wesley.*

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SECTION

SECTION VI.

A view of the SCRIPTURE-PROOFS by which Mr. T. attempts to demonstrate the truth of calvinian reprobation.

THAT the old and new testament hold forth a *partial* REPROBATION of *distinguishing* grace and an *impartial* REPROBATION of *retributive* justice, is a capital truth of the gospel. One of the leading errors of the Calvinists consists in confounding these two reprobations, and the elections which they draw after them. By the impetuous blast of prejudice, and the fire of a heated imagination, modern *Aarons* melt the *PARTIAL* election of grace and the *IMPARTIAL* election of justice; and, casting them in the mould of confusion, they make their *one* partial election of unscriptural, necessitating, antinomian *FREE-GRACE*, to which they are obliged to oppose their *one* partial reprobation of necessitating, Manichean *FREE-WRATH*. Now, as the scriptures frequently speak of the *HARMLESS* REPROBATION of grace, and of the *AWFUL* REPROBATION of justice, it would be surprising indeed, if, out of so large a book as the Bible, *Logica Genevensis* could not extract a few passages, which by being wrested from the context, and misapplied according to art, seem to favour calvinian reprobation. Such passages are produced in the following pages.

ARG. XXXIX. [Page 49.] After transcribing Rom. ix. 20—23, Mr. Toplady says, "Now, are these the words of scripture, or are they not? If not, prove the forgery. If they be you cannot fight against *reprobation*, without fighting against God."*

God."—Far from fighting against *scripture-reprobation*, we maintain, as St. Paul does in Rom. ix.—(1) That God has an absolute right GRATUITOUSLY to call whom he pleases to either of his two grand covenants of peculiarity [*Judaism and Christianity*]; and GRATUITOUSLY to *reprobate* whom he will, from the blessings peculiar to these covenants; leaving as many nations and individuals as he thinks fit, under the general blessings of the gracious covenants, which he made with reprieved Adam, and with spared Noah.—(2) We assert, that God has an indubitable right JUDICIALLY to *reprobate* obstinate unbelievers, under all the dispensations of his grace, and to appoint, that [as stubborn unbelievers] they shall be *vessels of wrath fitted for destruction* by their own unbelief, and not by God's free wrath. This is all the reprobation which St. Paul contends for in Rom. ix. See *Scales*, Sect. xi, where Mr. T.'s objection is answered at large. Therefore, with one hand, we defend *scripture-reprobation*; and with the other, we attack *calvinian-reprobation*: maintaining that the *scripture-reprobation* of grace, and of justice, are as different from calvinian, damning reprobation, as appointing a soldier to continue a soldier, and not to be a captain, or appointing a wilful deserter to be shot, is different from appointing a soldier necessarily to desert, that he may unavoidably be shot for desertion.

Having thus vindicated the *godly* reprobation maintained by St. Paul, from the misapprehensions of Mr. Toplady, we point at all the passages which we have produced in the *Scripture-scales* in defence of the DOCTRINES OF JUSTICE, the CONDITIONALITY of the reward of the inheritance, and the FREEDOM of the will. And, retorting Mr. T.'s argument, we say, "Now, are those the words of scripture, or are they not? If not, prove the forgery. If they be, you cannot fight against" [the conditional] "reprobation" [which we defend] "without fighting

ing: against God."—You cannot fight for calvinian reprobation, without fighting for free-wrath and the evil-principled deity worshipped by the Manichees.

ARG. XL. [Page 51.] Mr. T. supposes *absolute reprobation* by quoting 1 Sam. ii. 25. "*They [the sons of Eli] hearkened not to the voice of their father, because the Lord would slay them;*"—Here we are given to understand, that, by the decree of *the means*, the Lord secured the disobedience of these wicked men, in order to accomplish his decree *of the end*, that is, their absolute destruction.

To this truly calvinian insinuation we answer, (1) The sons of Eli, who had turned the tabernacle into an house of ill fame, and a den of thieves, had *personally* deserved a *judicial* reprobation: God therefore could *justly* give them up to a reprobate mind, in consequence of their personal, avoidable, repeated and aggravated crimes.—(2) The word *killing* does not here necessarily imply eternal damnation. The Lord *killed*, by a lion, the man of God from Judah, for having stopped in Bethel:—he *killed Nadab* and *Abiu* for offering strange fire:—he *killed* the child of David and Bathsheba:—he *killed* many of the Corinthians, for their irreverent partaking of the Lord's Supper:—but the *sin unto [bodily] DEATH* is not the *sin unto eternal death*; for St. Paul informs us that the body is sometime *given up to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord*, 1 Cor. v. 5.—(3) The Hebrew particle כִּי, which is rendered in our translation *because*, means also *THEREFORE*: and so our translators themselves have rendered it after St. Paul, and the *Septuagint*, Ps. cxvi. 10; *I believed, כִּי, AND THEREFORE will I speak*: see 2 Cor. iv. 13. If they had done their part as well in translating the verse quoted by Mr. Toplady, the doctrines of free-wrath would have gone proplefs; and we should have had these edifying words: *they [the sons of Eli] hearkened not to the voice of their father*

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AND THEREFORE *the Lord would slay them.* Thus the *voluntary sin* of free-agents would be represented as the cause of their *deserved reprobation*; and not their *undeserved reprobation*, as the cause of their *necessary sin*. See Sect. II.

ARG. XLI. [Page 51.] Mr. T. tries to prove absolute reprobation by quoting these words of our Lord, "*Thou Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be brought down to hell; for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would*" [or might] "*have remained unto this day.*"

This passage, if I am not mistaken, is nothing but a strong *expostulation* and *reproof*, admirably calculated to shame the unbelief, and alarm the fears of the *Capernautes*. Suppose I had an enemy, whose obstinate hatred had resisted for years the constant tokens of my love; and suppose I said to him, "Your obduracy is astonishing: if I had shewn to the fiercest tiger the kindness which I have shown you, I could have melted the savage beast into love;" would it be right, from such a *figurative supposition*, to conclude that I *absolutely* believed, I could have tamed the fiercest tiger?

But this passage taken in a literal sense, far from proving the absolute reprobation of *Sodom*, demonstrates that *Sodom* was never reprobated in the calvinian sense of the word: for if it had been *absolutely* reprobated from all eternity, no works done in her by Christ and his apostles, could have overcome her unbelief: but our Lord observes, that her strong unbelief could have been overcome by the extraordinary means of faith, which could not conquer the unbelief of Capernaum. Mr T. goes on:

ARG. XLII. [*Ibid.*] "But though God knew the citizens of Sodom would" [or might] "have reformed their conduct, had his providence made use of *effectual*" [Mr. T. should say of *EVERY effectual*] "*means to that end; still these effectual!*"

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Mr. T. should say, ALL these *extraordinary* and *peculiar*] "means were not vouchsafed."—True: because, according to the election of grace, God uses *more* means and more *powerful* means to convert some cities, than he does to convert others: witness the case of *Nineveh*, compared with that of *Jericho*. This is strongly maintained in my *Essay on the partial reprobation of distinguishing grace*, where this very passage is produced. But still we affirm two things:—(1) God always uses means sufficient to demonstrate, that his goodness, patience, and mercy, are over all his works [though in different degrees] and to testify that he is unwilling that sinners should die; unless they have first obstinately, and without necessity, refused to *work out their own eternal salvation* with the talent of *temporary* salvation, which is given to all, for the sake of him whose *saving grace has appeared to all men*, and who *enlightens* [in various degrees] *every man that came into the world*. (2) As the men of Sodom were not *absolutely lost*, though they had but *one* talent of means, no more were the men of Capernaum *absolutely saved*, though God favoured them with so many *more* talents of means, than he did the men of Sodom. Hence it appears, that Mr. T. has run upon the point of his own sword; the passage, which he appeals to, proving, that God does not work so *irresistibly* upon either Jews or Gentiles, as to secure his ABSOLUTE APPROBATION of some, and his ABSOLUTE REPROBATION of others.

ARG. XLIII. [Page 52.] Mr. T. to prop up calvinian reprobation, quotes these words of Christ, "FILL YE UP *the measure of your fathers*," Mat. xxiii. 32; and he takes care to produce the words FILL YE UP, in capitals; as if he would give us to understand, that Christ is extremely busy in getting reprobates to *sin* and *be damned*. For my part, as I believe that Christ never preached up *sin* and *wickedness*, I am persuaded that this expression is
nothing

nothing but a strong, *ironical reproof* of sin, like that in the Revelation, *Let him that is unjust be unjust still*;—or that in the Gospel, *Sleep on now, and take your rest*:—or that in the book of Ecclesiastes, *Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart, &c.* BUT KNOW, &c. I shudder when I consider “*doctrines of grace*,” so called, which support themselves by representing Christ as a preacher of wickedness. Calvinism may be compared to that insect, which feeds on putrifying carcases, lights only upon *real* or *apparent* sores, and delights chiefly in the smell of *corruption*. If there is a fault in our translation, Calvinism will pass over an hundred plain passages well-translated, and will eagerly light upon the error. Thus, p. 53 and 57, Mr. Toplady quotes, *Being disobedient whereunto they were appointed*, 1 Pet. ii. 1. He had rather take it for granted, that the god of Manes *absolutely predestinates* some people *to be disobedient*, than to do the holy God justice to admit this godly sense, which the original bears, *Being disobedient, whereunto they have set, or, disposed themselves*. See the proofs, *Scales* p. 96, and p. 138.

ARG. XLIV. [Page 52.] Mr. T. still pleading for the horrible decree of calvinian reprobation, says, “St. Matthew, if possible, expresses it still more strongly: *it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; but to them it is NOT given*, Matt. xiii. 11.”—I answer: (1) If, by the *mysteries of the kingdom of heaven*, you understand the *mysteries of CHRISTIANITY*, it is absurd to say, that all, who are not blessed with the knowledge of these *mysteries*, are calvinistically reprobated. This I demonstrate by verses 16, 17, and by the parallel place in St. Luke: *all things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him*. [That is, the mystery of a relative personality of
Father

Father and Son in the Godhead, has not been expressly revealed to others, as I chuse to reveal it to you my christian friends:} and, [to shew that this was his meaning] he turned him unto his disciples, and said privately, blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: for I tell you that many prophets [such as Samuel, Isaiah, Daniel, &c.] and kings [such as David, Solomon, Josiah, Hezekiah, &c. St. Matthew adds, and righteous men, such as Noah, Abraham, &c.] have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them: and to hear the things which ye hear, and have not heard them. Luke x. 22, 23, 24. Matt. xiii. 17.—Is not Mr. T. excessively fond of reprobating people to death, if he supposes, that, because it was NOT GIVEN to those prophets, kings, and righteous men, to know the mysteries of the christian dispensation, they were all absolutely doomed to sin on, and be damned?

But (2) should it be asserted, that, by the *mysteries of the kingdom*, we are to understand here every degree of saving light, then the reprobation mentioned in Matt. xiii. 11, is not the *partial* reprobation of *grace*, but the *impartial* reprobation of *justice*: and, in this case, to appeal to this verse in support of a chimerical reprobation of *free-wrath*, argues great inattention to the context; for the *very next* verse fixes the reason of the reprobation of the Jews who heard the gospel of Christ without being benefited by it;—a reason this, which saps the foundation of *absolute* reprobation. *But unto them it is NOT given*:—for they are calvinistically reprobated! No.—*Unto THEM it is NOT GIVEN: FOR whosoever hath, to him shall be GIVEN, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not [to purpose] from him shall be taken away, even that he hath, Matt. xiii. 12.* This anti-calvinian sense is strongly confirmed by our Lord's words two verses below: *to THEM it is NOT GIVEN, &c. for this people's heart is waxed gross:*

gross; [note: it IS WAXED *gross*, therefore it was not so *GROSS* at first as it is now :] and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes THEY HAVE CLOSED; left at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them, Matt. xiii. 15.—To produce therefore Matt. xiii. 11, as a capital proof of calvinian reprobation, is as daring an imposition upon the credulity of the simple, as to produce Exodus xx. in defence of adultery and murder. However, such arguments will not only be swallowed down in Geneva as tolerable, but the author of P. O. will cry them up as “*most masterly.*”

ARG. XLV. [Page 53.] Mr. T. concludes his scripture-proofs of calvinian reprobation by these words: “now I leave it to the decision of any unprejudiced, capable man upon earth, whether it be not evident, from these passages, &c. that *God hath determined to leave some men to perish in their sins, and to be justly punished for them?* In affirming which I only gave the scripture as I found it.”—That the scriptures produced by Mr. T. prove this, is true: we maintain it as well as he; and if he will impose no other reprobation upon us, we are ready to shake hands with him. Nor needs he call his book, “*More work for Mr. Wesley,*” but *A reconciliation with Mr. Wesley*: for, when we speak of the reprobation of justice, we assert, that “*God hath determined to leave some men*” [namely, the wise and prudent in their own eyes, the proud and disobedient, who do despite to the spirit of grace to the end of their day of salvation] “*to perish in their sins, and to be JUSTLY punished for them.*” But, according to Mr. T’s system, the men left to perish in their sins, are not the men whom the scriptures, which he has quoted, describe; but poor creatures absolutely sentenced to necessary, remediless sin, and to unavoidable, eternal damnation,
long

long before they had an existence in their mother's womb. And, in this case, we affirm, that their endless torments can never be just: and of consequence that the *calvinian reprobation* of unborn men, which Mr. T. has tried to dress up in scripture phrases, is as contrary to the scripture-reprobation of stubborn offenders, as Herod's ordering the *barbarous* destruction of the *Holy Innocents*, is different from his ordering the *righteous* execution of *bloody murderers*.

SECTION

SECTION VII.

An answer to the arguments by which Mr. T. tries to reconcile Calvinism with the doctrine of the day of judgment, and ABSOLUTE necessity with MORAL agency.

THEY, who *indirectly* set aside the day of judgment, do the cause of religion as much mischief as they, who *indirectly* set aside the immortality of the soul. Mr. Wesley asserts, that the Calvinists are the men. His words are, "On the principle of absolute predestination, there can be no future judgment:—It requires more pains than all men upon earth, and all the devils in hell, will ever be able to take, to reconcile the doctrine of" [calvinian] "reprobation with the doctrine of a judgment-day."—Mr. T. answers:

ARG. XLVI. [Page 82.] "The consequence is false; for absolute predestination is the very thing that renders the future judgment certain: God hath APPOINTED a day in which he will judge, the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ORDAINED."—If Mr. T. had put the words IN RIGHTEOUSNESS in capitals, instead of the words APPOINTED and ORDAINED [which he fondly hopes, will convey the idea of the calvinian decrees] he would have touched the knot of the difficulty: for the question is not, Whether there WILL BE a day of judgment; but, Whether, on the principle of absolute predestination, there CAN BE a day of judgment, consistently with divine equity, justice, wisdom, and sincerity: and that there can, Mr. T. attempts to prove by the following reasoning.

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ARC. XLVII. [Page 83.] "The most flagrant sinners sin *voluntarily*, notwithstanding the *inevitable* accomplishment of God's effective and permissive decrees. Now they, who sin *voluntarily*, are *accountable*: and accountable sinners are *judicable*; and if *judicable*, they are *punishable*."

Mr. T. has told us [p. 45.] that "*fallen men are involuntary Beings*;" and in this page he tells us, that they sin *voluntarily*. Now we, who never learned Mr. T's logic, cannot understand how *involuntary Beings* can sin *voluntarily*. But, letting this contradiction pass, and granting that sinners offend *voluntarily*, I ask, Is their *will* at liberty to chuse otherwise than it does, or is it not? If you say, it is at liberty to chuse otherwise than it does, you renounce *necessitating* predestination, and you allow the doctrine of *free-will*, which is the bulwark of the second gospel-axiom, and the scripture-engine which batters down *salvinian* reprobation: and, upon this scriptural plan, it is most certain, that God CAN *judge the world in righteousness*, that is, in a manner which reflects praise upon his essential *justice* and *wisdom*. But if you insinuate, that the will of sinners is absolutely bound by the "*efficacious purposes of heaven*," and by the "*effective decrees*" of him who "*worketh all things in all men, and even wickedness in the wicked*;"—if you say, that God's decree concerning every man is *irreversible*, whether it be a decree of absolute election to life, or of absolute reprobation to death, "*Because God's own decree SECURES the MEANS as well as the END, and ACCOMPLISHES the END by the MEANS*," p. 17;—or which comes to the same thing, if you assert, that the reprobate always sin *necessarily*, having no power, no liberty to *will* righteousness; you answer like a consistent Calvinist, and pour shame, folly, and unrighteousness upon the tribunal, where Christ will judge the world in righteousness.

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A just illustration will convince the unprejudiced reader, that this is really the case.—By the king's "EFFICACIOUS *permission*," a certain strong man called *Adam*, binds the hands of a thousand children behind their back with a chain of brass, and a strong lock, of which the king himself keeps the key. When the children are thus chained, the king commands them all, *upon pain of death*, to put their hands upon their breast, and promises ample rewards to those who will do it. Now, as the king is absolute, he *passes by* 700 of the bound children, and as he *passes them by*, he hangs about their neck a *black stone*, with this inscription, "*Unconditional reprobation to death*:" but being merciful too, he graciously fixes his love upon the rest of the children, just 300 in number, and he ordains them to finished salvation by hanging about their necks a *white stone*, with this inscription, "*Unconditional election to life*." And, that they may not miss their reward by non-performance of the above-mentioned condition, he gives the key of the locks to another strong man named *Christ*, who, in a day of irresistible power, looses the hands of the 300 elect children, and chains them upon their breast, as strongly as they were before chained behind their back. When all the elect are properly bound agreeably to orders, the king proceeds to judge the children according to their works, that is, according to their having put their hands *behind their back*, or *upon their breast*. In the mean time, a question arises in the court: can the king judge the children concerning the position of their hands, without rendering himself ridiculous? Can he WISELY REWARD the elect favourites with life according to THEIR works, when he has absolutely done the rewardable work for them by the stronger man? And can he JUSTLY PUNISH the reprobate with eternal death, for not putting their hands upon their breast; when the strong man has, according to a royal de-

cree, absolutely bound them behind their back?—
 “Yes, he can” [says a counsellor, who has learned logic in mystic Geneva] “for the children have *hands*, notwithstanding the *inevitable* accomplishment of the king’s *EFFECTIVE* and *permissive* decrees: now, children who have hands, and do not place them as they are bid, are *accountable*, and accountable children are *judicable*: and if judicable, they are *punishable*.” This argument would be excellent, if the counsellor did not speak of *hands*, which are *absolutely tied*. But it is not barely he having *hands*, but the having *hands* *FREE*, which make us accountable for not placing them properly.

Apply this plain observation to the case in hand, and you will see (1) That it is not barely the having a *will*, but the having *FREE-will*, which constitutes us *accountable*, *judicable*, and *punishable*:—(2) That, of consequence, Mr. Toplady’s grand argument is as inconclusive as that of the counsellor:—(3) That both arguments are as contrary to good sense, as the state of hands *at liberty*, is contrary to the state of hands *absolutely tied*:—as contrary to reason, as *free-will* is contrary to a *will absolutely bound*:—And (4) That, of consequence, the doctrine of the day of judgment is as incompatible with calvinian predestination, as sense with nonsense, and Christ with Belial.

However, if Mr. T. cannot carry his point by *reason*, he will do it by *scripture*: and therefore he raises such an argument as this: we often read in the Bible, that there will be a *day of judgment*: we often meet also in the Bible, with the words *must*, and *necessity*: and therefore, according to the Bible, the doctrine of a *day of judgment* is consistent with the doctrine of the *ABSOLUTE necessity* of human actions: just as if, in a thousand cases, a *degree* of necessity, or a *must*, we are not as different from *absolute* necessity, as the *want* of an apartment in
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the king's palace is different from the ABSOLUTE want of a room in any house in the kingdom. The absurdity of this argument will be better understood by considering the passages which Mr. T. produces to prove, that when men do good or evil, God's absolute decree of predestination necessitates them to do it.

ARG. XLVIII. [Page 60.] "It MUST NEEDS BE that offences come.—There MUST BE heresies among you.—Such things [wars, &c.] MUST NEEDS BE."—When Mr. T. builds calvinian necessity upon these scriptures, he is as much mistaken as if he fancied that Mr. Wesley and I were fatalists, because we say, "Considering the course and wickedness of the world, it CANNOT BE BUT Christendom will be distracted by heresies, law-suits, wars, and murders: for so long as men WILL follow worldly maxims, rather than evangelical precepts, such things MUST come to pass."—Again, would not the reader think that I trifled, if I attempted to prove ABSOLUTE necessity from such scriptural expressions as these? Seven days ye MUST eat unleavened bread.—New wine MUST BE put into new bottles.—He MUST NEEDS go through Samaria.—I have bought a piece of ground, and I MUST NEEDS go and see it.—How CAN I sin against God? I have married a wife, and therefore I CANNOT come.—The multitude MUST NEEDS come together [to mob Paul] Acts xxi. 22.—A bishop MUST BE blameless.—Ye MUST NEEDS BE subject [to rulers] not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

Once more: who does not see, that there is what the poverty of language obliges me to call (1) A necessity of DUTY: "I MUST pay my debts: —I MUST preach next Sunday."—(2) A necessity of CIVILITY: "I MUST pay such a visit."—(3) A necessity of CIRCUMSTANCE: "In

going from Jerusalem to Galilee, I MUST NEEDS pass through Samaria, because the high way lies directly through Samaria."——A necessity of CONVENIENCE: "I am tired with writing, I MUST leave off."——A necessity of DECENCY: "I MUST not go naked."——(6) A necessity of PRUDENCE: "I MUST look before I leap," &c.——Now, ALL these sorts of necessity, and an hundred more of the like stamp, do not amount to one single grain of calvinian, absolute, inseparable necessity. However, a rigid predestinarian [such is the force of prejudice!] sees his imaginary necessity in almost every MUST; just as a jealous man sees adultery in almost every look, which his virtuous wife casts upon the man whom he fancies to be his rival.

ARG. XLIX. [Page 61.] "Absolute necessity then is perfectly consistent with willingness and freedom in good agency, no less than in bad. For it is a true maxim, *Ubi voluntas, ibi Libertas.*"——That is, *Where there is a WILL, there is LIBERTY*: This maxim, which has led many good men into Calvinism, I have already exposed; see *Scales*, p. 261. To what is there advanced, I add the following remark. As there may be liberty where there is not a will, so there may be a will where there is not liberty. The first idle school-boy whom you meet, will convince you of it. I ask him, "when you are at school, and have a will, or, as you call it, a mind to go and play, have you liberty or freedom to do it?" He answers, "No" Here is then a WILL without LIBERTY. I ask him again, "When you are at school, where you have freedom or liberty to ply your book, have you a will to do it." He honestly answers, "No" again. Here is then LIBERTY without a WILL. How false therefore is this proposition, that *where there is a WILL there is LIBERTY*! Did judicious Calvinists consider this, they would no more say, "If all

men,

men were redeemed, they *would* all come out of the dungeon of sin." For there may be a *freedom* to come out consequent upon redemption, where there is no *will exercised*.—"Oh, but God makes us willing in the day of his power." True: in the day of salvation he restores to us the faculty of choosing moral good with some degree of ease; and, from time to time, he *peculiarly helps* us to make acts of willingness. But to suppose that he *absolutely wills* for us, is as absurd as to say, that when, after a quinsy, his gracious providence restores us a degree of liberty to swallow, he *neecessitates* us to eat and drink, or actually swallows for us.

ARG. L. [Page 61.] In his refusal to dismiss the Israelites, &c. "he [Pharaoh] could *will* no otherwise than he did, Ex. vii. 3, 4."—Is not this a mistake? When Pharaoh considered, did he not *alter* his mind? Did he not say to Moses, *Be gone, and bless me also*? If omnipotence had ABSOLUTELY hardened him, would he have complied at last? Do the *unchangeable* decrees change as the will of Pharaoh changed?

ARG. LI. [Page 61, 62.] "So when Saul went home to Gibeah, it is said, *There went with him a band of men, whose hearts God had touched*. In like manner God is said to have *stirred up the spirit of Cyrus*.—*Then rose up, &c. the Levites, with all them whose spirit God raised up*. Will any man say, that these did not will *freely*, only because they willed necessarily?"

(1) I [for one] say, that while they willed *necessarily*, [in the *calvinian* sense of the word *necessary*] they did not—they *COULD NOT* will *freely* [in the *moral* sense of the word *free*.] For Mr. T. is not morally *FREE to will*, so long as he is ABSOLUTELY BOUND *to will* one thing; any more than a man is *FREE to look to the left*, who is ABSOLUTELY BOUND to look to the *right*; let the object he looks at

at engage his heart and eye ever so pleasingly. God's Spirit prevents, accompanies, and follows us in every good thing: all our good works are *begun, continued, and ended in him*: but they are not *necessary*, in the calvinian sense of the word. In *moral* cases God does not *absolutely* necessitate us, though he may do it in *prophetic* and *political* cases. Thus, he *necessitated* Balaam, when he blessed Israel by the mouth of that covetous prophet;—and thus he *necessitated* Balaam's ass, when the dumb animal reproved his rider's madness. But then, whatever we do, under such *necessitating impulses*, will not be rewarded as our own work, any more than Balaam's good prophesy, and his ass's good reproof, were rewarded as *their own works*.

(2) From the above-mentioned passages, Mr. T. would make us believe, that, upon the whole, the *touches* of God's grace act *necessarily* like charms: but what says the stream of the scriptures? God *touched the heart* of all the Israelites, and stirred them up to faith: but the effect of that touch was so far from being *absolutely* forcible, that their hearts soon *started aside like a broken bow*; and, after having been *saved in Egypt* through *faith*, they *perished in the wilderness* through *unbelief*.—God gave king Saul a new heart; and yet, Saul cast away the heavenly gift.—God gave Solomon a *wise and understanding heart*; and yet, Solomon, in his old age, *made himself a foolish heart, darkened* by the love of heathenish women. God stirred up the heart of Peter to confess Christ, and to walk upon the sea; and yet, by and by, Peter *funk, cursed, swore, and denied his Lord*.—Awful demonstrations these, that, where divine grace works *most* powerfully, when its first grand impulse is over, there is an end of the *overbearing* power; and the soul, returning to its free-agency, chuses *without necessity* the *good*, which constitutes her *rewardable*; or the *evil*, which constitutes her *punishable*.

punishable. Of this Mr. Toplady himself produces a remarkable instance, 2 Cor. viii. 16, 17. "Thanks be to God [says the Apostle] WHO PUT the same earnest CARE INTO THE HEART of Titus for you:— OF HIS OWN ACCORD he went unto you."

If a gentleman, who delights to be in houses of ill fame, more than in the house of God, sees, in a circle of ladies, one whom he *suspects* of being immodest, he singles her out as one that may suit his purpose; and to her he makes his bold addresses. I am sorry to observe that this is exactly the case with Calvinism unmasked. We find, in the scriptures, a few places where God's suffering some men to do a lesser evil, in order to *prevent*, or to *punish* a greater evil, is expressed in a strong, figurative manner, which *seems* to ascribe sin to Him, just, as in other places, *jealousy, repentance, wrath, and fury*, together with *hands, feet, ears, and a nose*, are *figuratively* attributed to Him. Now, as *popish idolatry* screens herself behind these metaphors, so *calvinian Antinomianism* perpetually singles out those metaphorical expressions, which *seem* to make God the author of sin. Accordingly,

ARG. LII. [Page 61, &c.] Mr. T. produces these words of Joseph, "It was not you that sent me hither, but God;"—these words of David, "The Lord said to him (Shimei) curse David;"—these words of the sacred historian, "God hath appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahitophel, to the intent that the Lord might bring evil upon Absalom;"—and these words of the prophet, "Howbeit, he [the Assyrian king, turned loose upon Israel to avenge God's righteous quarrel with that hypocritical people] MEANETH not so, neither does his heart think so: but it is in his heart to destroy;"—these words in the Revelation, "God hath put it into their hearts [the hearts of the kings who shall hate the mystic harlot, and destroy her, and burn her with fire] to fulfil his will, and to agree, and to give their kingdom to the beast, till the
words

words of God shall be fulfilled:”—and the words of Peter, “*They [the accomplishers of the crucifixion of Christ] were gathered together to do whatsoever God’s hands, and God’s counsel had predestinated to be done, &c.*”

With respect to the last text, if it is rightly * translated, it is explained by these words of Peter, Acts ii. 23. *Christ was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God:—by his gracious counsel, that Christ should lay down his life as a ransom for all:—And by his clear foreknowledge of the disposition of the Jews to take that precious life away. This passage then, and all those which*

* With *Episcopus*, and some other learned critics, I doubt it is not. Why should it not be read thus? Acts iv. 26—28. *The Rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against the holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed [both Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together] for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.—By putting the clause Both Herod, &c. in a parenthesis, you have this evangelical sense, which gives no handle to the pleaders for sin. Both Herod and Pilate, &c. were gathered together against the holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed for to do whatsoever thy hand and counsel determined before to be done. I prefer this reading to the common one for the following reasons: (1) It is perfectly agreeable to the Greek; and the peculiar construction of the sentence is expressive of the peculiar earnestness with which the Apostle prayed. (2) It is attended with no Manichean inconueniency. (3) It is more agreeable to the context. For, if the Sanhedrim was gathered by God’s direction and decree, in order to threaten the Apostles, with what propriety could they say [verse 29.] *Now, Lord, behold their threatenings?*—And (4) It is strongly supported by verse 30, where Peter [after having observed verse 27, 28, according to our reading, that God had anointed his holy child Jesus to do all the miracles which he did on earth] prays, that, now Christ is gone to heaven, the effects of this powerful anointing may continue, and *signs and wonders may still be done by the name of his holy child Jesus.**

Mr.

Mr. T. has produced, or may yet produce, only prove:

- (1) That God foresees the evil which is in the heart of the wicked, and their future steps in peculiar circumstances, with ten thousand times more clearness and certainty, than a good huntsman foresees all the windings, doublings, and shifts of an hunted fox: and that he *over-rules their wicked counsels* to the execution of *his own wise and holy designs*, as a good rider over-rules the mad prancings of a vicious horse, to the display of his perfect skill in horsemanship, and to the treading down of the enemy in a day of battle. (2) That God *catches the wise in their own craftiness*, and that, to punish the wicked, he permits their wicked counsels to be defeated, and their best-concerted schemes to prove abortive. (3) That he frequently tries the faith, and exercises the patience of good men, by letting loose the wicked upon them, as in the case of Job and of Christ. (4) That he often punishes the wickedness of one man by letting loose upon him the wickedness of another man; and that he frequently avenges himself of one wicked nation by letting loose upon it the wickedness of another nation. Thus he let Absalom and Shimei loose upon David. Thus, a parable spoken by the prophet *Micaiah* informs us, that God, after having let a lying spirit loose upon Zedekiah, the false prophet, let Zedekiah loose upon wicked Ahab. Thus the Lord let loose the Philistines upon disobedient Israel, and the Romans upon the obdurate Jews, and their accursed city; using those wicked heathens as his vindictive scourge, just as he used swarms of frogs, and locusts, when he punished the rebellious Egypt with his plagues. — (5) That he sometimes lets a wicked man loose upon himself, as in the case of *Ahitophel*, *Nabal*, and *Judas*, who became their own executioners. — (6) That when wicked men are going to commit
atrocious

atrocious wickedness, he sometimes inclines their hearts so to relent, that they commit a *less* crime than they intended. For instance, when Joseph's brethren were going to starve him to death, by providential circumstances God inclined their hearts to *spare his life*; thus, instead of destroying him, they only sold him into Egypt.—(7) With respect to Rev. xvii. 17. the context, and the full stream of the Scripture, require that it should be understood thus: "as God, by providential circumstances, which seemed to favour their worldly views, suffered wicked kings to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, to help the beast to execute God's judgments upon corrupted churches and wicked states: so he will peculiarly let those kings loose upon the whore. and they shall agree to hate her, and shall make her desolate and naked."

Upon the whole, it is contrary to all the rules of criticism, decency, and piety, to take advantage of the dark construction of a sentence, or to avail ones self of a parable, an hyperbole, a bold metaphor, or an unguarded saying of a good man interwoven with the thread of scripture-history; in order to make appear [so far as Calvinism can] that "God worketh all things in all men; even wickedness in the wicked." Such a method of wresting the oracles of God, to make them speak the language of Belial and Moloch, is as ungenerous, as our inferring from these words, *I do not condemn thee*, that Christ does not condemn adulterers; that Christianity encourages; and that this single sentence, taken in a filthy, Antinomian sense, outweighs all the sermon upon the mount, as well as the holy meaning of the context: for these words being spoken to an adulteress, whom the magistrates had not condemned to die, and whom the Pharisees wanted Christ to *condemn to be stoned according to the law of Moses*; it is evident that our Lord's words, when taken in connexion with the context,

context, carry this edifying meaning. "I am come to act that part of a *Saviour*, and not that of a *Magistrate*: if the magistrates have not *condemned thee to be stoned*, neither do I condemn thee to that dreadful kind of death: avail thyself of thy undeserved reprieve: *go, and repent*, and evidence the sincerity of thy repentance by *sinning no more*." —Hence I conclude, that all the texts quoted by the Fatalists, prove that God *neecessitates* men to sin by his decrees, just as John vii. 11. proves that Christ *countenances* the filthy sin of adultery.

ARG. LIII. [p. 64.] Mr. T. thinks to demonstrate, that the doctrine of the ABSOLUTE *necessity* of all our actions, and consequently of all our sins, is true, by producing "St. Paul's case as a preacher. *Though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of? for NECESSITY is laid upon me, yea, woe is me if I preach not the gospel*, 1 Cor. ix. 16. Yet he preached the gospel FREELY, &c. NECESSITY therefore, and FREEDOM, are very good friends, notwithstanding all the efforts of Arminianism to set them at variance." —The Apostle evidently speaks here of a NECESSITY of PRECEPT on God's part, and of DUTY on his own part: and such a *necessity* being perfectly consistent with the alternative of *obedience*, or of *disobedience*, is also perfectly consistent with *freedom*, and with a day of judgment: and Mr. T. trifles when he speaks of *all the efforts of Arminianism, to set SUCH A necessity at variance with FREEDOM*: for, it is the distinguishing glory of our doctrine, to maintain both the *freedom* of the will, and the indispensable *necessity* of cordial obedience. But, in the name of candor and common sense I ask, What has a *necessity* of PRECEPT and DUTY to do with CALVINIAN *necessity*, which, in the day of God's power, ABSOLUTELY NECESSITATES the *elect* to *obey*, and the *reprobates* to *disobey*: entirely debarring the former from the alternative of *disobedience*, and the latter from the alternative of *obedience*? That

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the Apostle, in the text before us, does not mean a calvinian, *absolute* necessity, it is evident from the last clause of the verse, where he mentions the *possibility* of his disobeying, and the punishment that awaited him in case of disobedience: *woe is me, says he, if I preach not the gospel.*—A NECESSITY of precept was laid on Jonah to preach the gospel to the Ninevites; but THIS necessity was so far from calvinistically-binding him to preach, that (like Demas, and the clergy who fleece a flock which they do not feed) he ran away from his appointed work, and incurred the *woe* mentioned by the Apostle. Therefore, St. Paul's words candidly taken together, far from establishing *absolute necessity*, which admits of no alternative, are evidently subversive of this dangerous error, which exculpates the sinner, and makes God the author of sin.

Hence Mr. Wesley says with great truth, that if the doctrines of *absolute* predestination and calvinian necessity are true, there can be *no sin*; seeing "It cannot be a sin in a spark to rise, or in a stone to fall." And therefore, "*the reprobate*" [tending to evil by the *irresistible* power of divine predestination, AS UNAVOIDABLY as stones tend to the center, by the *irresistible* force of natural gravitation] "*can have no sin at all.*"—This is a just observation taken from the absurdity of the doctrine of an *absolute* necessity, originally brought on by God's absolute and irresistible decrees. Let us see how Mr. T. shows his wit on this occasion.

ARG. LIV. [p. 71, 72.] "*The reprobate CAN have no sin at all.* Indeed? They are quite sinless, are they? As perfect as Mr. Wesley himself? O excellent reprobation! &c. What then must the *elect* be? &c. Besides: if *reprobates* be sinless—nay, immutably perfect, so that they can have *no sin at all*, will it not follow that Mr. Wesley's own perfectionists are *reprobates*? For surely if *reprobates* may be *sinless*, the *sinless* may be *reprobates*.
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Did not Mr. John's MALICE outrun his CRAFT, when he advanced an objection, &c. so easily retortible?"

This *illogical*, not to say *illiberal* answer, is of a piece with the challenge, which the reader may see illustrated at the end of *Sect. I.* by my remarks upon a consequence as just as that of Mr. Wesley: for it is as evident, that if the reprobate are "*involuntary Beings*"——Beings *absolutely* necessitated by *efficacious, irresistible* predestination to act as they do, they are as really *sinless*, as a mountain of gold is really heavier than a handful of feathers. And Mr. Wesley may believe, that both consequences are just, without believing, either that *the wicked are sinless*, or that *there is a mountain of gold*. On what a slender foundation does *Logica Genevensis* rest her charges of *craft* and *malice*? And yet, this foundation is as solid as that, on which she raises her doctrines of unscriptural grace and free-wrath, But Mr. T. advances other arguments.

ARG. LV. [p. 69, 70.] "The holy Baptist, without any ceremony or scruple, compared some of his unregenerate hearers to *Stones*; saying, *God is able even of these STONES to raise up children to Abraham, &c. Ye therefore as lively STONES, are built up, a spiritual house, &c.*——*They (the elect) shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts——in the day when I make up my JEWELS: now, unless I am vehemently mistaken, Jewels are but another name for precious stones.*"——Hence the reader is given to understand, that when Mr. Wesley opposes the doctrine of *absolute necessity*, by saying, that, *It cannot be a sin in a stone to fall*, he turns "the Bible's own artillery against itself, and gives us too much room to fear that it is as natural to him to pervert——as it is for——a stone to sink."

By such arguments as these, I could prove transubstantiation: for, Christ said of a bit of bread, *This is my body.*——Nay, I could prove any other

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absurdity:

absurdity: I could prove that Christ could not *think*, and that his disciples could not *walk*: for he says, *I am the vine, and ye are the branches*; and a *vine* can no more *think*, than *branches* can *walk*.— I could prove that he was a *hen*, and the Jews *chickens*: for he says, that he would have gathered them, as a **HEN** gathers her **CHICKENS** under her wings. Nay, I could prove, that Christ had no more hand in our *redemption*, than we are supposed by Calvinists to have in our *conversion*; that his “*poor free-will* [to use Mr. Toplady’s expressions [page 70.] with respect to us] “*had no employ,*” that he was *absolutely passive, and that*” redemption “*is as totally the operation of*” the Father, “*as the severing of stones from their native quarry, and the erecting them into an elegant building are the effects of human agency.*”——If the astonished reader asks, how I can prove a proposition so subversive of the gratitude, which we owe to Christ for our redemption? I reply, By the very same argument, by which Mr. T. proves, that we are “*absolutely passive*” in the work of conversion, and that “*conversion is TOTALLY the operation of God:*” that is, by producing passages, where Christ is metaphorically called **A STONE**; and of these there are not a few. Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion a **STONE**, a **TRIED STONE**, a **PRECIOUS CORNER STONE**, a **SURE FOUNDATION**, II. xxviii. 16.— *Whosoever shall fall on this STONE shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder*, Mat. xxi. 34.—*The STONE which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner*, Acts iv. 11.—*To whom coming as to a living STONE*, &c. 1 Pet. ii. 4.—If to these texts we add those, in which he is compared to a *foundation*, to a *rock*, and to *jewels*, or *precious stones*, I could demonstrate [in the calvinian way] that Christ was once as “*absolutely passive*” in the work of our redemption as a *stone*. When I consider such arguments as these, I cannot help wondering at
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the gross impositions of pagan, popish, and calvinian doctors. I find myself again in the midst of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Jupiter, if we believe the Poet, turned *Niobe* into a rock. The tempter wanted Christ to turn a *stone* into *bread*. *Logica Romana* turns *bread* into *Christ*. But *Logica Genevensis* carries the bell, for she can, even without Hocus FOCUS of a massing priest, turn *Christ* into a *stone*.—Mr. Toplady far from recanting his argument *a lapide*, confirms it by the following.

ARG. LVI. [p. 71.] “A stone has the advantage of you: man's rebellious heart is, by nature, and so far as spiritual things are concerned, MORE intractable and unyielding than a stone itself. I may take up a stone, and throw it this way or that—and it obeys the impulse of my arm. Whereas in the sinner's heart, there is every species of hatred and opposition to God: nor can any thing, but omnipotent power, slay its enmity.”

I am glad Mr. T. vouchsafes, in this place, to grant, that *omnipotent power can slay the enmity*. I hope he will remember this concession, and no more turn from *the Prince of life*, to preach up the monster *Death*, as the *SLAYER* of the enmity. But, to come to the argument: would Mr. T. think me in earnest, if I attempted to prove that a stone *had* [once] *the advantage* of him, with respect to getting learning, and that there was more omnipotence required to make him a scholar, than to make the stone he stands upon, fit to take a degree in the University? However, I shall attempt to do it: displaying my skill in orthodox-logic, I personate the school-master, who taught Mr. Toplady grammar, and probably found him once at play, when he should have been at his book, and I say, “Indeed, master, a stone has the advantage of you. A boy's playful heart, is by nature, so far as grammar is concerned, *more intractable and unyielding* than a stone itself.”—[*Now for the proof!*]

“I may take up a stone, and throw it this way or that, and it instantly, and without the least degree of resistance obeys the impulse of my arm: whereas you resist my orders, you run away from your book, or you look off from it. In your playful heart, there is every species of hatred and opposition to your accidence; and therefore more power is required to make you a scholar, than to make that stone a grammarian.” Mr. Toplady’s *voluntary humility* claps this argument as excellent; but his *good sense* hisses it as absurd, and says with St. Paul, *When I was a child, I spake as a child: but when I became a man I put away childish things.*

ARG. LVII. [p. 71.] Ah but “God’s gracious promise to renew his people, runs in this remarkable style: *I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh.*”—And does this prove CALVINIAN *board-will*, any more than these gracious commands to renew our own hearts, prove PELAGIAN *free-will*? *Circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff-necked.*—*Make you a new heart and a new spirit.*—*Turn yourselves, and live ye?* Who does not see, that the evangelical union of such passages, gives birth to the scripture-doctrine of *affixed free-will*, which stands at equal distance from *calvinian necessity*, and from *Pelagian, self-sufficient exertion*?

ARG. LVIII. [p. 73.] But, God “WORKETH ALL THINGS according to the counsel of HIS OWN will, Eph. i. 11.”—By putting the word ALL in very large capitals, Mr. T. seems willing to insinuate, that God’s decree *causes* all things; and, of consequence, that God absolutely *works* the good actions of the righteous, and the bad deeds of the wicked. Whereas the Apostle means only, that *all the things WHICH GOD WORKS*, he works them according to the counsel of his own most wise, gracious, and righteous will. But the things which GOD WORKS, are, in many cases, as different from the things

things which we WORK, as light is different from darkness. This passage therefore, does not prove calvinian necessity: for, when God made man, according to the counsel of his own will, he made him a free-agent, and set before him life and death; bidding him chuse life. Now, to include Adam's eating of the forbidden fruit, and chusing death, among the things which GOD WORKETH, is to turn Manichee with a witness: it is to confound *Christ* and *Belial*; the acts of God, and the deeds of sinners. It is to suppose [horrible to think!] that God will send the reprobates to hell for HIS OWN deeds, or, if you please, for what he has absolutely wrought in them and by them, according to the counsel of his own necessitating will. This dreadful doctrine is that capital part of Calvinism which is called absolute predestination to death. If Mr. T. denies, that it is the second pillar of his doctrine of grace, he may turn to Sect. II. where he will find his peculiar gospel "UPON ITS LEGS."

I hope I need say no more upon this head, to convince the unprejudiced reader, that Mr. T's arguments in favour of calvinian necessity are frivolous; and that Mr. Wesley advances a glaring truth, when he asserts, that, On the principle of absolute predestination, there can be no future judgment [upon any known principle of wisdom, equity, and justice:] and that it requires more pains than all rationals will be ever able to take, to reconcile the doctrine of [calvinian] reprobation, with the doctrine of a judgment-day.

SECTION

SECTION VIII.

An answer to the argument taken from God's pre-science, whereby Mr. Toplady tries to prove, that the VRRY CRUELTY which Mr. Wesley charges on Calvinism, is really chargeable on the doctrine of general grace.

MR. Toplady is a spirited writer. He not only tries to reconcile calvinian reprobation with divine *mercy*, but he attempts to retort upon us the charge of holding a *cruel* doctrine.

ARG. LIX. [p. 47.] "But what, if, after all, that very *cruelty*, which Mr. Wesley pretends to charge on *Calvinism*, be found really chargeable on *Arminianism*? I pledge myself to *prove* this—before I conclude this tract."—And accordingly [p. 86, 87.] Mr. Toplady, after observing in his way, that according to Mr. Wesley's doctrine, God offers his grace to many who *put it from them*, and gives it to many who *receive it in vain*, and who, on this account, are condemned; Mr. Toplady, I say, sums up his argument in these words: "If God *knows*, that the offered grace *will be rejected*; it would be *MERCY* to *forbear* the offer. Prove the contrary if you are able."

I have answered this objection *at large*, *Scripture-Scales*, Sect. XIX. However I shall say something upon it here. (1) God's perfections shine in such a manner as not to eclipse one another. Wisdom, justice, mercy, and truth, are the adorable, and well-proportioned features of God's *moral face*, if I may venture upon this expression. Now, if, in order to magnify his *MERCY*, I thrust out his *wisdom* and *justice* [as I should do if I held a lawless calvinian

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nian election ;]—or, if, in order to magnify his justice, I thrust out his *mercy* and *wisdom* [as I should do, if I consistently held calvinian reprobation ;] should I not disfigure God's *moral* face, as much as I should spoil Mr. Toplady's *natural* face, if I swelled his eyes or cheeks to such a degree, as to leave absolutely no room for his other features ? The Calvinists forget that as human beauty does not consist in the monstrous bigness of *one* or *two* features, but in the harmonious and symmetrical proportion of *all* ; so divine glory does not consist in displaying a *mercy* and a *justice*, which would absolutely swallow up each other, together with *wisdom*, *holiness*, and *truth*. This would however be the case, if God, after having *wisely* decreed to make *free-agents*, in order to display his *holiness*, *justice*, and *truth*, by *judging them according to their works*, NECESSITATED them to be good or wicked, by decrees of *absolute* predestination to life and heaven, or of *absolute* reprobation to hell and damnation.

(2) Do but allow, that God made *rational*s in order to rule them *as rational*s, namely, by *laws* adapted to their nature ;—do but admit this truth, I say, which stands or falls with the Bible ; and it necessarily follows, that *rational*s were made with an eye to a *day of judgment* : and the moment this is granted, Mr. Toplady's argument vanishes into smoke. For, supposing that God had displayed *more mercy* towards those who die in their sins, by forbearing to give them grace and to offer them more grace ;—or, in other words, supposing that God had shewn the wicked *more mercy*, by shewing them **NO MERCY AT ALL** [which by the by is a contradiction in terms ;] yet, such a *merciless mercy* [if I may use the expression] would have blackened his *wisdom*, overthrown his *truth*, and destroyed his *justice*. What a poor figure, for instance, would his *justice* have made among his attributes, if he had said, that he would judicially
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cast his unprofitable servants into outer darkness, for burying a talent which they never had, or for not receiving a Saviour who was always kept from them? And what rationals would not have wondered at a *Governor*, who, after having made moral agents in order to *rule* them according to THEIR FREE-nature, and to *judge* them in *righteousness* according to THEIR *works*, should nevertheless shew himself.—(1) So *inconsistent*, as to rule them by *efficacious decrees*, which absolutely necessitate some of them to work iniquity; and others to work righteousness; (2) So *unjust*, as to judge them according to the works, which his own binding decrees, had *necessitated* them to do; and (3) So *cruel and unwise*, as to PUNISH them with *eternal death*, or REWARD them with *eternal life*, according to a sentence of *absolute reprobation to DEATH*, or of *absolute election to LIFE*, which he passed beforehand, *without any respect to THEIR works*, thousands of years before most of them were born? By what art could so strange a conduct have been reconciled with the titles of *Law-giver*, and *Judge of all the earth*, which God assumes; or with his repeated declarations, that *justice and equity* are the basis of his throne; and that, in point of judgment, his ways are perfectly equal?

If Mr. T. should try to vindicate so strange a proceeding, by saying, that God could justly reprobate to eternal death myriads of unborn infants FOR THE SIN OF ADAM; would he not make a bad matter worse; since [upon the plan of the *absolute* predestination of all event] Adam's sin was *necessarily* brought about by the decree of the MEANS, which decree: [if Calvinism is true] God made in order to *secure and accomplish* the two grand decrees of the END, namely, the eternal decree of *finished damnation by Adam*, and the eternal decree of *finished salvation by Christ*?

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The absurdity of Mr. Toplady's argument may be placed in a clearer light by an illustration. The king, to display his royal benevolence, equity, and justice, to maintain good order in his army, and excite his troopers to military diligence, promises to give a reward to all the men of a regiment of light horse, who shall ride so many miles without dismounting to plunder: and he engages himself to punish severely those who shall be guilty of that offence. He foresees indeed, that many will slight his offered rewards, and incur his threatened punishment: nevertheless, for the above-mentioned reasons, he proceeds. Some men are promoted, and others are punished. A Calvinist highly blames the king's conduct. He says, that his Majesty would have shewn himself *more gracious*, and would have asserted his sovereignty much better, if he had refused horses to the plunderers, and had punished them for lighting off horses *which they never had*: and that, on the other hand, it became his free-grace to tie the rewardable dragoons fast to their saddle, and by this means to *necessitate* them to keep on horseback, and deserve the promised reward. Would not such a conduct have marked his Majesty's reputation with the stamp of dissingenuity, cruelty, and folly? And yet, astonishing! because we do not approve of *such a judicial* distribution of the rewards of eternal life, and the punishments of eternal death, Mr. Toplady fixes the charge of *cruelty* upon the gospel which we preach! He goes on:

ARG. LX. [p. 85.] "According to Mr. Wesley's own fundamental principle of *universal grace*; grace itself, or the saving influence of the Holy Spirit on the hearts of men, DOES and MUST become the ministration of eternal death to thousands and millions."—[p. 89.] "Level therefore your tragical exclamations, about *unmercifulness*,

ness, at your own scheme, which truly and properly deserves them."

The flaw of this argument consists in the words "DOES and MUST," which Mr. T. puts in italics. (1) In the word DOES: it is a great mistake to say, that upon Mr. W's principles, grace itself DOES become the ministration of eternal death to any soul. It is not for *grace*, but for the *abuse* or *neglect* of grace, and it is saving light, that men are condemned. *This is the condemnation*, says Christ himself, *that light* [the light of grace] *is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light.*— And St. Paul adds, that *the grace of God which bringeth salvation*, hath [in different degrees appeared to all men, John iii. 19. Tit. ii. 11. There is no medium between condemning men for not using a talent of grace which *they had*, or for not using a talent of grace which *they NEVER had*. The former sentiment, which is perfectly agreeable to reason, scripture, and conscience, is that of Mr. *Wesley*: the latter sentiment, which contradicts one half of the Bible, shocks reason, and demolishes the doctrines of justice, is that of Mr. *Toplady*.

(2) When this gentleman says, that God's grace, upon Mr. Wesley's principles, MUST become the ministration of death to millions, he advances as groundless a proposition, as I would do, if I said, that the grace of creation, the grace of preservation, and the grace of a preached-gospel, ABSOLUTELY destroys millions; because millions, by wilfully abusing their *created* and *preserved* powers, or by neglecting so great salvation as the *gospel* brings, pull down upon themselves an unnecessary, and therefore a *just* destruction.—(3) We oppose the doctrine of ABSOLUTE NECESSITY, or the calvinian MUST, as being inseparable from Manicheism: and we assert, that there is no *needs* MUST in the eternal death of any man, because Christ imparts a degree of temporary salvation to all, with power to obey, and a promise to bestow eternal salvation upon

upon all that *will* obey. How ungenerous is it then, to charge upon us the very doctrine which we detest, when it has no *necessary* connexion with any of our principles! How irrational to say, that if our doctrine of grace is true, God's grace **MUST** become the ministration of death to millions!

—Ten men have a mortal disorder: a physician prepares a sovereign remedy for them all: five take it properly and recover, and five, who will not follow his prescriptions, die of their disorder: now, who but a prejudiced person would infer from thence, that the physician's sovereign remedy is *become the ministration of death* to the patients who die, because they would not take it? Is it right thus to confound a *remedy* with the *obstinate neglect* of it? A man *wilfully* starves himself to death with good food before him. I say that his *wilfulness* is the cause of his death: no, replies a decretist, it is the *good food* which you desire him to take. This absurd conclusion is all of a piece with that of Mr. Toplady.

ARG. LXI. [p. 89.] “The Arminian system represents the Father of mercies as offering grace to them, who he *knows*, will only add sin to sin, and make themselves two-fold more the children of hell by refusing it.”—Indeed is it not the Arminian system *only*, that says this: (1) All the Calvinists, who allow that God gave *angelic* grace to angels, though he knew that many of them would fall from that grace, and would fall *deeper*, than if they had fallen from a less exalted station:—(2) *Jesus Christ*, who gave Judas the grace of apostleship, and represents God as giving a pound to his servants who squander it, as well as to those who use it properly:—and (3) Mr. Toplady himself, who [notwithstanding his pretended horror for so scriptural a doctrine] dares not deny, that God gave the grace of creation to those who *shall* perish. Now the grace of creation implies spotless
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holiness: and if God could once graciously give spotless holiness to Judas in the loins of Adam, why could he not graciously restore to that Apostle a degree of free-agency to good, that he might be judged according to *his own works*, and not according to calvinian decrees of *finished wickedness* and *finished damnation* in Adam? But—(4) What is still more surprising, Mr. T. himself [p. 51.] quotes these words, which so abundantly decide the question: *Thou, Capernaum, which art EXALTED UNTO HEAVEN [by the peculiar favours and gospel-privileges bestowed upon thee] shalt be brought DOWN TO HELL: for if the MIGHTY WORKS which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained unto this day, Matt. xi. 23.* Now, I ask, Why were these *mighty works* done in Capernaum? Was it out of *love*—to bring Capernaum to repentance? Or was it out of *wrath*—that it might be *more tolerable in the day of judgment for Sodom than Capernaum*? There is no medium: Mr. Toplady must recant this part of the Bible, and of his book; or he must answer one of these two questions in the affirmative. If he says [as we do] that these *mighty works*, which might have converted Tyre, Sidon and Sodom, were primarily wrought to bring Capernaum to repentance, he gives up Calvinism, which stands or falls with the doctrine of *necessitating means* used in order to bring about a *necessary* end. If he says [as Calvinism does] that these *mighty works* were *primarily* wrought to sink Capernaum into hell—into a deeper hell than Sodom, because the *end* always shews what the *means* were used for; he runs upon the point of his own objection; he pulls upon *his* doctrines of grace the very *unmercifulness*, which he charges upon *ours*, and he shews to every unprejudiced reader, that the difficulty arising from the prescience of God, with which the Calvinists think

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to demolish the doctrine of general grace, falls upon Calvinism with a double weight.—Mr. Toplady is sensible that God could never have *appeared* good and just, unless the wicked had been *absolutely inexcusable*, and that they could never have been *inexcusable*, if God had condemned them for burying a talent of grace which they never had; and therefore Mr. T. tries to overthrow this easy solution of the difficulty by saying,

ARG. LXII. [p. 88.] “Be it so” [that the wicked *are made* INEXCUSABLE by a day of grace and temporary salvation] “yet, surely, God can never be thought, knowingly to render a man more INEXCUSABLE, by taking such measures as will certainly load him with accumulated condemnation, out of MERE LOVE to that man!”—— We grant it; and therefore we assert, that it is not out of MERE LOVE that God puts us in a gracious state of *probation*, or *temporary salvation*; but out of *wisdom*, *truth*, and *distributive justice*, as well as out of *mercy* and *love*. If God therefore were endued with no other perfection than that of *merciful love*, we would give up the doctrine of *judicial reprobation*; for a God devoid of *distributive justice* could, and would save all sinners in the calvinian way, that is, with a salvation perfectly finished without any of their works. But then, he would neither *judge* them, nor bestow eternal salvation upon them by way of *reward* for their works, as the scripture says he will.

Oh! how much more reasonable and scriptural is it, to allow the doctrine of free-grace, and free-will, established in the *Scripture-scales*; and to maintain the *reprobation of justice*——an unavoidable reprobation this, which is perpetually asserted in the gospel, and will leave the wicked entirely inexcusable, and God perfectly righteous:——

How much better is it, I say, to hold *such* a reprobation, than to admit *calvinian* reprobation, which renders the wicked excusable and pitiable, as being condemned for doing what omnipotence necessitated them to do;—a reprobation this, which stigmatizes Christ as a shuffler, for offering to all a salvation from which most are *absolutely* debarred;—a cruel reprobation, which represents the Father of mercies as an unjust Sovereign, who takes such measures as will *unavoidably* load myriads of unborn men with accumulated condemnation, out of *free-wrath* to their unformed souls.

Should Mr. Toplady say, “That, according to the gospel which we preach, the wicked shall *certainly* be damned; and therefore the difference between us is but trifling after all; seeing the Calvinists assert, that some men [namely those who are *eternally* reprobated by divine Sovereignty] shall *certainly* and *unavoidably* be damned; and the anti-calvinists say, that some men [namely those who are *finally* reprobated by divine justice] shall be *certainly* though *unavoidably* damned:”—— I reply, that frivolous as the difference between these two doctrines may appear to those, who judge according to the *appearance* of words, it is as capital as the difference between *avoidable* ruin and *unavoidable destruction*; between *justice* and *injustice*;—between *initial election* and *finished reprobation*;—between saying that God is the *FIRST cause* of the damnation of the wicked, and asserting that *THEY* are the *FIRST cause* of their own damnation. In a word, it is as great, as the difference between the *north* and the *south*——between a gospel made up of *antinomian free-grace* and barbarian *FREE-wrath*, and a gospel made up of *scriptural free grace*, and impartial, retributive *justice*.

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Upon the whole, from the preceding answers it is evident, if I am not mistaken, that, though the grand, calvinian objection taken from God's *fore-knowledge*, may, at first sight, puzzle the simple; yet it can bear neither the light of scripture, nor that of reason; and it recoils upon Calvinism with all the force, with which it is supposed to attack *the saving grace, which has appeared to all men.*

SECTION IX.

An answer to the charges of robbing the Trinity, and encouraging Deism, which charges Mr. T. brings against the doctrine of the anti-calvinists.

MR. T. thinks his cause so good, that he supposes himself able, not only to stand on the defensive; but also to attack the gospel which we preach. From his *Babel* therefore, [his strong tower of *Confusion*] he makes a bold sally, and charges us thus:

ARG. LXIII. [p. 94.] "*Arminianism robs the Father of his sovereignty.*"—This is a mistake; Arminianism dares not attribute to him the grim sovereignty of a Nero; but if it does not humbly allow him *all* the sovereignty, which scripture and reason ascribe to him, so far it is wrong, and so far we oppose Pelagian *Arminianism* as well as Manichean *Calvinism*.—It "*robs the Father of his DECREES:*"—This is a mistake: it reverences all his righteous, scriptural decrees; though it shudders at the thought of imputing to him unscriptural, calvinian decrees, more wicked and absurd than the decrees of Nebuchadnezzar and Darius. —It "*robs the Father of his providence:*"—Another mistake! Our doctrine only refuses to make God the author of sin, and to lead men to the pagan error of *Fatalism*, or to the Manichean error of a two-principled god, who absolutely works all things in all men, as a showman works all things in his puppets; fixing a *necessary* virtue on the good, and *necessary* wickedness on the wicked, to the subversion of all the divine perfections.

perfections, and to the entire overthrow of the second gospel-axiom, of Christ's tribunal, and of the *wisdom* and *justice*, which the scriptures ascribe to God, as *judge of the whole earth*.

ARG. LXIV. [ibid.] "*It [Arminianism] robs the SON of his efficacy as a Saviour.*"—Another mistake! It only dares not pour upon him the flame of being the *absolute reprobator* of myriads of unborn creatures, whose nature he assumed with a gracious design to be absolutely their *temporary Saviour*; promising to prove their *eternal Saviour* upon gospel-terms; and, accordingly, he *saves all mankind* with a *temporary salvation*; and *those who obey him*, with an *eternal salvation*. The EFFICACY of HIS blood is then complete, so far as he *absolutely* designed it should be.

ARG. LXV. [ibid.] "*It [Arminianism] robs the SPIRIT of his EFFICACY as a sanctifier.*" By no means: for it maintains, that the Spirit, which is the grace and light of Christ, *enlightens every man that comes into the world*, and leads the worst of men to some temporary good, or at least restrains them from the commission of a thousand crimes. So far the Spirit's grace is *efficacious in all*: and, if it is not *completely and eternally* efficacious in those who *harden their hearts*, and by their wilful hardness *treasure up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath*—it is because *the day of wrath*, for which the wicked were * SECONDARILY made, is to be *the day of the RIGHTEOUS judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds*, Rom. ii. 5, 6. and not the day of the *unrighteous judgment of Cal-*

* All angels and men were *primarily* made to enjoy an accepted time, and a temporary day of salvation. Those angels and men, who know and improve their day of salvation, were *secondarily* made for the day of remunerative love, and for a kingdom prepared for them from the beginning of the world.

Calvin, who [doctrinally] renders to every man according to a *finished salvation* in Christ, productive of *necessary* goodness; and according to a *finished damnation* in Adam, productive of *remediless* wickedness, and all its dreadful consequences.

ARG. LXVI. [p. 92.] Mr. *Toplady* produces a long quotation from Mr. *Slofs*, which being divested of the verbose dress in which error generally appears, amounts to this plain abridged argument: "If the doctrine of calvinian election is false, because all mankind are not the object of that election, and because all men have an equal right to the divine favour, it follows that infidels are right when they say, that the *jewish* and the *christian* revelations are false; for all mankind are not *elected* to the favour of having the Old and New Testament: and therefore Arminianism encouraged infidelity."

This argument is good to convince pelagian levellers, that God is *partial* in the distribution of his talents, and that he indulges *Jews* and *Christians* with an holy, *peculiar* election and calling, of which those who never heard of the Bible, are utterly deprived. I have, myself, made this remark in the *Essay on the gratuitous election, and partial reprobation* which St. Paul frequently preaches: but the argument does not affect *our anti-calvinian gospel*. For, (1) *We* do not say, that calvinian election is false, because it supposes that God is *PECULIARLY gracious* to some men; [for this we strongly assert, as well as the Calvinists:] but because it supposes

But those angels and men, who do not know and improve their day of salvation, were *secondarily* made for the day of retributive *wrath*, and for the fire prepared for the devil, his angels, and his servants, who are faithful to him unto death.

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that God is so PECULIARLY *gracious* to some men, as to be ABSOLUTELY *merciless* and *unjust* to all the rest of mankind.

(2) That very revelation, which Mr. *Slofs* thinks we betray to the Deists, informs us, that, though all men are not indulged with the *peculiar* blessings of Judaism and Christianity, yet they are all *chosen* and *called* to be righteous, at least according to the covenants made with *fallen* Adam, and *spared* Noah. Hence St. Peter says, that, *In every nation, he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness* [according to his light, though it should be only the *lowest* degree of that light, which enlightens every man that cometh into the world] *is accepted of him*: and St. Paul speaks of some *gentiles, who, though they have not the Law of Moses or the Law of Christ, do by nature* [in its state of initial restoration through the seed of life given to fallen Adam in the promise] *the things contained in the law, are a law unto themselves; shewing the work of the law written in their hearts.* Therefore, though there is a *gratuitous* election, which draws after it a *gratuitous* reprobation from the blessings peculiar to *Judaism* and *Christianity*; there is no *calvinian* election, which draws after it a *gratuitous* reprobation from all saving grace, and necessarily involves the greatest part of mankind in *unavoidable* damnation. Hence, if I mistake not, it appears, that when Mr. *Slofs* charges us with having contributed to the prevailing Deism of the present time, by furnishing the adversaries of divine revelation with arguments against Christianity," he [as well as Mr. *Toplady*] gratuitously imputes to our doctrine, what *really* belongs to Calvinism. For there is a perfect agreement between the *absolute necessity* of events, which is asserted by *calvinian bound-willers*; and that which is maintained by *deistical Fatalists*: and it is well known that the horrors of the absolute reprobation

tion which the Calvinists fancy they see in Rom. ix. have tempted many moralists who read that chapter with the reprobating glosses of Calvin and his followers, to bid adieu to revelation; it being impossible that a scheme of doctrine which represents God as the *absolute Reprobator* of myriads of unborn infants should have the *Parent of Good*, and the *God of Love* for its author.

SECTION

SECTION X.

An answer to the arguments by which Mr. Toplady attempts to retort the charge of ANTINOMIANISM, and to shew that Calvinism is more conducive to HOLINESS than the opposite doctrine.

MR. Hill asserts that Mr. T. *retorts all our objections upon us in a most masterly manner.* Let us see how he retorts the objection, which we make to *absolute predestination*—a doctrine this, by which *necessary holiness* is imposed upon the *elect*, and *necessary wickedness* upon the *reprobates*: how the fixing unavoidable holiness upon a minority, and unavoidable wickedness upon a majority of mankind, is reconcilable with the glory of divine holiness, Mr. Toplady informs us in the following argument.

ARG. LXVII. [Page 93, 94.] Calvinian * “election ensures holiness to a very great part of mankind: whereas precarious grace, deriving all its efficacy from the caprice of free-will, could not ensure holiness to any one individual of the whole species.”—Had Mr. T. stated the case properly, he

* The author of a letter to an Arminian Teacher [a letter this which I have quoted in a preceding note] advances the same argument in these words, p. 5. “The doctrine of eternal” [he means calvinian] “election” [for we believe the right, godly, eternal election maintained in the scriptures] “concludes God more merciful than the Arminian doctrine of supposed, universal redemption, because that doctrine which absolutely ascertains

he would have said, "calvinian election, which ensures necessary holiness to a *minority* of mankind; and calvinian reprobation, which ensures *necessary wickedness* to a *majority* of mankind, promote human sanctity MORE than the *partial election of grace*, which formerly afforded the *Jews*, and now affords the *Christians*, abundant helps to be *peculiarly* holy under their dispensations of *peculiar* grace:—yea, MORE than the *impartial election of justice*, which, under all the divine dispensations of divine grace, *chuses the man that is godly* to rewards of grace and glory;—and MORE than *the reprobation of justice*, which is extended to none but such as bury their talent of grace by wilful unbelief and voluntary disobedience.

If Mr. T. had thus stated the case, according to his real sentiments and ours, every candid reader would have seen that our doctrines of grace are far more conducive to human sanctity than those of Calvin: (1) Because Calvinism ensures HUMAN sanctity to none of the elect: for a sanctity, which is as necessary to a creature, as motion is to a moved puppet, is not the sanctity of a *free-agent*; and, of consequence, it is not HUMAN sanctity: (2) Because Calvinism ENSURES *remediless wickedness* to all the reprobate, and *remediless wickedness* can never be *human sanctity*."

the regeneration, effectual calling, the sanctification, &c. as well as the eternal salvation of an innumerable company, &c. Rev. vii. 9. must represent God more merciful than the Arminian scheme, which cannot ascertain the eternal salvation of one man now living," &c. As it is possible to kill two birds with one stone, I hope that my answer to Mr. Toplady will satisfy Mr. McGowan.

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With respect to what Mr. T. says concerning our doctrines of grace, which do "not ensure holiness to any ONE individual of the whole species;" if by "ensured holiness," he means a certain salvation without any *work* of faith, and *labour* of love, he is greatly mistaken: for our gospel *absolutely ensures* such a *salvation* [and of consequence *infant-holiness*] to that numerous part of mankind who die in their infancy. Nay, it absolutely insures a seed of redeeming, sanctifying grace to *all mankind*, so long as the day of grace or initial salvation lasts; for we maintain, as well as St. Paul, that *the free gift is come upon ALL MEN to justification of life*, Rom. v. 18: and we assert, as well as our Lord, that *of such* [of infants] *is the kingdom of heaven*, and therefore some *capacity* to enjoy it, which *capacity* we believe to be inseparably connected with a *seed of holiness*. Add to this, that our gospel, as well as Calvinism, *ENSURES eternal salvation* to all the adult who are *faithful unto death*: according to our doctrine *THESE shall never perish*: to these *elect* of justice, who *make their election* of grace sure by obedience, *Christ gives eternal life* in the fullest sense of the word: and *none shall pluck them out of his hand*. If Mr. T. had placed our gospel in this true light, his objection would have appeared as just as the rhodomontades of Goliath, when he was to dispatch David.

ARG. LXVIII. [p. 94.] Mr. T. tries to make up the antinomian gap; and he attempts it by doing that, which borders upon giving up Calvinism. "No man [says he] according to our system, has a right to look upon himself as elected, till sanctifying grace has *converted* him to faith and good works."

This flimsy salvo has quieted the fears of many godly Calvinists, when the antinomianism of their system stared them in the face. To show the absurdity of this evasion, I need only ask, has

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not every man A RIGHT to believe the truth? If I am ABSOLUTELY elected to eternal life, while I commit adultery and murder, while I defile my father's wife, and deny my Saviour with oaths and curses; why may not I believe it? Is there one scripture which commands me to believe a lie, or forbids me to believe the truth? — "Oh but you have NO RIGHT to believe yourself elected, TILL sanctifying grace has converted you to faith and good works."—Then it follows, that as an adult sinner, I am not elected to the reward of the inheritance, or to eternal life in glory, till I believe and do good works; or it follows that I have no RIGHT to believe the truth. If Mr. T. affirms, that I have NO RIGHT to believe the truth, he makes himself ridiculous before all the world: and if he says, that I am not absolutely elected, till I am converted to faith and good works; it follows, that, every time I am perverted from faith and good works, I forfeit my election of justice. Thus, under the guidance of Mr. T. himself, I escape the fatal rock of calvinian election, and find myself in the safe harbour of old, practical Christianity: *Ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, HATH ANY INHERITANCE in the kingdom of Christ and of God: Let no man deceive you with vain words.* For if I have no right to believe myself an heir of God, and a joint heir with Christ, while I turn whoremonger; it is evident that *whoredom* deprives me of my right; —much more *adultery* and *murder*. Hence it appears that Mr. T. cannot prop up the calvinian ark, but by flatly contradicting Paul, which is a piece of *impiety*; and by asserting that elect whoremongers have no right to believe the truth while they commit whoredom, which is a glaring *absurdity*.

ARG. LXIX. [p. 95.] After having made up the antinomian gap, by giving up either calvinian election, or the incontestible *right* which every man

man has to believe the truth, Mr. Toplady tries to retort the charge of Antinomianism upon our doctrines of grace: and he does it by producing one "Thomson, who, when he was in a fit of intemperance, if any one reminded him of the wrath of God threatned against such courses, would answer, I am a child of the devil to-day; but I have Free-will: and to-morrow I will make myself a child of God."

To this I answer, (1) The man spoke like a person "in a fit of intemperance," and there is no reasoning with such, any more than with mad men. But Dr. Crisp, when he was sober, and in the pulpit too, could say, "A believer may be assured of pardon as soon as he commits any sin, even adultery and murder.—Sins are but scare-crows and bug-bears to fright ignorant children, but men of understanding see they are counterfeit things:" and indeed it must be so, if, as Mr. T. tells us, *Whatever is, is RIGHT*, and necessarily flows from the predestinating will of him who does all things well.

(2) This Thomson [as appears by his speech] was a rigid free-willer; one who discarded the first gospel-axiom, and the doctrine of Free-grace; and therefore, his error does not effect our gospel. Nay, we oppose such free-willers, as much as we do the RIGID bound-willers, who discard the second gospel-axiom, and the necessity of sincere obedience in order to our judicial justification, and eternal salvation.

(3) If Thomson had been sober and reasonable, Mr. Wesley might easily have made up the pretended, antinomian gap of Arminianism five different ways:—(1) By shewing him, that, although free-will may reject a good motion, yet it cannot raise one without free-grace; and therefore, to say "To-morrow I will make myself a child of God," is as absurd in a man, as it would be in a woman, to say, To-morrow I will conceive

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alone:—it is as *impious* as to say, To-morrow I will absolutely command God, and he shall obey me.—(2) By shewing him his imminent danger, and the horror of his present state, which he, himself, acknowledges when he says, “*I am a child of the devil to-day.*”—(3) By urging the uncertain length of the day of salvation, Grace gives us no room to depend upon *to-morrow*; its constant language being, *Now is the accepted time.*—(4) By pressing the hardening nature of presumptuous sin.—And (5) By displaying the terrors of *just wrath*, which frequently says, *Take the talent from him.—Because ye refused, I will be avenged.—I give thee up to thy own heart's lusts,—to a reprobate mind.—Thou fool! THIS NIGHT shall thy soul be required of thee.*

These are *five* rational and scriptural ways of making up the supposed, antinomian gap of our gospel. But if *Mr. Thomson* had been a Calvinist, and had said, like *Mr. Fulsome*, “I have had a call, and my election is safe: as my good works can add nothing to my *finished salvation*, so my bad works can take nothing from it. Satan may pound me, if he please; but Jesus must replevy me. Let me wander where I will from God, Christ must fetch me back again. The covenant is *unconditionally* ordered in all things and sure. All things work for good to the elect.”—“*And if all things,*” [says *Mr. Hill*] “*then their very sins and corruptions are included in the royal promise.*”—“Whoredom and drunkennels may hurt another, but they cannot hurt me. God will over-rule sin for my good, and his glory: What ever is, is right: for God worketh all things in all men, even wickedness in the wicked, and how much more in his elect, who are his chosen instruments!”—If *Mr. Thomson*, I say, had been a Calvinist, and had *thus* stood his ground in the antinomian gap which Calvin, Dr. Crisp, *Mr. Fulsome*, *Mr. Hill*, and *Mr. Toplady* have made; who

who could *reasonably* have beaten him off? Do not all his conclusions flow from the doctrine of *absolute election* and *finished salvation*, as unavoidably as *four* is the result of *two* and *two*?

ARG. LXX. [p. 97.] Mr. T. attempts again to stop up the antinomian gap, which *Fatalism*, and *calvinian predestination* make in practical religion. Calling to his assistance *Zeno*, the founder of the *Stoicks* or *rigid predestinarians* among the heathens, he says, "*Zeno* one day thrashed his servant for pilfering. The fellow, knowing his master was a fatalist, thought to bring himself off by alledging that he was *DESTINED to steal*, and therefore ought not to be beat for it."—"You are destined to steal, are you? Answered the philosopher: then you are no less *DESTINED to be thrashed* for it: and laid on some hearty blows extraordinary."—I do not wonder if Mr. Hill, in his *finishing stroke*, calls Mr. Toplady's arguments "*most masterly*;" for this argument of *Zeno* is yet *MORE masterly* than his own: "I shall not take the least notice of him, any "more than, if I was travelling on the road, I would stop to lash, or even order my *footman* to lash every impertinent little quadruped in a village, that should come out and bark at me." Mr. Toplady, in the *Advertisement* placed at the head of his pamphlet, represents some of us as *unworthy of even being pillory'd in a preface, or flogg'd at a pamphlet's tail*:" We are now arrived at the *tail* of his pamphlet, in the body of which he has thought Mr. Wesley so highly *worthy* of his *rod*, as to "flog" him with the *gratuity, absoluteness, mercy, and justice*, which are peculiar to the *reprobation* defended through the whole performance. If seriousness did not become us, when we vindicate the injured attributes of *the judge of all the earth*, I might be tempted to ask with a smile, has Mr. T. so worn out his *rod* in making "*more work for Mr. Wesley*," that he is now obliged to borrow *Zeno's stick* to finish the execution *at the pamphlet's tail*? For my part, as I have no idea of riveting ortho-

doxy upon my readers with a *stick*, and of solving the rational objections of my opponents by "*laying on some hearty blows*," and so "*thrashing*" them in to conviction, or into silence, I own that *Logica Zenonis* and *Logica Genevensis* being of a piece, either of them can easily *beat me out of the field*. Arguments *a lapide* are laughable: but I fly before arguments *a baculo*. However, in my retreat, I will venture to prevent Mr. T. with the following queries.

If *Zeno*, in vindicating *Fatalism*, could say to a thief, that he was absolutely predestinated to *steal*; and to be THRASHED for stealing; is it not more than Mr. Toplady can say in vindication of *Calvinism*? For, upon his scheme, may not a man be absolutely predestinated, not only to *steal*, but also to ESCAPE *thrashing*, and to OBTAIN *salvation by healing*? Mr. Toplady is Mr. Hill's second; and Mr. Hill, in his fourth letter, [where he shews the *happy effects* of sin] tells the public and me, "*Onesimus robbed Philemon his master; and flying from justice was brought under Paul's preaching and converted*," Thus *Zeno's* predestination failed, and, with it, *Zeno's* argument: for *robbery* led not *Onesimus* to *thrashing*, but to *conversion* and *glory*, if we believe Mr. Hill. And if Mr. *Kulsome* is an elect, why might he not be guilty of as *fortunate* a robbery? Why might not a similar decree "*secure and accomplish the [same evangelical] END by the [same Antinomian] MEANS?*" Mr. Toplady may prevail over us by borrowing *Zeno's* cane, and the whip of Mr. Hill's *lashing footman*; but his pen will never demonstrate, (1) That *Calvinism* does not *rationaly* lead all her admirers to the deepest mire of *speculative Antinomianism*: and (2) That when they are there, nothing can keep them from weltering in the dirt of *practical Antinomianism*, but an happy inconstitence between their actions and their *peculiar principles*.

SECTION:

SECTION XI.

A caution against the tenet, whatever is, is right: an Antinomian tenet this, which Mr. T. calls "a first principle of the Bible."—An answer to his challenge about finding a middle way between the Calvinian doctrine of PROVIDENCE and the atheistical doctrine of CHANCE.

WHATEVER the true God works is undoubtedly right. But if the deity *absolutely* works all things in all men good and bad, it evidently follows, (1) That the two-principled deity preached by Manes is the true God: (2) That the bad principle of this double deity works *wickedness* in the wicked as necessarily as the good principle works *righteousness* in the righteous. And (3) that, the original of wickedness being divine, wickedness is as right as the deity from whom it flows. Upon this horrid, Manichean scheme, who can wonder at Mr. Toplady saying?

ARG. LXXI. [p. 96] "Tis a first principle of the Bible, and of sound Reason, that *whatever is, is right*; or will answer some great end, &c. in its relation to the whole"—Error is never more dangerous than when it looks a little like truth. But when it is imposed upon the simple, as "*a first principle of the Bible and of sound reason*" it makes dreadful work. How conclusively will a rigid predestinarian reason if he says, "*Whatever is, is right: and therefore sin is right.*—Again, it is wrong to hinder what is right: sin is right: and therefore it is wrong to hinder sin.—Once more, we ought to do what is right: sin is right: and.

and therefore we ought to commit sin."—Now, in opposition to Mr. Toplady's *first principle*, I assert as a *first principle of reason*, that, though it was right in God not *absolutely* to hinder sin, yet *sin is always wrong*.—"Oh, but God permitted it, and will get himself glory by displaying his vindictive justice in punishing it: for *the ministration of condemnation is GLORIOUS*." This argument has deluded many a pious Calvinist. To overthrow it, I need only observe, that *righteousness EXCEEDS condemnation in glory*.

In what respect is sin right? Can it be right in respect of God, if it brings him *less* glory than righteousness? Can it be right in respect of *man*, if it brings temporal misery upon *all*, and eternal misery upon *some*? Can it be right in respect of *the Adamic law, the law of Moses, or the law of Christ*? Certainly no: for sin is equally the transgression of all these laws. "Oh, but it is right with respect to the evangelical promise."—By no means: for the evangelical promise, vulgarly called *the gospel*, testifies of Christ, the destroyer of sin, and offers us a remedy against sin. Now, if sin were *right*, the gospel which remedies it, and Christ who destroys it, would be *wrong*. I conclude then, that, if sin is right, neither with respect of God, nor with respect of *man*; neither with regard to the *law*, nor with regard to the *gospel*; it is *right* in no shape: it is *WRONG* in every point of view.

"*But why did God permit it?*" Indeed he never properly permitted it, unless Mr. Toplady, who does not scruple to call God "*the Permitter of evil*," can prove, that to *forbid* in the most solemn manner, and under the severest penalty is the same thing as to *permit*.

Should you ask, Why did not God *ABSOLUTELY hinder* sin? I still answer, (1) Because his *wisdom* saw, that a world where *free-agents* and *necessary agents* are mixed, is better [all things considered] than

than a world stocked with nothing but *necessary agents*; i. e. creatures ABSOLUTELY HINDERED from sinning.—(2) Because his *distributive justice* could be displayed no other way, than by the creation of *accountable free-agents*, made with an eye to a *day of judgment*.—(3) Because it would be as absurd to NECESSITATE FREE-AGENTS, as to bid FREE-AGENTS BE, that they might NOT BE FREE-AGENTS;—as foolish as to form *accountable creatures*, that they might NOT BE *accountable*.—And (4) Because, when God saw that the free-agency of his creatures would introduce sin, he determined to over-rule, or remedy it in such a manner as would, upon the whole, render this world, with all the *voluntary evil*, and *voluntary good* in it, better than a world of *necessary agents*, where nothing but *necessary good* would have been displayed:—an inferior sort of good this, which would no more have admitted of the exercise of God's *political wisdom*, and *distributive justice*, than the excellence of precious stones and fine flowers admits of laws, rewards, and punishments.

Should the reader ask how far we may safely go, to meet the truth which borders most upon Mr. Toplady's false principle, *whatever is, is right*? I answer, (1) We may grant, nay, we ought to assert, that God will get himself glory every way. Evangelical grace and just wrath minister to his praise, though not equally: and therefore God willeth not *primarily* the death of his creatures. Punishment is his *strange work*; and he delights *more* in the exercise of his *remunerative* goodness, than in the exercise of his *vindictive* justice.—(2) Hence it appears, that the wrath of man, and the rage of the devil, will *turn to God's praise*: but it is only to his *inferior* praise. For, though the blessed will sing loud hallelujahs to divine justice, when vengeance shall overtake the ungodly; and though the conscience of the ungodly will give God glory, and testify that he is holy

holy in all his works, and righteous in all his vindictive ways; yet, this glory will be only the glory of the ministration of condemnation:—a dispensation this, which is inferior to the dispensation of righteous mercy. Hence it appears, that those who die in their sins, would have brought more glory to God by chusing righteousness and life, than they do by chusing death in the error of their ways. But still, this *inferior* praise, arising from the *condemnation* and *punishment* of *UNGODLY free-agents*—this *inferior* praise, I say, mixed with the *SUPERIOR* praise arising from the *justification* and *rewards* of *GODLY free-agents*, will far exceed the praise, which might have accrued to God from the *unavoidable* obedience, and *absurd* rewards of *necessitated* agents,—of angels and men absolutely bound to obey by a *necessitating* grace, like that which *rigid* bound-willers preach: were we even to suppose, that this forcible grace had calvinistically caught *all* rationals in a net of finished salvation, and had drawn them *all* to heaven, as irresistibly as *Simon Peter* drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three. For, before the *LAWGIVER* and *JUDGE* of *all the earth*, the unnecessary, voluntary goodness of *one* angel, or *one* man, is more excellent than the *necessary* goodness of a *world* of creatures, as unavoidably and passively virtuous, as a diamond is unavoidably and passively bright.

ARG. LXXII. [p. 96.] With respect to the second part of Mr. Toplady's doctrine, that whatever is, is right, because "*it will answer some great end, &c. in its relation to the whole;*" it is nothing but logical paint put on a false principle, to cover its deformity; for error can imitate Jezebel, who laid natural paint on her withered face, to fill up her hideous wrinkles, and impose upon the spectators. I may perhaps prove it by an illustration. I want to demonstrate that cheating, extortion, litigiousness, breaking the peace, robberies, and murders, are all *RIGHT*; and I do it by asserting, "That they answer some
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Some great ends in their relation to the whole ; for they employ the parliament in making laws to prevent, end, or punish them ; they afford business to all the judges, magistrates, lawyers, sheriffs, constables, jailors, turnkeys, chief-catchers, and executioners in the kingdom : and when robbers and murderers are hanged, they reflect praise upon the government which extirpates them ; they strike terror into the wicked ; and their untimely, dreadful end sets off the happiness of a virtuous course of life, and the bliss which crowns the death of the righteous. Besides, many murderers and robbers have been brought to Christ for pardon and salvation, like the dying thief, who by his robbery had the good luck to meet Christ on the cross : so that his own gallows, as well as our Lord's cross, proved the tree of life to that happy felon."—The mischievous absurdity of these pleas for the excellence of wickedness, puts me in mind of the arguments, by which a greedy publican of my parish once exculpated himself, when I reprov'd him for encouraging tippling and drunkenness. "The more ale we sell," said he, "the greater is the king's revenue. If it were not for us, the king could not live ;—nor could he pay the fleet and army ;—and if we had neither fleet nor army, we should soon fall into the hands of the French." So *great are the ends*, which tippling *answers in its relation to the whole* British empire, if we may believe a tapster, who pleads for drunkenness as plausibly, as some good, mistaken men do for all manner of wickedness.

From the whole, if I am not mistaken, we may safely conclude, that, though all God's works are *right*, yet *sin*, the work of fallen angels and fallen men, is NEVER RIGHT ; and that, though the universe, with all its sinfulness, is better than a *sinless* world *necessitated* to be sinless by the destruction of *free-agents* ; yet, as there is so much *sin* in the world, through the wrong use which *free-agents* make

make of their powers, Mr. T. advances an unscriptural and irrational maxim, when he says, that, *Whatever is, is right*; and he imposes upon us an *Arminian* paradox, when he asserts that this dangerous maxim "is a first principle of the Bible and of sound reason." I repeat it: it was *right* in God to create free-agents, to put them under a practicable law, and to determine to punish them according to their works, if they wantonly broke that law; but it could never be *right* in free-agents to break it, unless God had bound them to do it by making *calvinian* decrees necessarily productive of sin and wickedness. And supposing God had forbid free-agents to sin by his law, and had *necessitated* [which is more than to *enjoin*] them to sin by *calvinian* decrees; we desire Mr. T. to shew how it could have been *right* in God to forbid sin by law, to *necessitate* men to sin by decree, and to send them into eternal fire for not keeping a law which he had *necessitated* them to break.

The unreasonableness of this doctrine brings to my remembrance the boldness of Mr. T's challenge about the *calvinian* doctrine of Providence—a doctrine this, which asserts that God *absolutely necessitates* some men to *sin* and be *damned*. See Sect. ii.

ARG. LXXIII. [Page 73.] "Upon the plan of Mr. Wesley's consequence, the wretch was not a fool, but wise, who said in his heart *there is no God*. I defy the Pelagian to strike out a middle way between Providence and Chance," [i. e. between *Chance* and the *calvinian* notions of a *Providence*, which *absolutely* predestinates sin, and *necessitates* men and devils to commit it. —&c. "Why did the heathens themselves justly deem Epicurus an Atheist? Not because he denied the being of a God (for he asserted that :) but because he denied the agency of God's universal Providence."

From this quotation it is evident, (1) That Mr. T. indirectly charges us with holding an *Epicurean*, *atheistical* doctrine about Providence, because we
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abhor the doctrine of a Predestination which represents God as the author of sin.—And (2) That he defies or challenges us to point out a middle way between the *atheistical* doctrine of *Chance*, and the calvinian doctrine of *Providence*. This challenge is too important to be disregarded: an answer to it will conclude the argumentative part of this tract.

There are two opposite errors with respect to *Providence*. The *first* is that of the Epicurean philosophers, who thought that God does not at all concern himself about our sins; but leaves us to go on as we please, and as chance directs. The *second* is that of the rigid Predestinarians, who imagine that God *absolutely* predestinates sin and *necessarily* brings it about to accomplish his absolute decrees of eternally saving some men through Christ, and of eternally damning all the rest of mankind through Adam. Of these two erroneous sentiments, the latter appears to us the worse; seeing it is better to represent God as doing *nothing*, than to represent him as doing *wickedness*. The truth lies between these two opinions; God's Providence is *peculiarly concerned about sin*, but it does by no means *necessarily bring it about*. By this reasonable doctrine we answer Mr. T—'s challenge, and strike out the middle way between *his error* and that of *Epicurus*.

If you ask, how far God's Providence is concerned about sin? we reply, that it is concerned about it four ways. First, in *morally* hindering the *internal* commission of it, before it is committed. Secondly, in *providentially* hindering [at times] the *external* commission of it, when it has been intentionally committed. Thirdly, in marking, bounding, and over-ruling it, while it is committed. And, fourthly, in bringing about means of properly pardoning or exemplarily punishing it, *after* it has been committed. Dwell we a moment upon each of these particulars.

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(1) *Before*

(1) *Before* sin is committed, divine Providence is engaged in *morally* hindering the internal commission of it. In order to this God does two things: First, he *forbids* sin by natural, verbal, or written laws. And secondly, he keeps up our powers of body and soul; enduing us with *liberty*, whereby we may abstain, like moral agents, from the commission of sin; furnishing us besides with a variety of motives and helps to resist every temptation to sin:—a great variety this, which includes all God's threatenings and promises;—all his exhortations and warnings;—all the checks of our consciences, and the stirrings of the Holy Spirit;—all the counsels of good men, and the exemplary punishments of the wicked; together with the tears and blood of Christ, and the other *peculiar* means of grace, which God has appointed to keep Christians from sin, and to strengthen them in the performance of their duty.

(2) When sin is committed in the intention, God frequently prevents the *outward* commission, or the *full* completion of it, by peculiar interpositions of his Providence. Thus he hindered the men of Sodom from injuring Lot, by striking them with blindness:—he hindered Pharaoh from enslaving the Israelites, by drowning him in the Red Sea:—he hindered Balaam from cursing Israel, by putting a bridle in his mouth:—he hindered Jeroboam from hurting the prophet who came out of Judah, by drying up his royal hand, when he stretched it forth, saying, *lay hold on him*:—he hindered Herod from destroying the holy child Jesus, by warning Joseph to fly into Egypt, &c. &c. The scriptures, and the history of the world, are full of accounts of the ordinary and extraordinary interpositions of divine Providence, respecting the detection of intended mischief, and the preservation of persons and states, whom the wicked determined to destroy: and to go no farther than England, the providential discovery of the gunpowder

powder plot, is as remarkable an instance as any that God keeps a watchful eye upon the counsel of men, and confounds their devices when ever he pleases.

(3) During the commission of sin, God's Providence is engaged in marking it, in setting bounds to it, or in over-ruling it in a manner quite contrary to the-expectation of sinners. Thus when Joseph's brethren contrived getting money by selling him into Egypt, God contrived the preservation of Jacob's household—Thus, when *Haman* contrived a gallows to hang *Mordecai* thereon, the Lord so over-ruled this cruel design that *Haman* was hanged on that very gallows.—Thus, when *Satan* wanted to destroy *Job*, God set bounds to his rage, and bid the fierce accuser spare the good man's life. That envious fiend did his worst to make the patient saint curse God to his face; but the Lord so over-ruled his malice, that it worked for good to *Job*. For when *Job's* patience had had its perfect work, all his misfortunes ended in prosperity, and all his tempestuous tossings raised him to an higher degree of perfection: for, *The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust to the day of judgement,* 2 Pet. ii. 9.—Thus, again to preserve the seed of the righteous, God formerly kept 100 prophets, and 7000 true Israelites, from the cruelty of *Jezebel*; and, for the sake of sincere Christians, he will one day shorten the great tribulation, or fierce persecution, which the wicked will raise against them, Mat. xxiv. 22. When the ungodly are most busy in sinning, God's Providence is most employed in counter-working their sin, in putting bounds to their desperate designs, and in making a way for the godly to escape out of temptation, that they may be able to bear it: for the rod of the godly cometh not [with its full force] into the lot of the righteous, lest the righteous put forth their hand unto iniquity, through such powerful and lasting temptations,

tations, as would make it *impossible* for them to stand firm in the way of duty. Pl. cxxxv. 3.

(4) When sin is actually committed, the providence of God [in conjunction with his mercy and justice] is employed, either in using means to bring sinners to repentance, confession, and pardon, or in inflicting upon them such punishments as seem most proper to divine wisdom. To be convinced of it read the history of man's redemption by Jesus Christ. Mark the various steps by which Providence brings the guilty to conviction, the penitent to pardon, the finally impenitent to destruction, and all to some degree of punishment. By what an amazing train of providential dispensations were Joseph's brethren, for instance, brought to remember, lament, and smart for their cruel behaviour to him! And how did God, by various afflictions, bring his rebellious people to consider their ways, and to humble themselves before him in the lands of their captivity! What amazing work had divine Providence in checking, and punishing the sin of Pharaoh in Egypt;—that of the Israelites in the wilderness;—that of David and his house in Jerusalem—and that of Nebuchadnezzar and Belsh-zzar in Babylon!

Evangelically and providentially opening the way for the return of sinners, and repaying obdurate offenders to their face, make one half of God's work, as he is the gracious and righteous Governor of men. We cannot doubt it, if we take notice of the innumerable means, by which *conversions* and *punishments* are brought about.—To touch only upon *punishments*: some extend to the sea, others to the land: some spread over particular districts, others over whole kingdoms:—some affect a whole family, and others a whole community:—some affect the soul, and others the body:—some fall only upon one limb, or one of the senses; others upon the whole animal
frame,

frame, and all the senses:—some affect our well-being, others our being itself:—some are confined to this world, and others extend to a future state:—some are of a temporal, and others of an eternal nature. Now, since Providence [in subserviency to divine justice] manages all these punishments and their innumerable consequences, how mistaken is Mr. T. when he insinuates, that our doctrine supposes God to be an idle spectator while sin is committed!

(5) With respect to the *gracious* tempers of the righteous, we believe that they all flow [though without *calvinian* necessity] from *the free gift* which is come upon all men, and from *the light* which enlightens every man that cometh into the world. And as to their good works, we are so far from excluding divine grace and Providence, in order to exalt absolute free-will, that we assert, Not one good work would ever be begun, continued, or ended, if divine grace within us, and divine Providence without us, did not animate our souls, support our bodies, help our infirmities, and [to use the language of our church] “*prevent, accompany, and follow us*” through the whole. And yet, in *all* moral, and in *many* natural actions, we are as free from the laws of *calvinian* necessity, as from those of the Great Mogul.

(6) With regard to the families and kingdoms of this world, we assert, that God's Providence either baffles, controls, or sets bounds to the bad designs of the wicked; whilst it has the principal hand in succeeding the good designs of the righteous, as often as they have any success: for, *except the Lord keep the city*, as well as the watchman *the watchman waketh but in vain*.—And with respect to the course of nature, we believe that it is ordered by his unerring counsel. In order to maintain order in the universe, his providential *wisdom* made admirable laws of attraction,

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repulsion,

repulsion, generation, fermentation, vegetation, and dissolution. And his providential *power* and *watchfulness* are [though without either labour or anxiety] continually engaged in conducting all things according to those laws; except when [on proper occasions] he suspends the influence of his own natural decrees; and then fire may cease to burn;—iron to sink in water;—and hungry lions, to devour their helpless prey. Nay, at the beck of Omnipotence, a widow's cruse of oil, and barrel of meal, shall be filled without the help of the olive tree, and the formality of a growing harvest;—a dry rod shall suddenly blossom, and a green fig-tree shall instantly be dried up;—garments in daily use shall not wear out in forty years;—a prophet shall live forty days without food;—the liquid waves shall afford a solid walk to a believing Apostle;—a fish shall bring back the piece of money which it had swallowed—and water shall be turned into wine without the gradual process of vegetation.

If Mr. T. does us the justice to weigh these six observations upon the prodigious work, which God's *Providence* carries on in the moral, spiritual, and natural world, according to our doctrine; we hope he will no more intimate, that we *atheistically* deny, or *heretically* *desame* that divine attribute.

To conclude: we exactly steer our course between *rigid* free-willers, who suppose they are independant on God's Providence; and *rigid* bound-willers, who fancy they do nothing, but what Fate or God's Providence absolutely *binds* them to do. We equally detest the error of *Epicurus*, and that of Mr. *Toplady*. The former taught, that God took no notice of sin; the latter says, that God by *efficacious permissions*, and *irresistible decrees*, absolutely necessitates men to commit it. But we maintain, that although God never absolutely

absolutely *necessitated* his creatures to sin; yet his *Providence* is remarkably employed about sin in all the above-described ways. And if Mr. Toplady will call us *defamers* of divine Providence, and *Atheists*, because we dare not represent God, directly or indirectly, as the author of sin; we rejoice in so honourable a reproach, and humbly trust that this, as well as all manner of similar evil, is rashly said of us *for righteousness sake*.

SECTION

SECTION XII.

Some encouragements for those, who, from a principle of conscience, bear their testimony against the Antinomian doctrine of calvinian election, and the barbarous doctrine of calvinian reprobation.

I Humbly hope that I have, in the preceding pages, contended for the truth of the gospel, and the honour of God's perfections. My conscience bears me witness, that I have endeavoured to do it with the sincerity of a candid enquirer after truth; and that I have not, *knowingly*, leaped over *one material* difficulty, which Mr. T. has thrown in the way of the laborious divine, whose evangelical principles I vindicate. And now, judicious reader, if I have done my part, as a detector of the fallacies, by which the modern doctrines of grace are "*kept upon their legs*;" let me prevail upon thee to do thy part as a judge, and to say if the *right leg* of Calvinism [i. e. the lawless election of an unscriptural grace] so draws thy admiration, as to make thee overlook the deformity of the *left leg* [i. e. the absurd, unholy, sin-ensuring, hell-procuring, merciless, and unjust reprobation, which Mr. T. has attempted to vindicate.] Shall thy reason, thy conscience, thy feelings, thy Bible—and [what is more than this] shall *all the perfections* of thy God, and the *veracity* of thy Saviour, be sacrificed on the altar of a *reprobation*, which none of the prophets, apostles, and early fathers ever heard of?—a barbarous *reprobation*, which heated *Augustin* drew from the horrible error of
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Manichean necessity, and clothed with some scripture expressions detached from the context, and wrested from their original meaning?— a pharisaic *reprobation*, which the church of Rome took from him, and which some of our reformers unhappily brought from that corrupted society into the protestant churches?—In a word, a reprobation which disgraces Christianity, when that holy religion is considered as a system of evangelical doctrine, as much as our most enormous crimes disgrace it, when it is considered as a system of pure morality?—shall such a reprobation, I say, find a place in thy creed!—yea, among thy *doctrines of GRACE!* God forbid!

Dii meliora piis! erroremque hostibus illum! I hope better things of thy candor, good sense, and piety. If prejudice, human authority, and voluntary humility, seduce many good men into a profound reverence for that stupendous dogma, be not carried away by their number, or biassed by their shouts. Remember that all Israel, and good *Aaron* at their head, danced once around the golden calf:—that deluded *Solomon* was seen bowing at the shrine of *Ashtaroth*, the abominations of the *Sidonians*:—that all our godly fathers worshipped a consecrated water 400 years ago: that *all the world wandered after the beast*:—and that God's chosen people went a whoring with their own inventions, and once sacrificed their sons and their daughters to devils upon the altar of *Moloch*.—Consider this, I say, and take courage: be not afraid to “be pilloried in a preface, flogged at a pamphlet's tail,” and treated as a knave, a felon, or a blasphemer through the whole of the next Vindication of the * *deified* decrees, which are commonly called *Calvinism*.

* Mr. T. calls them *The Decrees of God*, and it is an axiom among the Calvinists, that “*God's decrees are God himself.*”

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This may be thy lot, if thou darest to bear thy plain testimony against the Antinomian idol of the day.

Nor say that thou art not in Italy, or Portugal; but in a protestant-land, a land of liberty—in England: for thou mightest meet with more mercy from *reprobating* priests in popish Naples than in orthodox Geneva. Being some years ago in the former of those cities, among the fine buildings which I viewed, one peculiarly drew my attention. It was a towering monument several stories high, erected by the Jesuits in honour of the Virgin Mary, whose image stood on the top of the elegant structure. But what surprized me most, was an Italian inscription engraven upon a stone of the monument, to this purpose; "Pope Benedict the XIVth, grants a plenary indulgence to all those, who shall honour this holy image; with privilege to deliver one soul out of purgatory, every time they shall pay their respects to this immaculate mother." While I copied this inscription in my pocket book, and dropped to my fellow-traveller an innocent irony about the absurdity of this *popish decree*; two or three priests passed by: they smelt out our heresy, looked displeas'd, but did not insult us. Mr. Wesley took some years ago a similar liberty with a literary monument erected in mystic Geneva, to the honour of *absolute reprobation*. He smiled at the severity of calvinian bigotry; and not without reason: since popish bigotry kindly sends a soul OUT OF PURGATORY, if you reverence the black image, which is pompously called the *immaculate Mother of God*: whereas calvinian bigotry indirectly sends TO HELL all those, who shall not bow to the doctrinal image, which she calls DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY, upon as good ground, as some ancient devotees called the appetite of *Bel [Baal]* and the Dragon DIVINE VORACITY. He [Mr. Wesley] add'd to his smile the publication of

of an ironical reproof. A gentleman, who serves at the altar of *absolute Reprobation*, caught him in the fact, and said something about "*transmitting the criminal to Virginia or Maryland, * if not to Tyburn.*" But free-wrath yielded to free-grace. Calvinian mercy rejoiced over orthodox judgment. Mr. Wesley is spared. The *Vindicator* "of the doctrines of grace," after "*wrapping his knuckles*"——"*pillorying*" him in a preface——and "*flogging*" him again and again in two pamphlets, and in a huge book, with a tenderness peculiar to the *House of Mercy*, where popish reprobation checks protestant Heresy;——the *Vindicator* of protestant Reprobation, I say, has let the gray-headed heretic go with this gentle and civil reprimand: [page 10:]——"*Had I publicly distorted and defamed the decrees of God:*" [*should it not be? had I fairly held out to public view the absurdity of the imaginary decrees preached by Calvin:*]——"*had I moreover advanced so many miles beyond boldness, as to lay those distortions and defamations at the door of another:*" [*should it not be? had I moreover ironically asserted, that monstrous consequences necessarily flow from monstrous premises:*] "*bold as I am affirmed to be, I could never have looked up afterwards. I should have thought EVERY MISCREANT I met an HONESTER man than myself. But Mr. John seems a perfect stranger to these feelings. His Murus aeneus*" [*his brassy hardness*] "*has been too long transferred from his conscience to his forehead. On the whole, &c. I had rather let the antient offender pass unchastized, than soil my hands in the operation.*" As Mr. Wesley is so kindly dismissed by Mr. Toplady, I must also dismiss thee, gentle Reader, and leave thee to decide, which is most likely to convert thee to calvinian reprobation, URBANITAS or LOGICA Gene-

* See Mr. Toplady's letter to Mr. Wesley, p. 6.

venis;—the *Courtesy* of our Opponents, or their *Arguments*.

In the mean time, if thou desirest to know how near *calvinian election* comes to the truth, and what is the *reprobation* which the scripture maintains, I promise thee *An Essay on the PARTIAL election of GRACE, and on the IMPARTIAL election of JUSTICE*:—A *double Essay* this, that will, I trust, unfold the difficulties, in which prejudiced divines, and system-makers have, for these fourteen hundred years, involved the fundamental doctrine of election. And, if that piece does not end the controversy [which, considering the prevalence of bigotry, is not to be expected in our days] I flatter myself that it will, at least, check party-spirit, reconcile judicious protestants to one another, and give some useful hints to more respectable divines, who in happier days, will exert themselves in the *total* extirpation of the errors, which disgrace *modern Christianity*.

E N D.

ADVERTISEMENT.

SINCE these sheets have been prepared for the press, I have seen a new performance of Mr. Toplady, in defence of the doctrine which is exposed in the preceding pages. As there are, in that piece, some *new* arguments, the plausibility of which may puzzle many readers; and as I think it my duty *fully* to vindicate the truth, and *completely* to detect error; I design to answer that book also, in a little Tract, which will be a Supplement to this, and which will probably see the light under the following title:

A R E P L Y

To the principal arguments, by which the Calvinists and the Fatalists support the spreading doctrine of *absolute Necessity*:

I N

S O M E R E M A R K S

On the Rev. Mr. Toplady's "*Scheme of christian and philosophical Necessity.*"