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# LOGICA GENEVENSIS:

O R, A

## FOURTH CHECK

T O

# ANTINOMIANISM;

I N W H I C H

St. *James's* Pure Religion is defended against the Charges, and established upon the Concessions, of Mr. RICHARD and Mr. ROWLAND HILL.

I N A

Series of LETTERS to those GENTLEMEN.

B Y

The VINDICATOR of the MINUTES,

*The Rev. Mr. John Helcher Vicar of Madeley & Shropshire*

- “ Reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and *scriptural*  
“ doctrine; for the time will come when they will not endure  
“ sound doctrine.” 2 Tim. iv. 2, 3.
- “ *Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be found in the faith,*  
“ *but let brotherly love continue.*” Tit. i. 13. Heb. xiii. 1.
- “ Some, whose carnal hearts could not bear the reproofs they  
“ have met with in St. *James's* Epistle, have endeavoured to dis-  
“ pute its authority. — By reading this blessed scripture, given  
“ by inspiration of God, we find how early Satan began to  
“ sow his tares among the wheat of God, and to bring the ac-  
“ cursed weeds of ANTINOMIANISM into the vineyard of the  
“ holy Jesus: one grand design of this epistle was to root  
“ these up, and to prevent the spreading of those libertine  
“ doctrines, which threatened the destruction of all practical  
“ godliness.” *The Rev. Mr. Madan's Sermon on Jam. ii. 24.*

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B R I S T O L:

Printed by W. PINE, in Wine-Street, 1772.



TO ALL CANDID

CALVINISTS in the Church of *England*.

Honored and dear Brethren,

A Student from *Geneva*, who has had the honor of being admitted a Minister of your Church; takes the liberty of dedicating to you these strictures on *Geneva-logic*, which were written both for the better information of your candid judgment, and to obtain tolerable terms of peace from his worthy Opponents.

Some, who mistake blunt truth for sneering insolence, and mild ironics for bitter farcasms, will probably dissuade you from looking into this fourth Check to Antinomianism. They will tell you, that *Logica-Genevensis* is "a very bad book," full of "calumny, forgeries, vile slanders, acrimonious sneers, and horrid misrepresentations." But candor, which condemns no one before he is heard, which weighs both sides of the question in an impartial balance, will soon convince you, that if every irony proceeds from spleen and acrimony of spirit, there is as much of both in these four words of my honored Opponent, *Pietas Oxoniensis*, and *Goliath slain*,† as in all the four Checks: and that I have not exceeded the apostolic direction of my motto, *Rebuke them sharply*, or rather *αποδομῶς*, cuttingly, but let brotherly love continue.

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I do.

† The ironical titles of two books written by my Opponent, to expose the proceedings of the University of *Oxford*, respecting the expulsion of six Students belonging to *Edmund Hall*.

I do not deny that some points of doctrine, which many hold in great veneration, excite pity or laughter in my checks. But how can I help it? If a painter, who knows not how to flatter, draws to the life an object excessively ridiculous in itself, must it not appear excessively ridiculous in his picture? Is it right to exclaim against his pencil as *malicious*, and his colours as *unfair*, because he impartially uses them according to the rules of his art? And can any unprejudiced person expect that he should draw the picture of the *night*, without using any black shades at all?

If the charge of "bitterness" does not entirely set you against this book, they will try to frighten you from reading it, by protesting, that I throw down the foundation of Christianity, and help Mr. *Wesley* to place *works* and *merit* on the Redeemer's throne. To this dreadful charge I answer, (1) That I had rather my right hand should lose its cunning to all eternity, than use it a moment to detract from the Saviour's *real* glory, to whom I am more indebted than any other man in the world: (2) That the strongest pleas I produce for holiness and good works, are quotations from the homilies of our own Church, as well as from the Puritan divines, whom I cite preferably to others, because they held what you are taught to call the *doctrines of grace*: (3) That what I have said of those doctrines recommends itself, to every unprejudiced person's reason and conscience: (4) That my capital arguments in favour of practical Christianity, are founded upon our second justification by the evidence of works in the great day; a doctrine, which my Opponent himself cannot help assenting to: (5) That from first to last, when the *meritorious cause* of our justification is considered, we set works aside; praying God *not to enter into judgment with us, or weigh our merits*, but to *pardon our offences* for Christ's sake; and



and gladly ascribing the whole of our salvation to his alone merits, as much as *Calvin* or *Dr. Crisp* does: (6) That when the word *meriting, deserving,* or *WORTHY*, which our Lord himself uses again and again, is applied to good works or good men, we mean absolutely nothing but *rewardable*, or qualified for the reception of a *gracious reward*. And (7) that even this *improper* merit or rewardableness of good works, is entirely derived from Christ's *proper* merit, who works what is good in us; and from the gracious promise of God, who has freely engaged himself to recompense the fruits of righteousness, which his own grace enables us to produce.

I hope, honored brethren, that these hints will so far break the waves of prejudice which beat against your candor, as to prevail upon you not to reject this little means of information. If you condescend to peruse it, I trust it will minister to your edification, by enlarging your views of Christ's prophetic and kingly office; by heightening your ideas of that practical religion, which the scriptures perpetually enforce; by lessening your regard for some well meant mistakes, on which good men have too hastily put the stamp of orthodoxy; and by giving you a more favourable opinion of the sentiments of your remonstrant brethren, who would rejoice to live at peace with you in the kingdom of grace, and walk in love with you to the kingdom of glory. But, whether you consent to give them the right hand of fellowship or not, no body, I think, can be more glad to offer it you, than he, who with undissembled respect, remains,

Honored and dear Brethren,

Your affectionate brother, and  
obedient servant in Christ,

J. F.

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# C O N T E N T S.

## L E T T E R I.

TO RICHARD HILL, Esq;

*Introduction.—The doctrine of justification by works in the last day is truly scriptural.—It is essentially different from justification by faith in the day of conversion.—Mr. Hill fully grants, and yet warmly opposes such a justification.*

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TO RICHARD HILL, Esq;

*Justification by the evidence of works, and St. James's undefiled religion, are established upon the authority of the liturgy, articles, and homilies of the Church of England.*

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## L E T T E R IV.

TO RICHARD HILL, Esq;

*Flavel, and many other Puritan authors, were offended at Dr. Crisp's doctrine. An important extract from Flavel's Treatise upon Antinomianism.*

## L E T T E R V.

TO RICHARD HILL, Esq;

*Mr. Wesley's minutes, and St. James's pure religion, are established on Mr. Hill's important concession, that*  
“ we shall be justified by the evidence of works in the  
“ great day.”

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L E T T E R VI.

TO RICHARD HILL, Esq;

*If we shall be justified by the evidence of works in the last day, there is an end of Dr. Crisp's finished salvation, and Calvin's imputed righteousness: Those two main pillars of Antinomianism and Calvinism are fairly broken.*

L E T T E R VII.

TO RICHARD HILL, Esq;

*Mr. Hill's arguments in defence of Dr. Crisp's finished salvation, are answered.*

L E T T E R VIII.

TO RICHARD HILL, Esq;

*Mr. Hill is mistaken when he says, " we have scripture authority to call good works dung, dross, " and filthy rags."*

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*An answer to Mr. ROWLAND HILL's arguments against justification by works in the day of judgment, closed by some strictures upon the friendliness of his Friendly Remarks.*

L E T T E R X.

*An answer to Mr. RICHARD and Mr. ROWLAND HILL's Remarks upon the Third Check, in which the scriptural doctrine of justification in its several branches is vindicated from their witticisms, and Mr. Hill cut off from some of his subterfuges.*

L E T T E R XI:

*The doctrine of a believer's justification by works, is reconciled with the doctrine of a sinner's justification by grace: and it is proved, that Calvinism makes way for bare-faced Antinomianism, absolutely destroys the law of Christ, and casts his royal crown to the ground.*

C O N C L U S I O N.

LOGICA

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LOGICA GENEVENSIS,  
OR, A  
FOURTH CHECK  
TO  
ANTINOMIANISM, &c.

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LETTER I.

TO RICHARD HILL, Esq;

Honored and dear Sir,

MY entering the field of controversy to defend St. *James's pure religion*, procured me your five letters, which I compare to a shower of rain gently descending from the placid heaven. But the six which have followed, resemble a storm of hail, pouring down from the lowering sky, ushered by some harmless flashes of lightning, and accompanied by the rumbling of distant thunder. If my comparison is just, it is no wonder that when I read them first, I was almost thunder-struck, and began to fear, lest instead of adding *light*, I had only  
only

only added *heat*, to the hasty zeal which I endeavoured to check.

But at the second perusal, my drooping hopes revive: the disburdened clouds begin to break: the air, discharged of the exhalations which rendered it sultry and hazy, seems cooler and clearer than before; and the smiling plains of evangelical truth, veiwed through that defecated medium, appear more gay after the unexpected storm. Methinks even *moderation*, the phoenix consumed by our polemic fires, is going to rise out of its ashes; and that, notwithstanding the din of a controversial war, *the voice of the turtle is still heard in our land*.

May the gentle sound approach nearer and nearer, and tune our listening hearts to the melodious accents of divine and brotherly love! And Thou Prince of Peace, Thou true Solomon, Thou pacific Son of warlike David; should an evil spirit come upon me, as it did upon Saul, to make me dip my pen in the envenomed gall of discord, or turn it into a javelin to strike my dear Opponent through and through; mercifully bow the heavens, gently touch the strings of my heart, and play upon them the melting tune of forgiving love! Teach me to check the rapid growth of antinomian errors, without hindering the slow progress of thy precious truth; and graciously instruct me how to defend an insulted, venerable father, without hurting an honored, though alas! prepossessed brother. If the latter has offended, suffer me not to fall upon him with the whip of merciless revenge; and if I must use the rod of reproof, teach me to weigh every stroke in the balance of the sanctuary with tender fear, and yet with honest impartiality.

Should I, in this encounter, gracious Lord, overcome by *thy wisdom* my worthy antagonist, help me by *thy meekness* to give him an example of christian moderation; and while I tie him with the cords of

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a man and a believer, while I bind him with reason and scripture to the *left* wheel of thy Gospel chariot, which alas! he mistakes for a wheel of Antichrist's carriage; let me rejoice to be tied by him with the same easy bonds to the *right* wheel, which he, without reason, fears I am determined to stop. And when we are thus mutually bound to thy triumphant car, draw us with double swiftness to the happy regions, *where the good, as well the wicked, cease from troubling, and those who are weary of contention are at rest.* So shall we leave for ever behind the deep and noisy *waters of strife*, in which so many bigots miserably perish; and the barren mountains of Gilboah, where hurried Saul falls upon the point of his own controversial sword, and lovely Jonathan himself receives a mortal wound.

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You remember, honored Sir, that I opened the Second Check to Antinomianism, by demonstrating, that in the day of judgment we shall be justified by works, *i. e.* by the *evidence* of works. A person of your penetration could not but see, that if this legal proposition stood, your favourite doctrines of *finished* salvation, and *calvinian* imputation of righteousness to an impenitent adulterer, would lose their exorbitant influence. You designed therefore to bend yourself with Sampson's might, upon this adamantine pillar of our *heretical* doctrine. Let us see whether your redoubled efforts have shaken it, or only shewn that it stands as firm as the pillars of heaven.

You enter upon the arduous labour by deciding, in your *first* paragraph, that I deal in "*Sneer, banter, sarcasm, notorious falsehood, calumny, and gross perversions:*" and to confirm this charge, you produce three anonymous letters, one of which deposes that what I have written upon finished salvation "*is enough to make every child of God shudder:*"

while

while another pronounces, that my "book is full of groundless and false arguments: and the third, that I am "infatuated," and have "advanced pernicious doctrines in bitter expressions." Your initial charge, supported by this threefold authority, will probably pass for a demonstration with some of your readers; but as I consider it only as a faint imitation of Calvin's book, called, *Responsio ad calumnias Nebulonis*, I hasten to what looks a little like an argument.

Page 4, you say concerning justification by works, *i. e.* by the evidence of works in the last day, "I may SAFELY AFFIRM that it has no existence in the word of God." So, honored Sir, the plainest and fullest passages of the sacred oracles, are, it seems, to fly like chaff before YOUR SAFE AFFIRMATION; for you have not supported it by one single text. Near twenty have I produced, which declare with one consent, that we shall be *judged*, not according to our faith, but *according to our works*; and that the DOERS of the law, and they alone, shall be justified in the last day; but in your "FULL and particular answer to my book," you take a full and easy leap over most of these texts. Two however you touch upon; let us see if you have been able to press them into the service of your doctrine.

(1) You find fault with our translation of Rev. xxii. 14. *Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life.* You say, that the word which is rendered *right*, properly signifies *priviledge*. Granting it, for peace's sake, I ask, What do you get by this criticism? Absolutely nothing: for the word *priviledge* proves my point as well as the word *right*; unless you can demonstrate that it makes a material difference in the sense of the following similar sentence. Blessed was the son of Aaron, whom Moses anointed high-priest, that he might have the *right*, (or, that he might

might have the *privilege*) of entering once a year into the holy of holies. If those different expressions convey the same idea, your objection is frivolous, and Rev. xxii. 14. even according to *your own* translation, still evidently confirms the words of our Lord and his favourite disciple. *If thou wilt enter into LIFE, keep the commandments — And this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another.*

(2) The other text you touch upon is Matt. xii. 36, 37. *In the day of judgment, by thy words shalt thou be justified.* Page 10, you thus comment upon it. “ Our Lord points out the danger of vain and idle words; and affirms, that as every tree is known by its fruit, so may the true state of the heart be known by the evil or good things which proceed out of the mouth; and having LAID DOWN THIS RULE OF JUDGMENT, he adds the words which you have so often cited in defence of your doctrine, *By thy words thou shalt be justified, &c.* *i. e.* As words and works are the streams which flow from the spring of the heart, so by these it will appear whether that spring *was ever*” (I would say with more propriety, *is now*) “ purified by grace; or whether it still remains in its natural corrupt state; the actions of a man being the *declarative evidences*, both here and at the great day, whether or no *he was*” (I would say, *he is*) “ among the trees of righteousness which the Lord hath planted. This is the plain easy sense of this passage.”

Is it indeed, honored Sir? Well then, I have the pleasure of informing you, that, supposing you allow of my little alterations, we are exactly of the same sentiment: And I think that, upon second thoughts, you will not reject them: for it is evident, the actions of to-day show what a free-agent is to-day, and not what he was yesterday, or will

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be six months hence. By what argument will you prove that because Lucifer *was* once a bright angel, and Adam a godlike creature, they continued such under all the horrors of their rebellion? Or that David's repentance *after* Nathan's exhortation, evidenced that he *was* a penitent *before*? In the last day the *grand* enquiry will not be, whether Hymeneus, Philetus, and Demas "*were EVER purified by grace;*" but whether they were so at death. Because our last works will be admitted as the last, and consequently the most important and decisive evidences: for *as the tree falls so it lies*. Apostates, far from being justified for having been once *purified by grace*, will be counted worthy of a *sover punishment* for having turned from the way of righteousness. Would not the world hiss a physician, who should publickly maintain, that by feeling peoples pulse now, he can tell whether they *were ever* sick or well? Or that because one of his patients *was* alive ten years ago, he *is* alive now, though every symptom of death and corruption is actually upon him? And shall your hint, honored Sir, persuade your readers, that what would be an imposition upon common sense in a gentleman of the faculty, is genuine orthodoxy in Mr. Hill?

But I have too high an opinion of your good sense and piety, dear Sir, to think that you will persist in your inaccuracy, merely for the pleasure of maintaining the ridiculous perseverance of antinomian apostates, and contradicting the God of truth, who expressly mentions *the righteous turning from his righteousness, and dying in the sin that he has sinned*. My hopes that you will give it up are the more sanguine, as it is rectified in the same page, by two quotations, which have the full stamp of your approbation.

"The judicious Dr. Guise, say you, paraphrases  
 "thus on the place: *Your words, as well as actions,*  
 "*shall be produced in evidence for or against you, to*  
 "prove"

“*prove*” (not whether you EVER were, but) “*whether you ARE a saint or a sinner, a true believer or not; and according to their evidence you shall be either publicly acquitted or condemned in the great day.*” And as it is absurd to suppose that Christ shall enquire whether men ARE *believers* in the day of judgment, because faith will then be lost in sight; Mr. Wesley, whom you quote next as if he contradicted me, wisely corrects the little inaccuracy of the Doctor, and says, “*Your words as well as actions shall be produced in evidence for or against you, to prove (not whether you ARE, but) whether you WAS a true believer or not, and according to their evidence you will either be acquitted or condemned in the great day.*” The very doctrine this which I have advanced at large, 2 Check, p. 21.

However, triumphing as if you had won the day; you conclude by saying, “*In the mouth of these two witnesses may THE TRUTH be firmly established.*” To this pious wish, honored Sir, my soul breathes out a cordial AMEN! I rejoice to see that God has given you candor to the acknowledgment of THE TRUTH: and as it is firmly established in the mouth of Dr. Guise and Mr. Wesley, may it be for ever confirmed by this spontaneous testimony of Mr. Hill! But in the name of brotherly love, if you thus hold THE TRUTH which I contend for, *i. e.* Justification by the evidence of works in the last day, why do you oppose me? Why do you represent my sentiment “*as full of rottenness and deadly poison?*” Till you solve this problem, permit me to vent my surprise by a sigh, and to say *Logica Genevensis!*

Having seen how *fully and particularly*, you have granted the fundamental doctrine of the book, to which you was to give a *full and particular answer*, namely, that our final justification will turn upon the evidence of works in the last day; I go back to page 4. where to my utter astonishment you “*affirm, that as this doctrine has no existence in the word of God, so neither*

in any protestant church under heaven." Thus to unchurch Mr. Wesley and me, you unchurch Dr. Guise and yourself.

To support your assertion you quote Bishop Cowper, Dr. Fulke, and Mr. Hervey, who agree to maintain, that "justification is ONE SINGLE ACT, and must therefore be done or undone." As neither you, nor they, have supported this proposition by one single argument, I shall just observe, that a thousand bishops and doctors, are lighter than vanity, when weighed in the balance against the authority of Christ and his apostles.

However, if you forget your proofs, I shall produce mine; and by the following syllogism I demonstrate, that justification in the day of our conversion, and justification in the last day, are no more *one single act*; than the day of a sinner's conversion, and that of judgment, are one single day.

Two acts, which differ as to time, place, persons, witnesses, and circumstances, &c. cannot be *one single act*; (the one may be *done*, when the other remains *undone*.) But our first justification at conversion, thus differs from our second justification in the great day. Therefore our first and \* second justification cannot be one single act, &c.

The second proposition, which alone is disputable, may be thus abundantly proved. Our first and second justification differ, (1) With respect to *time*: The time of the one is the hour of conversion; and the time of the other the day of judgment. (2) With respect to *place*: The place of the former is *this earth*; and the place of the latter the awful spot, in the new heaven or on the new earth, where the tribunal of Christ shall be erected. (3) With respect to the *witnesses*: The  
witnesses

\* I still call them *first* and *second*, not only to accommodate myself to the Rev. Mr. Shirley's expression in his Narrative; but because they may with propriety be thus distinguished, when considered with respect to each other.

witnesses of the former are the Spirit of God and our own conscience; or, to speak in scripture language, *the Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are the children of God*: but the witnesses of the latter will be the countless myriads of men and angels assembled before Christ. (4) With respect to the *Justifier*: In the former justification *one God justifies the circumcision and uncircumcision*; and in the latter *one mediator between God and man, even the man Christ Jesus*, will pronounce the sentence; for *the Father judgeth no man, but has committed all judgment to the Son*. (5) With respect to the *justified*: In the day of conversion, a *penitent sinner* is justified; in the day of judgment, a *persevering saint*. (6) With respect to the *article upon which justification will turn*: Although the meritorious cause of both our justifications is the same, that is, the blood and righteousness of Christ, yet the instrumental cause is very different: By FAITH we obtain (not purchase) the *first*, and by WORKS the *second*. (7) With respect to the *act of the Justifier*: At our conversion, God covers and pardons our sins; but in the day of judgment, Christ uncovers and approves our righteousness. And lastly, With regard to the *consequences of both*: At the first justification, we are enlisted by the Friend of sinners to *fight the good fight of faith* in the church militant; and at the second, we are admitted by the righteous Judge to *receive a crown of righteousness; and shine like the sun* in the church triumphant.

Is it not strange, that the enchanting power of Calvinian logic should have detained us so long in *Babel*, where things so vastly different are perpetually confounded! Is it not deplorable, that when Mr. Wesley has the courage to call us out of mystic *Geneva*, so many tongues and pens should be sharpened against him! Shall foreign logic for ever prevail over *English* good sense, and christian bro-

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therly kindness? Have we so "leaned towards Calvinism," as to be totally past recovery? And is the balance between St. Paul's and St. James's justification lost among pious Protestants for ever? O ye regenerate Britons, who have unfortunately fallen in love with the Geneva Delilah, awake! awake! put on strength, and leap out of the arms of that enchantress. If she rocks you asleep in her bosom, it is only to bind you fast with cords of antinomian errors, and deliver you up to the horrors of antinomian practices. Has she not already cut off the locks, and put out the eyes of thousands? And does not Sampson publicly grind for the Philistines? Have we not seen Mr. Hill himself tell the world, that *all sins work for good to the pleasant children, who go on frowardly from adultery to treachery, and from treachery to murder?*

But you have an answer ready. Page 6, you insinuate, that it is I, who have erected a Babel, by denying that the two above-described justifications are one and the same. And to prove it, you advance a dilemma which is already obviated in the Third Check, p. 47. We readily grant you, honored Sir, that if a man dies the moment he is justified by faith, the inward labor of his love (for living faith always works by love) will justify him in the day of judgment. But you must also grant us, that if he lives, and turns from his righteousness; or, which is the same, if his faith, instead of working by love and obedience, works by lust and malice, by adultery and murder, it is no longer a living faith: It is the dead faith, of which St. James says, *What does it profit, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can that faith save him? Faith if it hath not works is dead.*—You see then, how that, in what you call "the intermediate state," as well as in the last day, *by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.* Jam. ii.

Page

Page 6, you assert, that my " favourite scheme is rather overthrown than supported by the instance of the collier," on whose *evidence* I supposed myself acquitted in a court of judicature. " His testimony, " say you, proves indeed your innocence, but it " does in no degree *constitute* that innocence." Are then to *justify a man*, and to *constitute him innocent*, expressions of the same import? Nay, some believe, that when God justifies returning prodigals at their conversion, he does not constitute them innocent, but for Christ's sake mercifully pardons their manifold sins, and graciously accepts their guilty persons; and that when Christ shall justify persevering saints in the last day, he will not constitute them innocent, but only declare, upon the evidence of their last works, that they are *pure in heart*, and therefore qualified to *see God*, and *worthy to obtain that world*, where the children of the resurrection are equal to angels.

To shew that the instance of the grafted tree overthrows also the doctrine of a two-fold justification, you quote that great and good man Mr. *Hervey*. But you forget that his bare assertion is no better than your own. I appeal from both your assertions to the common sense of any impartial man, whether there is not a material difference between declaring that a CRAB-STOCK is properly *grafted*; and pronouncing that an APPLE-TREE is not cankered and barren, but *sound and fruitful*. Mr. *Hervey's* mistake appears to me so much the more surprizing, as the distinction on which he explodes, is every where obvious.

Look into our orchards, and you will see some trees that were once properly grafted, but are now blasted, dead, rotten, and perhaps torn up by the roots. Consider our congregations, and you will cry out as the pious † divine under whose ministry you

† The Rev. Mr. *De Courcy*, in his " Delineation of true and false zeal," a little edifying tract, which does justice to St. *James's* pure religion, and shows, that some pious *Calvinists* clearly see the growth, and honestly check the progress of *Antinomianism*, so far as their principles will allow.

you sit at present, “ O what sad instances does the  
 “ present state of the church afford us of persons, who  
 “ set out with a most vehement zeal at the begin-  
 “ ning, seemed to promise great things, and carry all  
 “ before them; who are now like the snuff of an  
 “ extinguished taper, devoid of any apparent life!—  
 “ We swarm with slumbering virgins on the right  
 “ hand and on the left. The Delilah of this world  
 “ has shorn their locks, their former strength is  
 “ gone, their frame is totally enervated, and the  
 “ Philistines are upon them.”

But above all, search the Oracles of God, and there you will see various descriptions of apostates, that is, of men who to the last, *tread under foot the Son of God, and account the blood of the covenant, wherewith they were sanctified, and consequently justified, a common despicable thing.* These, in a dying hour, have no right to say, *I have kept the faith*; for alas! by *putting away a good conscience, concerning faith they have made shipwreck.* These, like *withered branches of the heavenly vine, in which they once blossomed, shall be taken away, cast forth, and burned, in the last day, together with the chaff, for not bearing fruit, and ending in the FLESH*; agreeable to that awful clause of the gospel charter: *The works of the FLESH are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, idolatry, hatred, variance, wrath, strife, envying, murder, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of which I tell you, justified believers, as I have told you in time past, that they who do such things SHALL NOT inherit the kingdom of heaven.* Thus, the numerous tribe of apostates, after having been *justified by faith* in the day of their conversion, shall be *condemned by works* in the day of judgment. So real, so important is the distinction, which Mr. Hervey looks upon as needless, and you, Sir, as “ full of deadly poison!”

However, says Bishop Cowper, “ This distinction  
 “ confounds two benefits, justification and sanctifi-  
 “ cation.”

“ cation.” To this *assertion*, which, according to a grand rule of your logic, is also to pass for *proof*, I answer, that our *sanctification* will no more be confounded with our *justification* in the last day, than our *faith* is confounded with our *acceptance* in the day of our conversion. When you shall demonstrate, that the witnesses upon whose testimony a criminal is absolved, are the same thing as the sentence of absolution pronounced by the judge, you will be able to make it appear, that sanctification is the same thing as justification in the last day; or, which is all one, that there is no difference between an instrumental cause, and its proper effect. — May both our hearts lie open to the bright beams of convincing truth! And may you believe, that my pen expresses the feelings of my heart, when I subscribe myself,

Honored and dear Sir,

Your most obedient Servant in Him,  
who will justify us by our words,

J. F.

LETTER



## L E T T E R II.

TO RICHARD HILL, Esq;

Honored and dear Sir,

**A**N assertion of your's seems to me of greater moment, than the quotation from Bishop Cowper, which I answered in my last. You maintain, (p. 11.) that *the doctrine of a two-fold justification is not to be found in any part of the liturgy of our Church.*

I. Not to mention again the latter part of St. Athanasius's Creed; permit me, Sir, to ask you, if on the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Sundays after Trinity you never considered what is implied in these and the like petitions? "Grant that we may so *faithfully* serve thee in this life, that we *fail not finally* to attain thy heavenly promises, through the merits of Jesus Christ. — Make us to *love* that which thou dost *command*, that we may *obtain* that which thou dost *promise.*" Again, on St. Peter's day, "Make all *pastors diligently* to preach thy holy word, and the people *obediently* to follow the same, *that they may receive the crown* of everlasting glory, through Jesus Christ." And on the Third Sunday in Advent, "Grant that thy ministers may so prepare thy way, by *turning* the hearts of the *disobedient*, that at thy *second coming* to judge the world, we may be found an *acceptable people* in thy fight."

St.

St. *James's* justification by works consequent upon justification by faith, is described in the Service for Ash-Wednesday: "It is from henceforth we walk  
 " in his ways; it we follow him in lowliness, pa-  
 " tience, and charity, and be ordered by the go-  
 " vernance of his Holy Spirit, seeking always his  
 " glory, and serving him duly with thanksgiving."

—Then comes the description of our final justifi-  
 cation, which is but a solemn and public confirma-  
 tion of St. *James's* justification by works. —  
 " This if we do, Christ will deliver us from the curse  
 " of the law, and from the extreme malediction  
 " which shall light upon them that shall be set on the  
 " left hand; and he will set us on his right hand,  
 " and give us the gracious benediction of his Fa-  
 " ther, commanding us to take possession of his  
 " glorious kingdom." *Commination.*

I flatter myself, honored Sir, that you will not set these quotations aside, by just saying what you do on another occasion: "As to the quotation you  
 " have brought from Mr. *Henry* in defence of this  
 " doctrine, for any good it does your cause, it might  
 " as well have been urged in defence of *extreme un-*  
 " *tion.*" I hope you will not object, that the  
 words, *second justification by works*, are not in our  
 Liturgy; for if the THING is evidently there, what  
 can a candid enquirer after truth require more? Should you have recourse to such an argument, you will permit me to ask you, what you would say to those who assert, that the DOCTRINE of the Trinity is not found in the Scripture, because the WORD *Trinity* is not read there? And the same answers which you would give to such opponents, I now before-hand return to yourself.

II. As final justification by the evidence of works is clearly asserted in our *Liturgy*, so it is indirectly maintained in our *Articles*. You know, honored Sir, that the Eleventh treats of *justification by faith*

at

at our conversion; and you yourself very justly observe, (p. 11.) "That our Reformers seemed to have had an eye to the words of our Lord—*The tree is known (i. e. is evidenced) by its fruit*, when they drew up our Twelfth Article, which asserts, that a lively faith may be as evidently known by good works, as a tree discerned by its fruit." This, honored Sir, is the very basis of Mr. Wesley's "rotten" doctrine, the very foundation on which St. James builds his *pure and undefiled religion*. This being granted, it necessarily follows, to the overthrow of your favourite scheme, that a living, justifying faith may degenerate into a dead, condemning faith, as surely as *David's* faith, once productive of the fruits of righteousness, degenerated into a faith productive of adultery and murder.

You are aware of the advantage that the Twelfth Article gives us over you; therefore, to obviate it, you insinuate in your five letters, that *David's* faith, when he committed adultery, was the same as when he danced before the ark. It was justifying faith still, only "in a winter-season." This argument, which will pass for a demonstration in *Geneva*, will appear an evasion in *England*, if our readers consider, that it is founded merely upon the *calvinian* custom of forcing rational comparisons to go upon all four like brutes, and then driving them far beyond the intention of those by whom they were first produced. We know that a tree on the banks of *Severn* may be good in winter, though it bear no good fruit; because no trees bear among us any fruit good or bad in January. But this cannot be the case either of believers or unbelievers: They bear fruit all the year round; unless you can prove, that like men in an apoplectic fit, they neither think, speak, nor act "in a winter-season." Again,

Believers, who commit adultery and murder, are not good trees even in a *negative* sense; for they *positively*

*fitively* bear fruit of the most poisonous nature. How then can either their faith, or persons be evidenced, a *good tree* by such bad fruit, such *detestable evidence*? While you put your logic to the rack for an answer, I shall take the liberty to encounter you a moment with your own weapons, and making the degraded comparison of our Twelfth Article walk upon all four against you, I promise you, that if you can shew me an apple-tree, which bears poisonous crabs in summer, much more one that bears them, “ *in a winter-season,*” I will turn antinomian, and believe that an impenitent murderer has justifying faith, and is compleat in Christ’s righteousness.

III. Having thus, I hope, rescued our Twelfth Article from the violence, which your scheme offers to its *holy* meaning; I presume to ask, Why do you not mention the *Homilies*, when you say that the doctrine of a two-fold justification is not found in any part of the Offices and Liturgy of our Church? Is it because you never consulted them upon the subject of our controversy? To save you the trouble of turning them over, and undeceive those who are frightened from the pure doctrine of their own Church by the late cries of *Arminianism! Pelagianism! and Popery!* I shall present you with the following extract from our Homilies, which will shew you, they are not less opposite to Antinomianism than our Liturgy and Articles.

‘ The first coming unto God is through faith;  
 ‘ whereby we are justified before God. And, lest  
 ‘ any man should be deceived, it is diligently to be  
 ‘ noted, that there is one faith, which in scripture  
 ‘ is called a *dead faith*, which bringeth forth no  
 ‘ good works, but is idle, barren, and unfruitful.  
 ‘ And this faith, by the holy apostle St. *James*, is  
 ‘ compared to the faith of devils. And such faith  
 ‘ have the wicked, naughty christian people, who,  
 ‘ as St. *Paul* saith, *confess* God with their mouths, but  
 ‘ deny

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' deny him in their deeds.—Forasmuch as *faith*  
 ' *without works is dead*, it is not now faith, as a dead  
 ' man is not a man. The true, lively christian faith  
 ' liveth and stirreth inwardly in the heart. It is  
 ' not without the love of God and our neighbour,  
 ' nor without the desire to hear God's word, and  
 ' follow the same, in eschewing evil, and doing  
 ' gladly all good works.—Of this faith, this is first to  
 ' be noted, that it does not lie dead in the heart, but  
 ' is lively and fruitful in bringing forth good works.  
 ' As the light cannot be hid, so a true faith cannot  
 ' be kept secret, but shews itself by good works:  
 ' And as the living body of a man ever exerciseth  
 ' such things as belong to a living body; so the soul  
 ' that has a lively faith in it, will be doing alway  
 ' some good work, which shall declare that it is  
 ' living. For he is like a tree set by the water-side,  
 ' his leaf will be green, and he will not cease to  
 ' bring forth his fruit.' *Hom. of Faith, 1 Part.* Here  
 ' is no antinomian salvo; no "*winter state*" allowed  
 ' of, to bring forth the dire fruits of adultery and  
 ' murder.

' There is one **WORK** in which are all good  
 ' works, that is, *faith which worketh by charity*. If  
 ' you have it, you have the ground of all good  
 ' works; for wisdom, temperance, and justice are  
 ' all referred unto this faith: Without it we have  
 ' not virtues, but only their names and shadows.  
 ' Many have no fruit of their works, because faith,  
 ' *the chief WORK*, lacketh. Our faith in Christ must  
 ' go before, and after be nourished by good works.  
 ' The thief did believe only, and the most merciful  
 ' God justified him. If he had lived, and not re-  
 ' garded *the WORKS of faith*, (N. B.) he should have  
 ' **LOST HIS SALVATION** again.' *Hom. on Good*  
 ' **Works, 1 Part.**

' The third thing to be declared unto you, is,  
 ' what manner of works they are which spring out  
 ' of

of true faith, and lead faithful men to everlasting  
 life. This cannot be known so well, as by our  
 Saviour himself, who being asked of a certain  
 great man this question, *What works shall I do to  
 come to everlasting life?* answered him, *If thou wilt  
 come to everlasting life, keep the commandments: Thou  
 shalt not kill: Thou shalt not commit adultery, &c.*  
 By which words Christ declared, that the laws of  
 God are the very way which leads to everlasting  
 life. So that this is to be taken for a MOST TRUE  
 lesson, taught by Christ's OWN MOUTH, that the  
 works of the moral commandments of God are the  
 very true works of faith, which lead to the blessed  
 life to come. But the blindness and malice of men  
 hath ever been ready to fall from God and his  
 LAW, and to invent a new way to salvation by  
 works of their own device. Therefore Christ said,  
*You leave the commandments of God, to keep your own  
 traditions.* You must have an assured faith in God,  
 love him, and dread to offend him evermore:  
 Then for his sake love ALL men, friends and foes,  
 because they are his creation and image, and RE-  
 DEEMED BY CHRIST AS YE ARE. Kill not; com-  
 mit no manner of adultery, in will nor in deed,  
 &c. Thus in keeping the commandments of God  
 [wherein standeth his pure honour, and which,  
 wrought in faith, he hath ordained to be the right  
 trade and path-way to heaven] you SHALL NOT  
 FAIL to come to everlasting life.' Hom. on Good  
 Works, 3 Part.

Whereas God hath shewed to all that TRULY  
 BELIEVE his gospel, his face of mercy in Jesus  
 Christ, which does so enlighten their hearts, that,  
 if they behold it as they ought, they are transform-  
 ed to his image, and made partakers of the hea-  
 venly light, and of his Holy Spirit: So, if THEY  
 AFTER DO NEGLECT the same, and order not their  
 life according to his example and doctrine, he

‘ will take away from them his kingdom, because  
 ‘ they bring not forth the fruit thereof.—And if  
 ‘ this will not serve, but still we remain disobedient,  
 ‘ behaving ourselves uncharitably by disdain, envy,  
 ‘ malice, or by committing murder, adultery, or  
 ‘ such detestable works; then he threateneth us by  
 ‘ terrible comminations, swearing in great anger,  
 ‘ that WHOSOEVER does these works shall NEVER  
 ‘ enter into his rest, which is the kingdom of hea-  
 ‘ ven.’ *Hom. of Falling from God, 1 Part.*

‘ We do call for mercy in vain, IF we will not  
 ‘ show mercy to our neighbours. For IF we do  
 ‘ not put wrath and displeasure forth out of our  
 ‘ hearts to our brother, no more will God forgive  
 ‘ the wrath that our sins have deserved before him.  
 ‘ For under this CONDITION doth God forgive us,  
 ‘ IF we forgive others. God commands us to for-  
 ‘ give, IF we will have any part of the pardon  
 ‘ which Christ purchased by shedding his precious  
 ‘ blood. Let us then be favourable one to another,  
 ‘ &c. By these means shall we move God to be  
 ‘ merciful to our sins. He that hateth his brother \*  
 ‘ IS THE CHILD OF DAMNATION AND OF THE DE-  
 ‘ VIL, cursed and hated of God, SO LONG AS HE SO  
 ‘ REMAINETH. For as peace and charity make us  
 ‘ the *blessed children of God*; so do hatred and malice  
 ‘ make us the *cursed children of the devil.*’ *Hom. for*  
*Good-Friday.*

The *Homily on Dress* brings to my mind what you  
 say, p. 85, upon that head. If I am not mistaken,  
 you quote Mr. *Hervey* in support † of finery, which  
 surprises

\* Did not David once hate *Uriah*, as much as *Jezebel* did *Naboth*? Was not innocent blood shed in both cases, by means of sanguinary letters? Is it to the honor of *David*, that he outdid *Jezebel* in kindly desiring *Uriah* to carry his own death-warrant to *Joab*?

† I blame, in the 2d Check, p. 85. only such professors of godliness as “ wear gold, pearl, and precious stones, when no distinction of office or state obliges them to do it.” As you find fault with this  
 guarded

surprises me so much the more, as the plainness of your dress is a practical answer to what can be advanced in support of that branch of Antinomianism. Permit me however to guard your ornamented quotation in the plain nervous language of our Church. After mentioning *the round attires of the head*, exposed by *Isaiah*, she says: 'No less truly is the vanity used among us. For the proud and haughty stomachs of the daughters of *England*, are so maintained with divers disguised sorts of costly apparel, that, as *Tertullian* saith, there is left no difference in apparel between an honest matron and a common strumpet. Yea, many care not what they spend in disguising themselves, ever desiring new toys, and inventing new fashions. Therefore we must needs look for God's fearful vengeance from heaven, to overthrow our pride, as he overthrew *Herod*, who, in his royal apparel forgetting God, was smitten of an angel, and eaten up of worms.'

'But some vain women will object, all which we do, in decking ourselves with gay apparel, is to please our husbands. O most shameful answer, to the reproach of thy husband! What could'st thou say more to set out his foolishness, than to charge him to be pleased with the devil's attire? Nay, nay, this is but a vain excuse, of such as go about to please' (*themselves and*) 'others, rather than their husbands.—She does but deserve scorn, to set out all her commendation in jewish and heathenish apparel, and yet brag of her christianity; and sometimes she is the cause of much deceit in her husband's dealings, that she may be the more gorgeously set out to the sight of the vain world. O thou woman, not a christian, but worse than a pagan, thou

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guarded doctrine, and insinuate, that I "dwindle the noble ideas of *St. Paul* into a meanness of sense besitting the superstitious and contracted spirit of a hermit." It necessarily follows, that you plead for finery, or that you oppose me for opposition's sake, when you mean exactly the same thing with me.



' thou fettest out thy pride, and makest of thy inde-  
 ' cent apparel the devil's net to catch souls. How-  
 ' soever thou perfumeest thyself, yet cannot thy  
 ' beastliness be hidden. The more thou garnishest  
 ' thyself with these outward blazings, the less thou  
 ' carest for the inward garnishing of thy mind.  
 ' Hear, hear what Christ's holy Apostles do write.'  
 Then follow those passages of St. *Peter* and St. *Paul*,  
 which you suppose I " *do not rightly understand.*"

To convince you, however, that our Church has  
 as much of " *the superstitious and contracted spirit of  
 a hermit*" as myself, I shall plead a moment more  
 against finery, in her own words: ' The wife of an  
 ' heathen being asked why she wore no gold; she  
 ' answered, that she thought her husband's virtues  
 ' sufficient ornaments. How much more ought eve-  
 ' ry christian to think himself sufficiently garnished  
 ' with our Saviour Christ's heavenly virtues! But  
 ' perhaps some will answer, that they must do some-  
 ' thing to shew their birth and blood: As though  
 ' these things' (*jewels and finery*) ' were not common  
 ' to those who are most vile: as though thy hus-  
 ' band's riches could not be better bestowed than  
 ' in such superfluities: as though when thou wast  
 ' christened, thou didst not RENOUNCE *the pride* of  
 ' this world, and the *pomp* of the flesh. If thou  
 ' sayest, that the custom is to be followed, I ask of  
 ' thee, Whose custom should be followed? Of the  
 ' wife, or of fools? If thou sayest, Of the wife;  
 ' then, I say, follow them; for fools customs, who  
 ' should follow but fools. If any lewd custom be  
 ' used, be thou the first to break it: Labour to di-  
 ' minish it, and lay it down, and thou shalt have  
 ' more praise before God by it, than by all the glory  
 ' of such superfluity. I speak not against convenient  
 ' apparel, for every state agreeable; but against the  
 ' superfluity, whereby thou and thy husband are  
 ' compelled to rob the poor, to maintain thy costli-  
 ' nefs.

‘ nefs. Hear how holy queen Esther setteth out  
 ‘ these goodly ornaments, as they are called, when  
 ‘ in order to save God’s people she ‘put them on :  
 ‘ *Thou knowest, O Lord, the necessity which I am driven*  
 ‘ *to, to put on this apparel, and that I abhor this sign*  
 ‘ *of pride, and that I defy it as a filthy cloth.*’ Hom.  
 against Excess of Apparel.

So far is our Church from siding with antinomian  
 solifidianism, which perpetually decries good works,  
 that she rather leans to the other extreme. If  
 “ *popery is about half way between protestantism and*  
 “ *the minutes,*” you will hardly think that the mass  
 itself is a *quarter of the way*, between Dr. Crisp’s  
 scheme, and the following propositions extracted  
 from the *Homily on Alms-deeds*.

‘ Most true is that saying of St. *Augustin, Via cæli*  
 ‘ *pauper est*, relieving of the poor is the right way  
 ‘ to heaven. Christ promiseth a reward to those who  
 ‘ give but a cup of cold water in his name to them  
 ‘ that have need of it; and that reward is the king-  
 ‘ dom of heaven. No doubt therefore God regard-  
 ‘ eth highly, that which he rewardeth so liberally.  
 ‘ He that hath been liberal to the poor, let him  
 ‘ know that his godly doings are accepted, and  
 ‘ thankfully taken at God’s hands, which he will  
 ‘ requite with double and treble; for so says the  
 ‘ wise man: *He who sheweth mercy to the poor, doth*  
 ‘ *lay his money in bank to the Lord* for a large interest  
 ‘ and gain; the gain being chiefly the possession of  
 ‘ the life everlasting, through the merits of Christ.’

When our Church has given us this strong dose  
 of legality, that she may by a desperate remedy re-  
 move a desperate disease, and kill or cure the anti-  
 nomian spirit in all her children; lest the violent  
 medicine should hurt us, she, like a prudent mother,  
 instantly administers the following balsamic cor-  
 rective.

‘ Some will say, If charitable works are able to  
 ‘ reconcile us to God, and deliver us from damna-  
 tion,

' tion, then are Christ's merits defaced; then are  
 ' we justified by works, and by our deeds may  
 ' we merit heaven. But understand, dearly be-  
 ' loved, that no godly men, when they, in extol-  
 ' ling the dignity, profit, and effect of virtuous and  
 ' liberal alms, do say that it bringeth us to the favour  
 ' of God, do mean that our work is the ORIGINAL  
 ' cause of our acceptance before God, &c. for that  
 ' were indeed to deface Christ, and to defraud him  
 ' of his glory. But they mean, that the Spirit of  
 ' God mightily working in them who seemed before  
 ' children of wrath, they DECLARE by their out-  
 ' ward deeds, that they are the undoubted children  
 ' of God.—By their tender pity (wherein they shew  
 ' themselves to be like unto God) they declare  
 ' openly and manifestly unto the sight of all men,  
 ' that they are the sons of God. For as the good  
 ' fruit does argue the goodness of the tree, so doth  
 ' the good deed of a man prove the goodness of him  
 ' that doeth it.'

In justice to our holy Church, whom some repre-  
 sent as a Patroness of Antinomianism; in brotherly  
 love to you, honored Sir, who seem to judge of her  
 doctrines by a few expressions which custom made  
 her use after St. *Augustin*; in tender compassion to  
 many of her members who are strangers to her true  
 sentiments; and in common humanity to Mr. *Wesley*,  
 who is perpetually accused of erecting popery upon  
 her ruins; I have presented you with this extract  
 from our homilies. If you lay by the veil of pre-  
 judice, which keeps the light from your honest  
 heart, I humbly hope it will convince you, that our  
 Church nobly contends for St. *James's* evangelical  
 legality: that she pleads for the *rewardableness* (which  
 is all we understand by the *merit*) of works, in FAR  
 stronger terms than Mr. *Wesley* does in the Minutes;  
 and that in perpetually making our justification,  
 merited by Christ, turn upon the *instrumentality* of  
 a lively faith, and the *evidence* of good works, as  
 there

there is opportunity to do them, she tears up Calvinism and antinomian delusions by the very roots.

Leaving you to consider, how you shall bring about a reconciliation between *your* Fourth Letter and our godly Homilies, I shall just take the liberty to remind you, that when you entered, or took your degrees at *Oxford*, you subscribed to the 39 Articles; the 35th of which declares, that “ *the Homilies contain a godly and wholesome doctrine, necessary for these* ” papistical and antinomian “ *times.* ” That, keeping clear from both extremes, we may evidence the godliness of that doctrine, by the soundness of our publications, and the exemplariness of our conduct, is the cordial prayer of,

Honored and dear Sir,

Your obedient Servant in the Liturgy, Articles,  
and Homilies of the Church of *England*,

J. F.

LETTER

## L E T T E R III.

TO RICHARD HILL, Esq;

Honored and dear Sir,

**I**N my last, I endeavoured to show you, that our Church, far from warping to Crispianity, strongly inforces St. *James's* undefiled religion: Let us now see what more modern divines, especially the Puritan, thought about the important subject of our controversy.

Page 13, you oppose the doctrine which you have (p. 11.) so heartily wished to be FIRMLY ESTABLISHED in the mouth of two witnesses. “ If  
 “ Mr. *Whitefield* had been now living, say you, I  
 “ doubt not but he would have told you, that if  
 “ need should be, he was ready to offer himself  
 “ among the foremost of those true protestants, who,  
 “ you tell us, could have *burned* against the doctrine  
 “ of a second justification by works. And as to the  
 “ Puritan divines, there is not one of the many  
 “ hundreds of them, but what *abhorred* the doctrine  
 “ of a second justification by works, as full of *rot-*  
 “ *tenness* and *deadly poison*. — Surely then it is not  
 “ without justice that I accuse you of the *grossest*  
 “ *perversions* and *misrepresentations*, that perhaps ever  
 “ proceeded from any author's pen. The ashes of  
 “ that laborious man of God Mr. *Whitefield*, you  
 “ have raked up, in order to bring him as a coad-  
 “ jutor to support your tottering doctrine of a second  
 “ justifi-

“ justification by works.” And again, p. 91 and 92, “ I am not afraid to challenge Mr. F——r, to fix upon one protestant minister, either Puritan or of the Church of *England*, from the beginning of the reformation to the reign of *Charles* the Second, who held the doctrines he has been contending for.” — “ Sure I am, that you have grieved many a pious heart among our dissenting brethren, by fathering upon their venerable ancestors such a spurious offspring, as can only trace its descent from the loins of *the man of sin*, by whom it was begotten, out of the mother of abominations, the *scarlet Babylonish whore*, which sitteth upon many waters.”

Your charges and challenge, honored Sir, deserve an answer, not because they fix the blot of *the grossest perversions* upon my insignificant character; but because they represent the holy apostle *James*, whose doctrines I vindicate, as *THE MAN OF SIN*, begetting his undefiled religion out of the *scarlet Babylonish whore*. I begin with what you say about Mr. *Whitefield*.

I never thought he was *clear* in the doctrine of our Lord, *In the day of judgment by thy words shalt thou be justified*; for if he had seen it in its proper light, he would instantly have renounced Calvinism. All I have asserted is, that the most eminent ministers, Mr. *Whitefield* himself not excepted, perpetually allude to that doctrine, when their enlarged hearts (under a full gale of God's free Spirit) get clear of the shallows of bigotry, or the narrow channels of their favorite systems: For then, sailing in deep water, and regardless of the rocks of offence, they cut their easy way through the raging billows of opposition, and speak ALL the truth as it is in Jesus; or at least ALLUDE (this was my expression, see 2 Check, p. 7.) to what, at another time, they would perhaps oppose with all their might.

And

And do you not, honored Sir, allow that Mr. *Whitefield* did this in the application of his sermons with regard to my doctrine, when you say, (p. 15.) *All that can be gathered from his expressions, is, that he believed there would be a great and awful day, in which all who sit under the sound of the gospel, shall be called to give a solemn account of what they hear, and every minister as solemn an account of the doctrine delivered by him.* To convince you, that you grant me all I contended for, permit me to ask, whether this *solemn account* will be in order to a mock-trial, or to the *solemn justification or condemnation* mentioned by our Lord, *Matt. xii. 37*? If you affirm the former, you traduce heavenly wisdom, you blaspheme Jesus Christ: if the latter, you give up the point; our hearing and speaking, *i. e.* our works, will turn evidence for or against us in the day of judgment; and according to their deposition, the scale of absolution and condemnation will turn for heaven or hell.

Let therefore the public judge, who wrongs Mr. *Whitefield*; I, who represent him as speaking agreeably to the plain words of his heavenly Master, *Matt. xii. 37*; or you, dear Sir, who make him advance as a zealot at the head of a body of prejudiced men, to burn against as explicit and *important* a declaration as ever dropped from the Redeemer's lips. I say *important*; because the moment you strike at our justification by works in the last day, you strike at the doctrine of a day of judgment; and the moment that fundamental doctrine is overthrown, natural and revealed religion sink in a heap of common ruins.

Pass we on now to the other reason, for which you "*accuse me of the grossest misrepresentations and perversions that perhaps ever proceeded from any author's pen.*" I have affirmed, 2 Check, p. 7. that *all the*  
 \* SOBER puritan divines have directly or \* INDIRECTLY  
 asserted

\* These were my *limited* expressions.

asserted a second justification by works; and you tell us, p. 13. "There is NOT ONE of them but what abhorred it, as full of rottenness and deadly poison." One of us is undoubtedly mistaken; for our propositions are diametrically opposite. Let us see who is the man.

To dispute about words is unbecoming men of reason and religion; and that we may not be guilty of this common absurdity, and oppose one another, when perhaps we mean the same thing, permit me to state the question as clearly as I possibly can. Not considering the *meritorious*, but the *instrumental* cause of our justification, I ask: In the day of judgment, shall we be justified or condemned by the works which Christ did in the days of his flesh, or by the works which we ourselves do in the days of our flesh?—Or, in other terms, Shall we be justified by the righteousness of Christ *imputed to us*, as *Calvin* supposes it was imputed to *David* in *Uriah's* bed? Or by the righteousness of Christ *implanted in us*, as it was implanted in *David* when *his eyes ran down with water because men kept not God's law*?—Or, if you please, Shall we be justified by Christ's loving God and man for us? Or by our loving God and man ourselves? The former of those sentiments is that of *Dr. Crisp*, and all his admirers: That the latter was the sentiment of *Dr. Owen*, and all the SOBER Puritan divines, when they regarded Christ more than *Calvin*, I prove thus:

*Dr. Owen*, (the pious and learned champion of the Calvinists in the last century, whom you quote, p. 93.) speaking in his treatise on justification, p. 222, of one justified at his conversion, says, "That God does indispensably require of him personal obedience, which may be called his evangelical righteousness—That THIS righteousness is \* pleada-

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ble

\* I have shewn in the *Vindication*, how *David* and *Ezekiel* pleaded this righteousness before God. Another instance of  
this



“ ble unto an acquitment against any charge from  
 “ Satan, the world, or our own consciences—That  
 “ upon IT we shall be *declared righteous* in the last  
 “ day; and without IT none shall. And if any  
 “ shall think meet from hence to conclude unto an  
 “ EVANGELICAL JUSTIFICATION, or call God’s ac-  
 “ ceptance of OUR righteousness by that name, I  
 “ shall by no means contend † with them. When-  
 “ ever this enquiry is made, how a man that pro-  
 “ fesseth evangelical faith in Christ, shall be tried  
 “ and judged; and whereon, as such, he shall be  
 “ JUSTIFIED: we grant that it is; and must be,  
 “ BY HIS OWN PERSONAL OBEDIENCE.”

This important quotation is produced by *D. Wil-*  
*liams*, in his *Gospel truth vindicated against Dr. Crisp’s*  
*opinions*, p. 149. It is introduced to confirm the  
 following *gospel truth*. “ The Lord Jesus has of  
 “ grace, for his own merits, promised to bring to  
 “ heaven such as are partakers of true holiness, and  
 “ do good works *perseveringly*: and he appoints these,  
 “ as the way and means of a believer’s obtaining  
 “ salvation; requiring them as indispensable duties,  
 “ and qualifications of all such whom he will save  
 “ and bless; and excluding all that want and neglect  
 “ them, or live under the power of what is contrary  
 “ thereto.” Here is evidently the pure doctrine of  
 the Minutes, and the undefiled religion of *St.*  
*James*.

The same judicious author, in his preface, speaks  
 thus upon the subject of our controversy. ‘ The  
 ‘ revival of these (*Dr. Crisp’s*) errors, must not only  
 ‘ exclude

this plea I lately found in *Nehemiah* - That man of God, after  
 describing his royal hospitality, and tender regard for the poor,  
 says. *Think upon me, my God, for good, according to all that I have*  
*done for this people.* Neh. v. 19

† Who indeed would contend with them, but such as are not  
 afraid of flying in the face of *St. Paul* and *Jesus Christ*? See  
*Rom. ii. 13.* and *Matt. xii. 37.*

' exclude that ministry as legal, which is most apt  
 ' to secure the practical power of religion; but also  
 ' render unity among christians impossible. Mutual  
 ' censures are unavoidable; while one side' (the  
*sober Puritans*) ' press the terms of the gospel, under  
 ' its promises and threats, for which they are accused  
 ' as enemies to Christ and grace; and the other side'  
 (the followers of *Dr. Crisp*) ' ignorantly set up the  
 ' name of Christ and *free grace*, against the govern-  
 ' ment of Christ and the rule of judgment.'

' I believe, many abettors of these mistakes are  
 ' honestly zealous for the honour of free grace, but  
 ' have not light to see how God has provided for  
 ' this. By this pretence Antinomianism corrupted  
 ' *Germany*; it bid fair to overthrow church and state  
 ' in *New-England*; and by its stroke at the vitals of  
 ' religion it alarmed most of the pulpits in *England*.  
 ' Many of our ablest pens were engaged against these  
 ' errors; as *Mr. Gataker*, *Mr. Rutherford*, *Anthony*  
 ' *Burgess*, the provincial Synod at *London*; with very  
 ' many others, whose labours God was pleased to  
 ' bless to the stopping of the attempts of *Dr. Crisp*,  
 ' by name opposed by the foresaid divines, *Saltmarsh*,  
 ' *Eaton*, &c.

' To the grief of such as perceive the tendency  
 ' of these principles, we are engaged in a new oppo-  
 ' sition, or must betray the truth as it is in Jesus. I  
 ' believe many abettors of these notions, have grace  
 ' to preserve their minds and practices from their in-  
 ' fluence: but they ought to consider, that the ge-  
 ' nerality of mankind have no such antidote; and  
 ' themselves need not fortify their own temptations,  
 ' nor lose the defence which the wisdom of God  
 ' has provided against remissness in duty, and sinful  
 ' backslidings.'

' In this present testimony to the TRUTH OF THE  
 ' GOSPEL, I have studied plainness. To the best of  
 ' my knowledge I have in nothing misrepresented

‘ Dr. *Crisp*’s opinions, nor mistaken his sense: For  
 ‘ most of them he oft studiously pleads: Of each I  
 ‘ could multiply proofs, and all of them are neces-  
 ‘ sary for his scheme, though not consistent with all  
 ‘ his other occasional expressions. I have carefully  
 ‘ avoided any reflection on Dr. *Crisp*, whom I be-  
 ‘ lieve a holy man.’

The whole work of *D. Williams*, and consequent-  
 ly the preceding quotations, have the remark-  
 able sanction of the following certificate. ‘ We,  
 ‘ whose names are subscribed, do judge that our  
 ‘ Rev. Brother has, in all that is material, *fully* and  
 ‘ *rightly* stated the *Truths* and *Errors* mentioned as  
 ‘ such, in the following treatise. And do account  
 ‘ he has, in this work, done considerable service to  
 ‘ the Church of Christ: adding our prayers, that  
 ‘ these labours of his may be a mean for reclaiming  
 ‘ those who have been misled into such *dangerous*  
 ‘ opinions; and for establishing those that waver in  
 ‘ any of these *Truths*.’ Signed by near Fifty Puri-  
 tan ministers, the first of whom is *William Bates*,  
 and the last *Edmund Calamy*, two of the greatest  
 preachers in the last century.

The following appendix closes the certificate, ‘ I  
 ‘ have by me near as many worthy names, such as  
 ‘ Mr. *Woodhouse*, Mr. *Hallet*, Mr. *Boys*, &c. who  
 ‘ have approved of this work. But I think this  
 ‘ number sufficient, to convince the world, that the  
 ‘ *Presbyterian ministers*, at least, espouse not the *an-*  
 ‘ *tinomian dotages*: yea, I am credibly informed,  
 ‘ that the most learned country ministers, of the  
 ‘ congregational persuasion, disallow the *Errors here*  
 ‘ opposed, and are amazed at such of their brethren  
 ‘ in *London*, as are displeased with this book.’

Now, dear Sir, you must either prove that what  
 Dr. *Owen*, *D. Williams*, and such a cloud of puritan  
 divines, consent to call an *evangelical justification*, in  
 the last day, by our own personal obedience, is not a jus-  
 tification; or you must confess, that you have given  
 the

the world a true specimen of *Geneva-logic*, when you have declared that "there is NOT ONE puritan divine but what *abhorred* the doctrine of such a justification, as full of rottenness and deadly poison." And you must do me the justice to acknowledge you did not give yourself time to weigh your words in the balance of brotherly kindness, when you *accused* me of *calumny* and the *grosslest perversions* that perhaps ever proceeded from any author's pen. for asserting what I thought my quotations from Mr. Henry sufficiently proved, and what your groundless charge has obliged me fully to demonstrate. And now, honored Sir, permit me to apologize for the severity of your conduct towards me by reminding my reader, that your great Diana was in danger, and that on such a trying occasion, even a good man may be put into an hurry, and act, before he is aware, inconsistently with the christian virtues which blazon his character.

*D. Williams's Gospel Truth vindicated* might be confirmed by numberless quotations from Puritan authors, who directly or *indirectly* assert a second justification by works. Take one instance out of a thousand. *Anthony Burgess*, Fellow of Emanuel College in *Cambridge*, (I think, one of the ejected ministers) speaking in his twelfth sermon of *Obedience as a sign of grace*, concludes his discourse by this truly *Anti-Crispian* paragraph.

' Art thou universal in thy obedience? Then  
' thou may'st take comfort. Otherwise know, if  
' thou has not respect to all the ways and duties re-  
' quired by God, thou wilt be confounded: Though  
' with *Ahab* and *Herod* thou *do many things*, yet if not  
' all things, confusion will be upon thee. O then,  
' how few are there, who may claim a right to  
' † grace! Many men have an external obedience  
D. 31 ' only,

† Some of the Puritans understood by *grace* a state of justification and sanctification.

only, and no internal; but most have a partial, and  
 not entire, compleat obedience; therefore it is,  
 that *many are called, but few chosen*. Consider that  
 terrible expression of St. *James*, chap. ii. 10, 11.  
 where the apostle informs BELIEVERS, that if they  
 are guilty but of that one sin, *accepting of persons*,  
 they are transgressors of the law in general; which  
 he farther urgeth by this assertion, *He that keepeth  
 all, and offendeth in one, is guilty of all*; not with the  
 guilt of every particular sin, but in respect of the  
 authority of the lawgiver, according to that, *Cursed  
 is every one that continueth not in every thing commanded  
 by the law*. Seeing therefore God in regeneration  
 does write his law in our hearts, which does semi-  
 nally contain the exercise of all holy actions; so that  
 there cannot be an instance of any godly duty, of  
 which God does not infuse a principle in us: and  
 seeing glorification will be universal of soul and  
 body, in all parts and faculties, how necessary is  
 it that sanctification should be universal? Take  
 heed therefore, that the works of grace in thee be  
 not abortive or monstrous, wanting essential and  
 necessary parts. Let not thy ship be drowned by  
 any one leak.

From this alarming quotation it appears, holy  
 Calvinist ministers saw, an hundred years ago,  
 that if believers did not secure St. *James's* justifica-  
 tion by universal obedience, *the works of grace in them  
 would prove abortive*, their hopes would perish, their  
 ship would *sink*, though by *one leak* only; and conse-  
 quently they would be condemned, as *Hymeneus* and  
*Philetus*, in the day of judgment. And let none  
 complain of the legality of this doctrine; for our  
 Lord himself fully preached it, when he said, *Except  
 a man forsake ALL, he cannot be my disciple*.

Take another instance of a later date. The Rev.  
 Mr. *Haweis*, that has distinguished himself among  
 the zealous ministers of our church, who have  
 espoused

espoused Calvin's sentiments, speaks thus to the point, in his comment on *Matt. x:1 37*. ' Not an idle word passes without the divine notice, but we must answer for it at the day of judgment. With what circumspection then should we keep the door of our lips, when our eternal state is to be determined thereby, and our words must all be produced at the bar of God, as evidences of our justification or condemnation, and sentence proceed accordingly' If this is not maintaining, at least, *indirectly*, justification by work in the day of judgment, my reason fails, and I can no more understand how two and two make four.

The Reverend Mr. *Madan* himself, if I am not mistaken, grants what I contend for, in the very title of the sermon quoted in my motto, *Justification BY WORKS reconciled with Justification BY FAITH, &c.* but much more in the following passages, which I extract from it.

" In every person that is justified three particulars concur, (1) *The MERITORIOUS CAUSE of our justification, which is Christ.* (2) *The INSTRUMENTAL CAUSE, which is FAITH*—and then the justification in the text" (*Ye see now that by works a man is JUSTIFIED, and not by faith only* " which is to be understood in a DECLARATIVE sense — no person being justified in Paul's sense, that is not also in the sense of our text," i. e. in the sense of St. *James*.)

The truth contained in this last sentence, is the rampart of practical christianity; and the ground of the Minutes. If that judicious divine considers what his proposition necessarily implies. I am persuaded, he will not only side with Mr. *Wesley* against the *Benedictine Monk*, but also give up Calvinism, with which his assertion is no more reconcilable, than it is with what you, Sir, call "a winter," (and I beg leave to name AN ANTINOMIAN) "state," in which we are supposed to be justified in  
*Paul's*

Paul's sense, while we fly in the face of St. James by the commission of adultery and murder.

The same eminent Minister asks in the same discourse, "What does it profit, though a man say he hath *faith and have not works? Can faith save him?*" (Can faith save David in Uriah's bed? Can it save Solomon worshipping *Asharoth*, perhaps with his seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines; "i. e. *Such a faith as has not works, as is not productive of the fruit of the Spirit in the HEART and LIFE? Is this saving faith? CERTAINLY NOT; for such a faith wants the evidence of its being true and real, and nothing but true faith can save.—If my faith does not produce the proper fruits, it is no better than the DEVIL'S faith.—We have no scripture testimony of our being any other than the DEVIL'S CHILDREN, unless we evidence the truth of our faith, by shewing forth the genuine fruits and works of faith. All this the apostle confirms, v. 20, 26. Faith without works is dead.—As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*"

This excellent passage is the demolition of Calvinism, and the very doctrine of the Minutes, if you except the article about *the word merit*, which I do not read in our pious author's sermon. However, p. 12, I find the word *deserve* in the following important question: "*How can we not only escape the penalty threatened, but DESERVE the REWARDS promised under the law?*" And as I do not understand "splitting a hair," I think that *the two expressions, meriting and deserving, when duly considered, are not as wide as east is from west*: And I fear, that that if Mr. Wesley is an heretic, for using the former at a conference among friends; the Rev. Mr. Madam is not quite orthodox, for using the latter in St. Vedast's church before friends and enemies. But as this question may turn upon some nicety of the *English language*, which, as a foreigner, I have not yet observed, I drop it to obviate an objection.

You.

You will perhaps say, honored Sir, that all the above-mentioned authors, being sound Calvinists, hold *your* election, and that you could produce passages out of their writings, absolutely irreconcilable with the preceding quotations. To this I reply, that a volume of such passages, instead of invalidating the doctrine which I maintain, would only prove, that the peculiarities of *Calvin* are *absolutely irreconcilable* with *St. James's* undefiled religion; and that even the most judicious Calvinists cannot make their scheme hang tolerably together.

I hope, honored Sir, the preceding pages will convince my readers, that you have spoken unwarily, when you have asserted, that *there is not one of the many hundred Puritan divines, but what abhorred my doctrine as full of rottenness*: And that the author of *GOLIAH SLAIN* has been rather too forward in CHALLENGING me to *fix upon one Protestant minister, either Puritan or of the Church of England, who to the reign of Charles the Second held the doctrine I have been contending for.*

Your challenge, dear Sir, provokes me to imitation: And I conclude this letter by challenging you, in my turn, to fix upon a man who will expose your mistakes more bluntly, and yet esteem and love you more cordially, than,

Honored and dear Sir,

Your most obedient Servant in *St. James's*  
pure religion,

J. F.

LETTER



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## L E T T E R IV.

TO RICHARD HILL, Esq;

Honored and dear Sir,

**B**EFORE I take my leave of the Puritan writers, you will permit me to make some observations upon the fault you find with my quoting one of them. Page 94, you introduce a *judicious, worthy, reverend friend*, charging me with having most NOTORIOUSLY PERVERTED the quotation which I produced out of *Flavel*, (Vind. p. 46); and you stamp with your approbation, his exclamation on the subject, *Could you have expected such DISINGENUITY from Madeley!*

Now, dear Sir, full of *disingenuity* as you suppose me to be, I can yet act with *frankness*. And to convince you of it, I publicly stand to my quotation, and charge your worthy friend with—What shall I call it?—A gross mistake. My quotation I had from that judicious Puritan divine *D. Williams*, who, far from *notoriously perverting* the sense of the ministers that drew up *Flavel's* preface, has weakened it, by leaving out some excellent Anti-Crispian sentences. Permit me to punish your friend for his hasty charge, by laying the whole passage before my readers; reminding them, that only the sentences enclosed in crochets, [     ] are quoted in the Vindication.

A body of seven eminent divines, all friends, it seems, to *Dr. Crisp*, but enemies to his *antinomian dotages*,

obstacles, charitably endeavour to apologize for him, at the same time that they recommend *Flavel's Treatise on mental errors* in general, and on *Antinomianism* in particular, where *Dr. Crisp* is opposed by name. Having mentioned two similar propositions of his, viz. [*' Salvation is not the end of any thing we do—And, We are to act from life, not for life,*'] they bear this full testimony against the absurdity which they contain.

‘ [It were in effect to abandon human nature,] and to sin against a very fundamental law of our creation, not to intend our own felicity: It were to make our first and most deeply fundamental duty, in one great essential branch of it, our sin, viz. To take the Lord for our God: For to take him for our God, most essentially includes our taking him for our *supreme good*, which we all know is included in the notion of the *last end*: It were to make it unlawful to strive against all sin, and particularly against sinful aversion from God, wherein lies the very death of the soul, or the sum of it's misery; or to strive after perfect conformity to God in holiness, and the full fruition of him, wherein the soul's final blessedness does principally consist.’

‘ [It were to teach us to violate the great precepts of the gospel,] *Repent that your sins may be blotted out—Strive to enter in at the strait gate,—work out your own salvation with fear and trembling—* To obliterate the patterns and precedents set before us in the gospel, *We have believed in Jesus Christ, THAT we might be justified—I keep under my body lest I should be cast away—THAT thou may'st save thyself, and them that hear thee.*’

‘ [It were to suppose us bound to do more for the salvation of others, than our own'] salvation. We are required to save others with fear, plucking them out of the fire. Nay, we were not (by this rule strictly understood) so much as to pray for our own salvation, which is a doing somewhat; when,

‘ no

\* no doubt, we are to pray for the success of the gospel, to this purpose, on behalf of other men.'

' [ 'I were to make all the threatenings of eternal death, and promises of eternal life, we find in the gospel of our blessed Lord, useless, as motives to shun the one, and obtain the other : ] For they can be motives no way, but as the escaping the former, and the attainment of the other, have with us the place and consideration of an end.'

' [ It makes what is mentioned in the scripture, as the character and commendation of the most eminent saints, a fault, ] as of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; that *they fought the better and heavenly country*; and plainly declared that they did so; which necessarily implies their making it their end.'

Now, honored Sir, it lies upon you to prove, that because Mr. *Williams* and I have not produced all that makes against you, we are guilty of a *most notorious perversion* \* of the quotation. If you affirm, that

\* Want of argument in a bad cause, which people will defend AT ALL EVENTS, (if I may use the words which Mr. *Hill* too hastily lends me in his book, but justly claims as his own in the errata) obliges them to fly to personal charges. *Zelus arma ministrat*. Their Diana is in danger: they must raise dust, and make a noise, to divert the attention of the reader from the point: Who knows but she may escape in the hurry? At the end of the above-mentioned quotation, I had added three lines, to throw some light upon the last clause, which *D. Williams* had cut off too short. As I did not enclose them in commas, it never entered into my mind, that any body would charge me with presenting them as a quotation, nor do they in the least *misrepresent*, much less *pervert* the sense of the authors. Upon this, however, my Opponent brings me to a trial. But if, at p. 97. he lets me escape, without condemning me point blank for FORGING QUOTATIONS; he is not so mild, p. 27. I have observed in the Second Check, p. 46. that Mr. *Wesley* in his Minutes guards the foundation of the gospel by the two clauses, where he mentions the exclusion of the *merit of works* in point of salvation, and *believing in Christ*. The two clauses I present in one point of view, in the very words of the Minutes, although not in the

that the *perversion* I am charged with, consists in saying, that the divines who wrote *Flavel's* preface, were

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were

the *sense* of the verb *believing*, thus: "Not by the merit of works," but by "believing in Christ." My Opponent is pleased here to overlook the commas, which show, that I produce two different places of the Minutes; and then he improves his own oversight thus. "FORGERIES of this kind have long passed for no crime with Mr. Wesley. I did not think you would have followed him in these ungenerous artifices, which must unavoidably sink the writer in our esteem. But I am sorry to say, Sir, that this is not the only stratagem of this sort, which you have made use of: Instance, your bringing in Mr. Whitefield as a maintainer of a second justification by works, &c. &c." — The bare mention of such groundless accusations being a sufficient refutation of them, I shall close this note by observing, that the pure religion which I vindicate, is too well grounded on scripture, to need the support, either of the pretended forgeries which my opponent contrives for me, or of the blackening charges, which he is forced to produce for want of better arguments.

In almost any other but my pious opponent, I should think, that this severity proceeded from palpable dissimulation; but my respect for him does not permit me to entertain such a thought. I urge for his excuse, the inconceivable strength of prejudice, and the fatal tendency of his favourite system. Yes, O Calvinism, upon thee I charge the mistakes of my worthy antagonist! If at any time his benevolent temper is sowered, thy leaven has done it. It is by thy powerful influence that he discovers a *forgery*, where there is not so much as the printer's omission of a comma to countenance his discovery. — It is through the mists which thou raisest, that he sees in the works of one of our most correct authors, nothing but a regular series of inconsistencies, a wheel of contradiction running round and round again. — Thou lendest him thy deceitful glass, when he looks at my *Second Check*, and cries out, "Base and shocking slander! — Acrimonious, bitter, and low sneers! Horrid misrepresentations, and notorious perversions! Abominable beyond all the rest! A wretched spirit of low sarcasm and slanderous banter runs through the whole book," which contains "more than an hundred close pages, as totally void of scriptural argument, as they are replete with calumny, gross perversions, equivocations," — and a "doctrine full of rottenness and deadly poison, the spurious offspring of the man of sin, begotten out of the scarlet whore."

I beg my readers would not think the worse of my opponent's candor, on account of these severe charges. In one sense they appear to me very moderate; For who can wonder, that a good, mistaken

were shocked at Dr. Crisp's doctrine, when they nevertheless apologize for his person: I reply, that their apology confirms my assertion, even more than their arguments; for they say, "It is likely the *Doctor meant,*" just what Mr. Wesley does, "that *we should not work FOR life ONLY; without aiming at working FROM life ALSO. For it is not tolerable charity to suppose, that one would deliberately say, that salvation is not the end of any good work we do, or that we are not to work for life, in the rigid sense of the words.*" And they profess their hopes, that, *upon consideration, he would presently unsay it, (namely, the absurd proposition, We are not to work for life) being calmly reasoned with."*

Thus hoped those pious divines concerning Dr. Crisp; and thus I once hoped also concerning his admirers. But, alas! experience has damped my hope; for, when they have been "calmly reasoned with," they have shewn themselves much more ready to *unsay* what they had said right, than what the doctor had said wrong: and to this day they publicly defend those *antinomian dotages*, which the author's of *Flavel's* preface could not believe Dr. Crisp could possibly mean, even when he preached and wrote them.

You

mistaken men, who find *Calvin's* everlasting, absolute, and unconditional reprobation in the mild oracles of the God of love, should find FORGERY, vile slander, calumny, horrid perversions, deadly poison, &c. in my sharp Checks; and perpetual contradictions in Mr. Wesley's works? Are we not treated with remarkable kindness, in comparison of the merciful God whom we serve? Undoubtedly: for neither of us is yet so much as indirectly charged with contriving in cool blood the murder of one man; much less with forming from all eternity the evangelical plan to save unconditionally by free grace the little flock of the elect, and damn unconditionally by free wrath the immense herd of the reprobates; and with spending near six thousand years in bringing about an irresistible decree, that the one shall absolutely go to heaven, let them do what they please to be damned; and that the other shall absolutely go to hell, and burn there to all eternity, let them do what they can to be saved.

You express, honored Sir, a most extraordinary wish, p. 94. Speaking of *Flavel's Discourse upon mental errors*, which is also called *A blow at the root*, you say, "I should have been glad, could I have transcribed the whole discourse." But as you have not done it, I shall give a *blow at the root* of your system, by presenting you with an extract of the second Appendix, which is a pretty large Treatise full against ANTI-NOMIANISM.

'The design of the following sheets,' says that great Puritan divine, in the discourse you should be glad wholly to transcribe, 'is to free the grace of God from the dangerous errors, which fight against it under its own colours; to prevent the seduction of some that stagger; and to vindicate my own doctrine. The scriptures, foreseeing there would arise such a sort of men in the church, as would wax wanton against Christ, and turn his grace into lasciviousness, has not only pre cautioned us in general to beware of such opinions, as corrupt the doctrine of free grace: *Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid:* but has marked those very opinions by which it would be abused, and made abundant provision against them. As namely, (1) All vilifying expressions of God's holy law, *R. m. vii.* (2) All opinions inclining men to the neglect of the duties of obedience, under pretence of free grace and liberty by Christ, *Jam. ii. Matt. xxv.* (3) All opinions neglecting sanctification as the evidence of justification, which is the principal scope of *St. John's* first epistle.'

'Notwithstanding, such is the wickedness of some, and weakness of others, that in all ages (especially in the last and present) men have notoriously corrupted the doctrine of free grace, to the great reproach of Christ, scandal of the world, and hardening of the enemies of the reformation. Behold (says *Conzen* the Jesuit) the fruit of protestantism, and their gospel preaching.'

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‘ The gospel makes sin more odious than the law did, and discovers the punishment of it in a more dreadful manner. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation? It shews us our encouragements to holiness greater than ever; and yet corrupt nature will still abuse it. The more luscious the food is, the more men are apt to surfeit upon it.’

‘ This perversion of free grace is justly chargeable both upon wicked and good men. Wicked men corrupt it designedly, that by entitling God to their sins, they might sin the more quietly. So the Nicolaitans, and school of Simon; the Gnostics, in the very dawning of gospel light; and he that reads the preface of learned Mr. Gataker’s book, will find that some Antinomians of our days are not much behind the vilest of them. One of them cries out, *Away with the law, it cuts off a man’s legs, and then bids him walk.* Another says, *That If a man, by the Spirit, know himself to be in a state of grace, though he commit murder, † God sees no sin in him.*’

‘ But others ‡ there are, whose judgments are unhappily tainted with those loose doctrines; yet being, in the main, godly persons; they dare not take liberty to sin, or live in the neglect of known duties, though their principles too much incline that way: but though they dare not, others will, who imbibe corrupt notions from them; and the renowned piety of the authors will be no antidote against the danger: but make the poison operate the more powerfully, by receiving it in such a vehicle. Now it is highly probable these men were charmed into these opinions upon such accounts as these.’

(1) ‘ Some

† This is, I fear, the very doctrine of your Fourth Letter, where an impenitent murderer is represented as *complete in Christ*, &c.

‡ Here my worthy opponent is exactly described by *Flavel*.

(1) ° Some of them might have felt in themselves  
 ° the anguish of a perplexed conscience under sin,  
 ° and not being able to live under the terrors of the  
 ° law, might too hastily snatch at such doctrines which  
 ° promise them relief and ease. (2) Others have  
 ° been induced to espouse these opinions, from the  
 ° excess of their zeal against the errors of the papists.  
 ° (3) Others have been sucked into those quick-sands  
 ° of antinomian errors, by fathering their own fan-  
 ° cies upon the Holy Spirit. (4) And it is not un-  
 ° like, but a comparative weakness of mind, meeting  
 ° with a fervent zeal for Christ, may induce others  
 ° to espouse such *taking* and *plausible*, though *perni-*  
 ° *cious* doctrines.

° Let all good men beware of such opinions and  
 ° expressions, as give a handle to wicked men to  
 ° abuse the grace of God; which haply the author  
 ° himself dares not do, and may strongly hope others  
 ° may not do: But if the principle will yield it, it  
 ° is in vain to think corrupt nature will not catch  
 ° at it, and make a vile use, and dangerous improve-  
 ° ment of it!

° For example: If such a principle as this be af-  
 ° fected before the world, *That men need not fear, that*  
 ° *any, or all the sins they commit, shall do them any hurt* \*;  
 ° let the author warn and caution readers, [as the an-  
 ° tinomian || author of that expression has done] not  
 ° to abuse this doctrine, it is to no purpose: the  
 ° doctrine itself is full of dangerous consequents, and  
 ° wicked men have the best skill to draw them forth  
 ° to cherish their lusts. That which the author  
 ° might design for the relief of the distressed, quickly

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turns

\* My worthy opponent has publicly advanced, not only that  
 sin, even adultery and murder, does not hurt the pleasant chil-  
 dren, but that it even works for their good.

|| Dr. Crisp, who was publicly called an *Antinomian* by the Pu-  
 ritans, and his tenets *loose, corrupt, and pernicious doctrines; anti-*  
*nomian dogmas, &c.*



' turns into poison in the bowels of the wicked.  
 ' Nor can we excuse it, by saying, any gospel truth  
 ' may be thus abused ; for this is *none* of that num-  
 ' ber, but a principle that gives offence to the godly,  
 ' and encouragement to the ungodly. And so much  
 ' as to the rise and occasion of antinomian errors.'

II. ' Let us view next, some of the chief errors of  
 ' Antinomians. (1) Some make justification to be an  
 ' eternal act of God, and affirm, that the elect were  
 ' justified before the world had a being—Others, that  
 ' they were justified at the time of Christ's death:  
 ' With these Dr. *Crisp* harmonizes. (2) That justi-  
 ' fication by faith is no more but a manifestation to  
 ' us, of what was done before we had a being. (3)  
 ' That men ought not to question whether they  
 ' believe or no. *Saltm. on free grace*, p. 92, 95.  
 ' (4) That believers are not bound to mourn for sin,  
 ' because it was pardoned before it was committed;  
 ' and pardoned sin is no sin. *Eaton's honeycomb of jus-*  
 ' *tification*. p. 4:6. (5) That God sees no sin in be-  
 ' lievers, whatsoever sins they commit. (6) That  
 ' God is not angry with the elect, and that to say he  
 ' smites them for their sins, is an injurious reflection  
 ' upon his justice. This is avouched generally in  
 ' all their writings. (7) That by God's laying our  
 ' iniquities upon Christ, he became as compleatly  
 ' sinful as we, and we as compleatly righteous as  
 ' Christ. Dr. *Crisp*. p. 270: (8) That no sin can  
 ' do believers any hurt, nor must they do any duty  
 ' for their own salvation. (9) That the new cove-  
 ' nant is not made properly with us, but with Christ  
 ' for us ; and that this covenant is all of it a promise,  
 ' having NO CONDITION on our part. They do ab-  
 ' solutely deny, that faith, repentance, and obedi-  
 ' ence are CONDITIONS in the new covenant; but  
 ' say, they are no conditions on our side, but  
 ' Christ's, and that he repented, believed, and  
 ' obeyed for us. *Saltmarsh on free grace*, p. 126.  
 ' (10) They

‘ (10) They speak very slightly of trying ourselves  
 ‘ by marks and signs of grace; *Saltmarsh* calls it a  
 ‘ low, carnal way; but the *New-England Antinomi-*  
 ‘ *ans* call it a fundamental error, to make sanctifica-  
 ‘ tion an evidence of justification: they say, that  
 ‘ the darker our sanctification is, the brighter is our  
 ‘ justification.’

‘ I look upon such doctrines to be of a very dan-  
 ‘ gerous nature, and their malignity and contagion  
 ‘ would certainly spread much farther than it does,  
 ‘ had not God provided two powerful antidotes.

‘ (1) The scope and current of the scriptures.  
 ‘ They speak of the elect as *children of wrath* during  
 ‘ their unregenerate state. They frequently discover  
 ‘ God’s anger, and tells us, his castigatory rods are  
 ‘ laid upon them for their sins. They represent sin  
 ‘ as the greatest evil; *most opposite to the glory of*  
 ‘ *God and good of his saints.* They call the saints to  
 ‘ mourn for their sins, &c. They put the people of  
 ‘ God to the trial of their interest in Christ, by  
 ‘ signs and marks from the divers branches of sanc-  
 ‘ tification. They infer *duties* from *priviledges*;  
 ‘ and therefore the antinomian dialect is a *wild note*,  
 ‘ which the generality of serious christians do easily  
 ‘ distinguish from the scripture language.’

‘ (2) The experience and practice of the saints  
 ‘ greatly secure us from the spreading malignity of  
 ‘ Antinomianism. They acknowledge, that before  
 ‘ their conversion they were equal in sin and misery  
 ‘ with the vilest wretches in the world. They fear  
 ‘ nothing more than sin. They are not only sensible  
 ‘ that God sees sin in them, but they admire his pati-  
 ‘ ence, that they are not consumed for it. They  
 ‘ urge his commands and threatenings, as well as pro-  
 ‘ mises, upon their own hearts, to promote sanctifi-  
 ‘ cation. They excite themselves to duty and watch-  
 ‘ fulness against sin. They encourage themselves by  
 ‘ the *rewards* of obedience, knowing their *labour*  
 ‘ is

' is not vain in the Lord. And he that shall tell  
 ' them; " their sips can do them no hurt, or their  
 ' duties no good," speaks to them not only as a bar-  
 ' barian, but in such a language as their souls *abhor*.  
 ' The zeal and love of Christ being kindled in their  
 ' souls, they have no patience to hear such doctrines  
 ' as so greatly derogate from his glory, under a pre-  
 ' tence of honouring and exalting him. It wounds  
 ' and grieves their very hearts to see the world har-  
 ' dened in their prejudices against reformation, and  
 ' a gap opened to all licentiousness. But notwith-  
 ' standing this double antidote, we find, by daily  
 ' experience, such doctrines too much obtaining in  
 ' the professing world. *Tantum religio suadere malo-  
 ' rum.*'

' For my own part, he that searcheth my heart is  
 ' witness, I would rather chuse to have my right  
 ' hand wither, and my tongue rot within my mouth,  
 ' than to speak one word, or write one line, to cloud  
 ' the free grace of God. Let it arise and shine in its  
 ' meridian glory. None owes more to it, or ex-  
 ' pects more from it than I do; and what I write in  
 ' this controversy is to vindicate it from those opini-  
 ' ons, which, under pretence of exalting it, do  
 ' really militate against it.'

Then follows a prolix refutation of the above-  
 mentioned antinomian errors, most of which neces-  
 sarily flow from your second and fourth letters.  
 When our pious author attacks them as a disciple of  
 St. James, he carries all before him: but when he  
 encounters them as an admirer of Calvin, his hands  
 hang down, *Amebeck* prevails, and a shrewd logici-  
 an could, without any magical power, force him to  
 confess, that most of the errors which he so justly  
 opposes, are the natural consequences of *uncondition-  
 al* election, *particular* redemption, *irresistible* grace,  
*Calvinian* imputation of righteousness to impenitent  
 murderers, the *infallible* perseverance of believers,  
 who defile their fathers beds, and, in a word, Sal-  
 vation.

vation *finished* for all the "pleasant children," who go on forwardly in the way of their own heart. Thus it would appear that *Calvinism* is "the *apostor* *Judeos*, to use Mr. Flavel's words, the radical and prolific error from which most of the rest are spawned."

He concludes his Anti-Crispian treatise by the following truly christian paragraph: 'I call the searcher of hearts to witness, that I have not intermeddled with this controversy of Antinomianism, out of any delight I take in polemic studies, or an unpeaceable contradicting humour, but out of pure zeal for the glory and truths of God, for the vindication and defence whereof, I have been necessarily engaged therein. And having discharged my duty thus far, I now resolve to return, if God permit me, to my much more agreeable studies; still maintaining my christian charity for those whom I oppose; not doubting but I shall meet those in heaven, from whom I am forced in lesser things to dissent upon earth.'

While my heart is warmed by the love which breathes through the last words of Mr. *Flavel's* book, permit me to tell you, that I cordially adopt them with respect to dear Mr. *Shirley* and yourself, hoping that if you think yourself obliged "to cut off all intercourse and friendship with me" upon earth, on account of what you are pleased to call my *disingenuity* and *gross perversions*, you will gladly ascribe to the Lamb of God a common salvation truly finished in heaven, together with,

Honored and dear Sir,

Your most obedient Servant in the pure  
gospel of St. *James*,

J. F.

LETTER

## L E T T E R V.

TO RICHARD HELL, Esq;

Honored and dear Sir,

I HAVE hitherto endeavoured to shew, that the exploded doctrine of a second justification by works, [*i. e.* by the evidence or instrumentality of works,] in the day of judgment, is scriptural, consonant to the doctrine of our Church, and directly or indirectly maintained, as by yourself, so by all Anti-Crispian Puritan divines, whenever they regard St. James's holy doctrine more than Calvin's peculiar opinions. I shall now answer a most important question, which you propose about it, p. 149. You introduce it by these words:

"You cannot suppose that when Mr. Shirley said, *Blessed be God, neither Mr. Wesley, nor any of his preachers (Mr. Oliver excepted) hold a SECOND JUSTIFICATION BY WORKS*, he intended to exclude good works in an evidential sense." Indeed, Sir, I DID suppose it; nor can I to this moment conceive, how Mr. Shirley could lean towards Calvinism, if he were settled in St. James's doctrine of justification by the evidence of works. You proceed:

"Neither Mr. Shirley, nor I, nor any Calvinist that I ever heard of, deny that a sinner is declaratively justified by works, both here and at the day of judgment." You astonish me, honored Sir: Why then do you, at the end of this very paragraph,

graph, find fault with me for saying, that IT WILL BE ABSURD in a man, set on the left hand as a REBELLIOUS SUBJECT of our heavenly King, to plead the works of Christ, when his own works are called for, as the only evidences according to which he must be justified or condemned? Why do you cry out, in the fifth letter of your *Review*, "*O shocking to tell! Horresco referens,*" &c.—Why do so many Calvinists shudder with horror, because I have represented our Lord as condemning by the evidence of works, [agreeably to his own express doctrine, *Matt. xxv.*] a practical Antinomian, a canting apostate, who had no good works to be *declaratively justified* by in the day of judgment? Why do you maintain, that when *David* committed adultery and murder, he was *justified from all things, his sins past, present, and to come, were FOR EVER and for ever cancelled*? And why do you (p. 70) call me a *snake that bites the Calvinist ministers*, because I have exposed the Antinomianism of those preachers, who, setting aside Christ's doctrine of justification by the evidence of works in the last day, give thousands to understand, that they shall then be abundantly justified by *righteousness imputed in Calvin's way, and by nothing else*? You go on:

"Therefore, I say, if you utterly disclaim all human works, as the *procuring, meritorious cause* of justification, what need was there of addressing Mr. *Skirley* as you have done? Yea, what need was there of your making this point a matter of controversy at all? We are quite agreed, both as to the expression, and as to the meaning of it."

Are we indeed quite agreed, both as to the expression of a second justification by works in the day of judgment, and as to the meaning of it, to which I once more set my seal, viz. that we shall be justified, *not by the merit, but by the evidence of works*. What a pity

pity is it, then, dear Sir, that you did not find this out, till you came to the 149th page of your book! It would probably have saved you the trouble of writing it, and me the thankless office of exposing it.

However, it is but right I should requite your candid concession, by answering your important question: "*What need was there of making this point, (of justification by the evidence of works in the day of judgment) a matter of controversy at all?*" I will ingenuously tell you: I wanted an immoveable point to fix my engine upon, in order to throw down your great Diana, and pull up by the roots the immense tree of antinomian knowledge. And now you have so fully and repeatedly granted me the firm point which I desired; permit me, honored Sir, to throw myself at your feet, to return you thanks, and tell you, that you are the happy prisoner of the truth which I vindicate.

"What do you mean?"—What you little expect, dear Sir, and what I think you cannot possibly avoid. Yes, whether you will or no, I must serve a friendly warrant, and "young ignorance" arrests you in the name of *English Logic*, to make you publicly subscribe to the Anti-Crispian propositions, which your *Benedictine* monk has rashly traduced.—"I will never do it: I am ready to offer myself among the foremost of those true protestants, who could have burned against the doctrine of a second justification by works."—Well then, honored Sir, you shall go, not to the stake near *Baliol College*, but to the ground and pillar of truth: and that you may not make a needless resistance, I humbly presume to bind you before all the candid and judicious Calvinists in *England*, with the following NECESSARY consequences of a capital doctrine, which, you tell us, "*was never denied either by Mr. Shirley, or yourself, or any Calvinist you ever heard of.*"

If we are "*justified by works, i. e. by the evidence of works, both here and at the day of judgment,*" it follows,

lows, (1) That Mr. Wesley's doctrine with respect to man's faithfulness in good works is true; and that, if a man (*Judas* for instance) is not faithful in the unrighteous Mammon, God will not give him the true riches of glory. Though he should once have had faith enough to leave all and follow Christ, his shipwrecked faith, sunk by bad works, will profit him nothing: he shall as surely be condemned by the evidence of his unfaithfulness, as ever an highwayman was condemned, upon the fullest evidence, that he had robbed upon the highway.

(2) The second proposition of the Minutes also stands now upon an immovable basis. Every believer till he comes to glory works FOR, as well as FROM life, since his WORKS will appear as witnesses FOR or against him at the day of judgment, and LIFE or death will be the certain consequence of their deposition.

(3) The third proposition of the Minutes now shines like the meridian sun after an eclipse. Nothing is more false than the maxim, that a man is to do nothing in order to justification, either at conversion, or in the last day. For the work of faith undoubtedly takes place in the day of conversion, agreeably to those words of St. Paul, *We have believed THAT we might be justified.* And, if even Calvinists grant, that a sinner is "justified by the evidence of works both here and at the day of judgment," it is indubitable, that he must provide that evidence, as there is opportunity, and that, if even an apostle provides it not, he shall, notwithstanding his election, increase the number of those practical Antinomians, whose condemnation I have described, 2 Check, p. 97. Hence appears also the error couched under the unguarded proposition which you advance, (p. 12.) "In the act of justification we affirm, good works have no place:" for the good work of faith has the important place of an INSTRUMENT, when we are justified at  
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our



our conversion; and the *good work* of love will have the place of the chief witness, by whose deposition we shall be justified in the great day.

You indeed produce the words of our Church, *The thief did believe ONLY, and the merciful God justified him*; but they make against you, for they intimate, that the work of faith was previous to his justification. And that he was not saved *without works*, strictly speaking, although he was saved without the merit of works, I prove by your quotation from Bishop Cowper, *Justifying faith, whereby we are saved, CANNOT be without works*; and by these words of St. James, and the Rev. Mr. Madan, adapted to the present case. Could "*faith save him? i. e. such a faith as*" HATH NOT WORKS, *as is not productive of the fruits of the Spirit in the heart and life? Is this saving faith? Certainly not.*" When our Church says, that he went to heaven *without works*, she means, without the outward works which pharisees trust to, such as receiving the sacraments, going to the temple, and giving alms; or she grossly contradicts St. James, Bishop Cowper, Mr. Madan, and herself. Therefore, notwithstanding all you have advanced, even the penitent thief's experience, who, as our church says, *should have LOST his salvation*, and consequently his justification and election, if he had lived, and not regarded the works of faith, is "a formidable rampart" for, not against St. James's undefiled religion. Again,

(3) When, in the *Review of the whole affair*, Mr. Wesley says, that *he who now believes in Christ with a loving, obedient heart, is now accepted of God*; what does he say more than you, and your favourite Bishop, who tell us, (p. 12.) *That justifying faith, whereby we are saved, CANNOT be without good works; for faith worketh by love?* Does it not evidently follow, from your own, as well as Mr. Wesley's proposition, that while the incestuous Corinthian defiled his

his father's bed, his living, justifying faith had degenerated into a dead, devilish faith? Agreeably to that evangelically-legal proposition of Mr. Madan, *If my faith does not produce the proper fruits, it is no better than the devil's faith:* Whence it necessarily follows, that the devil's faith is justifying, or that the *Corinthian* backslider was condemned; and consequently, that Calvinism and Antinomianism, the grand pillars of defiled religion, are two broken reeds.

(5) It is now an indubitable truth, that a *sincere heathen*, who never heard the name of Christ, and nevertheless *feareth God, and worketh righteousness according to his light, is accepted of him:* for, if he perseveres, he will be justified in the last day by the *evidence* of his works of righteousness; and he is now justified by the *instrumentality* of his faith in the light of his dispensation; for this light, when we receive it by faith, (if we may believe those excellent mystics \* *St. John* and *St. Paul*) is *Christ*

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\* The word *mysticism*, like the word *enthusiasm*, may be used in a good or a bad sense. I am no more ashamed of the true *mystics*, i. e. those who fathom the deep mysteries of inward religion; than of the true *enthusiasts*, those who are really inspired by the grace and love of God. When I said, that *Solomon* was the great Jewish *mystic*, I took the word *mystic* in a good sense: If all are *mystics* who preach *Christ in us*, and *Christ the light of the world*, (as you insinuate in your five letters) I affirm, that *St. Paul* and *St. John* are two of the greatest mystics in the world. And when I intimated, that *Solomon's Song* is a *mystical* book, and that the Rev. Mr. *Romaine* has given us a *mystical*, and in general edifying explanation of the 107th Psalm; I no more insulted those good men, than our Church reflects upon our Lord, when she says, that "matrimony represents to us the *mystical* union between Christ and his Church." If Mr. *Wesley* has spoken against *mysticism*, it is undoubtedly against that which is wild and unscriptural; for he has shewn his approbation of rational and scriptural *mysticism*, by publishing very edifying extracts from the works of the great *German* and *English* mystics, *Kempis* and Mr. *Law*. Permit me to recommend to you, what Mr. *Hartley*,  
a cler-

in us, the hope of glory. *John* i. 5, 9. *Col.* i. 27. *Eph.* iii. 17. and v. 14.

(6) Nor can you now justly refuse to clear Mr. *Wesley* of the charge of *heresy*, because he says, *Salvation is not by the merit of works, but by works as a condition*; for in the present case, where is the difference between the word *EVIDENCE*, which you use, with Dr. *Guise*, Mr. *Wesley*, and me; and the word *CONDITION*, which Mr. *Wesley* uses, with our Church, and most of the Puritan divines? An example will inforce my appeal to your candor: You sit upon the bench as a magistrate, and a prisoner stands at the bar: You say to him, "You are charged with calumny, forgery, and gross per-  
" versions; but you shall be acquitted, on CONDI-  
" TION that some of your reputable neighbours give  
" you a good character." A lawyer checks you for using the treasonable word *CONDITION*, insisting you must say, that the prisoner shall be acquitted, or condemned, according to the *EVIDENCE* which his creditable neighbours will give of his good behaviour. You turn to the bar, and say, "Prisoner, did you understand me?" Yes, Sir, replies he, as well as the gentleman who stops your honor. That is enough, say you, let us not *dispute about words*: I am persuaded, the court understands, we all mean, that the acquittal or condemnation of the prisoner will entirely turn upon the deposition of proper witnesses.

(7) With regard to the word *Merit*, I hope our controversy is at an end: for Mr. *Wesley* and I, or  
to

a clergyman whom you have quoted with honor, has written in defence of the mystics, and to remind you, that abroad, those who go a little deeper into inward christianity than the generality of their neighbours, are called *pietists*, or *mystics*, as commonly as they are called *methodists* in *England*. On the preceding accounts I hope, that when Mr. *Wesley* or Mr. *Shirley* shall again condemn mysticism, they will particularly observe, that it is only unscriptural and irrational mysticism which they explode.

to speak your own language, *Old Mordecai and young Ignorance*, freely grant what Bishop Hopkins and you assert, (Review, p. 42.) namely, that “ In all PRO-  
 “ PER merit there must be an equivalence, or at least  
 “ a proportion of worth between the work and the  
 “ reward;—and that the obedience we perform  
 “ cannot be said, without a grand IMPROPRIETY, to  
 “ MERIT any reward from God.” But, you must  
 also grant us, that if our Lord, speaking after the  
 manner of men, by a grand † *catachresis*, a very con-  
 descending *impropriety*, frequently uses the word  
*meriting* or *deserving*, we may without heresy use it  
 after him.

Should you ask me, how I can prove that our  
 Lord ever used it; I reply, that if he used again and  
 again words answering to it as face answers to face  
 in a glass, it is just as if he had used the *English* word  
*merit*, or Mr. Wesley’s Latin word *meritum*: and to  
 prove that he did so, I appeal to the first Greek lex-  
 icon you will meet with. I suppose it is that of  
*Schrevelius*, because it is the most common all *Europe*-  
 over. Look for *mereor* [to merit or deserve] and you  
 will find that the correspondent Greek is,  $\mu\iota\sigma\theta\omega\sigma$   
 $\phi\epsilon\rho\epsilon\iota\upsilon$ , literally, *to carry a reward*, and  $\alpha\lambda\iota\omega\sigma$   $\epsilon\upsilon\omega\alpha\iota$ , *to be*  
*worthy*:  $\alpha\lambda\iota\omega\sigma$  answers to *meritum*, *merit*; and  $\alpha\lambda\iota\omega\sigma$   $\tau\omicron$   
*merito*, *deservedly*, or *according to one’s merit*.

To prove therefore that our Lord did not scruple  
 to use the word *merit* in an IMPROPER sense, I need  
 only prove that he did not scruple applying the  
 words  $\mu\iota\sigma\theta\omega\sigma$  and  $\alpha\lambda\iota\omega\sigma$ , to man. Take some instan-  
 ces of both.

(1) Mat. xx. 8. Give them  $\tau\omicron\upsilon\alpha\ \mu\iota\sigma\theta\omega\sigma$ , their hire, or  
 reward. And again, Mat. v. 12. Your reward  
 ( $\mu\iota\sigma\theta\omega\sigma$ ) is great in heaven, &c. Hence the apostle  
 calls God ( $\mu\iota\sigma\theta\omega\sigma\ \rho\omega\delta\omicron\upsilon\sigma$ ) the Rewarder; and Moses is  
 F 3 said.

† A figure of speech which consists in using a word in an im-  
 proper sense: as when unfaithful ministers are called *dogs that*  
*sanctify bark*.

said to *look to* (*μισθαποδοσια*) *the recompence of reward*, Heb. xi. 6, 26. And the word *μισθαποδοσια*, the bestowing of a reward, as much answers to the word *μισθοφορια*, the carrying of a reward, or *merit*, as the relative words which necessarily suppose one another. He therefore, that uses the former without scruple, makes himself quite ridiculous before unprejudiced people, if he scruples using the latter; much more if he thinks the doing it is a *dreadful heresy*.

(2) As for the other word (*αξιος*) *meriting, deserving, or worthy*, it is as scriptural as any word in the bible. You find it used both in a proper, and in an improper sense in the following scriptures: (1) In a *proper sense*. *The labourer is WORTHY OF, OF MERITS his hire*, Luke x. 7. *WORTHY OF DESERVING stripes*, Luke xii. 48. *WORTHY OF, OF MERITING death*, Acts xxi. 11. *They have shed the blood of thy saints, and thou hast given them blood to drink, for they ARE WORTHY: That is, they MERIT, they DESERVE it*. Rev. xvi. 6. (2) In an *improper sense*, which you represent as heretical. *They shall walk with me in white, for they ARE WORTHY*, Rev. iii. 4. *Enquire who is WORTHY*, Mat. x. 11. *WORTHY of me*, Mat. x. 37. *They that were bidden WERE not WORTHY*, Mat. xxii. 8. *WORTHY to escape these things*, Luke xxi. 36. *WORTHY to obtain that world*, Luke xx. 35. &c. &c.

In all these passages the original word is *αξιος*, *worthy, meriting, or deserving*. Bishop Cowper therefore, whom you quote in your five letters, p. 26, spoke with uncommon rashness when he said, "No man led by the Spirit of Jesus, did ever use this word of MERIT," [i. e. *αξιος ειραι*] "as applying it to man; it is the proud speech of Antichrist. Search the scriptures, and ye shall see that none of all those who speak by divine inspiration, did ever use it: Yea, the godly fathers always abhorred it." What! The sacred writers "never used the word *αξιος ειραι*!"  
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“The godly fathers always abhorred” an expression which the Holy Ghost so frequently makes use of! Christ himself “spoke by the proud spirit of Antichrist!” When I see such camels obtruded upon the Church, and swallowed down by thousands as glib truth, I am cut to the heart, and in a pang of sorrow and shame groan, “From such divinity, good Lord, deliver me, my worthy opponent, and all real protestants!”

To this Mr. Rowland Hill answers before-hand, in his *Friendly Remarks*, p. 28. This is “a bad criticism upon the word ἀξίος, which MORE PROPERLY means MEET or FIT.” Now, Sir, to your bare assertion I oppose, (1) All the Greek lexicons. (2) The testimony of *Beza*, Calvin’s successor, who, speaking of the word ἀξίος, says, “It is PROPERLY used of that which is of equal weight and importance.” (3) The testimony of *Leigh*, another learned Calvinist, who, in his *Critica Sacra*, says, “ἀξίος has its name from ἀγισσιν, a trahendo: quæ præponderant, lancem attrahunt; and is a metaphor taken from balances, when one scale doth counterpoize another.”—And speaking of ἀξίω, a word derived from ἀξίος, he adds, “It signifieth, when either reward or punishment is given according to the portion of MERIT.” And this he proves by 1 Tim. v. 17. *Let the elders that rule well, be counted WORTHY of double honor—For the scripture says, the labourer is WORTHY of his reward.*

When I see learned Calvinists forced to grant all we contend for, I wish that no Protestant may any longer expose his prejudice, in denying what is absolutely undeniable, viz. That Christ and his apostles assert, some men *merit* or *are worthy* of rewards. Taking care, therefore, never to fix to those scriptural words the idea of PROPER *worthiness*, or *merit* of CONDIGNITY, let us no longer fight against Christ, by saying, they are in *no sense* worthy, whom

whom Christ himself *makes, accounts, and calls* WORTHY; yea, whom he gloriously *rewards* as such.

(8) As for this modest proposition of the Minutes, *It is a doubt, if God justifies any one that never did fear him and work righteousness*, it stands now ESTABLISHED by your concessions, not as matter of doubt, but as matter of fact, if we speak of justification in the hour of conversion, or in the day of judgment. For with respect to the former, you justly observe, (p. 12) that the *faith whereby we are saved*, and consequently justified, CANNOT be without good works: And with regard to the latter, you say, p. 149, *What need is there of making our justification by the evidence of works in the day of judgment, a matter of controversy at all? We are quite agreed, that a sinner is declaratively justified by WORKS.* Now, honored Sir, if he is justified by works, it is undoubtedly by works of RIGHTEOUSNESS; unless it could be proved, that he may justified by works of UNRIGHTEOUSNESS, by adultery and murder.

(9) It is likewise evident from your own concessions, that *talking of a justified or a sanctified state, without paying a due regard to good works, tends to mislead men*, and actually misleads thousands. If *Judas*, for instance, when he neglected good works, which are the *mark* of our first, and the *instrument* of our second justification, *trusted to what was done in the moment in which he was effectually called to leave all and follow Jesus*, he grossly deceived himself: Or, if he depended upon imputed righteousness, when he neglected personal holiness, he built upon the loosest sand.

The seasonableness of Mr. *Wesley's* caution in this respect, will strike you, honored Sir, if you cast your eyes upon the numbers of fallen believers, who once, like obedient *Judas*, left all to follow Christ; but, having resumed their besetting sin, like the apostolic traitor, now sell their Saviour and election, perhaps

perhaps for a less valuable consideration than he did. However they were once in a justified and sanctified state, and Mr. Hill tells them, that *in the act of justification good works have no place*, and insinuates, that adulterers and murderers may be in the *winter season* of a sanctified state; therefore they reasonably conclude, that they are still justified and sanctified. Thus they live, and if God does not send them an honest *Nathan*, or if when he comes, they stop their ears, and cry out, *Heresy!* thus like *Judas* they will die.

(10) With respect to the last clause of the Minutes, you must acknowledge, that *we are every moment pleasing or displeasing to God, according to the whole of our inward tempers and outward behaviour*: Or, to clothe Mr. Wesley's doctrine in words in which you agree with me; you must confess, that, "As we may die every hour and every moment, we are liable to be every hour and every moment justified, or condemned, by the evidence of our \* works." This is evident, if you consider St. Paul's words, *Without faith it is impossible to PLEASE God*; and if you do not recant what you say, Review, p. 12. *Justifying faith* [the faith by which we please God] *CANNOT be without good works*. You must therefore prove, that adultery, treachery, and murder are *good works*, and by that means openly plead for *Belial, Baal, and Beelzebub*; or you must grant, that when *David* committed those crimes, he had not *justifying faith*, and consequently did not please God. And the moment you grant this, you set your seal to the last proposition of the Minutes, which you esteem most contrary, and I entirely agreeable, to sound doctrine.

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\* The reader is once more desired to remember, that by works we understand not only the works of the tongue and hands, *i. e.* words and actions; but also, and chiefly, the works of the mind and heart, that is, thoughts, desires, and tempers.



Having thus, by the help of your own concessions, once more removed the rock of offence, under which you try to crush that reasonable rampart of St. *James's* undefiled religion, which we call *the Minutes*, I leave you to consider how much Mr. *Wesley* has been misunderstood, and how much the truth of the gospel has been set at nought. I am,

Honored and dear Sir,

Your's, &c.

J. F.

LETTER.

## L E T T E R VI.

TO RICHARD HILL, Esq;

Honored and dear Sir,

WHILE my engine, common sense, stands yet firm upon the point of our justification by the evidence of works, which you have so fully granted me, permit me to level it a moment at the basis of the main pillars which support Antinomianism and Calvinism.

(1) If righteous *Lot* had died when he repeated the crimes of drunkenness and incest, his justification would have been turned into condemnation; According to *St. Paul's* plain rule, *If thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision*: For neither the holy God, nor any virtuous man, can possibly justify a sinner upon the evidence of *drunkenness* and *incest*.

(2) If old *Solomon*, doting upon heathenish young women, and led away by them into abominable idolatries, had died before he was brought again to repentance; he could never have seen the kingdom of God:—He should have perished in his sin: Unless *Geneva* logic can make it appear, in direct opposition to the word of God, that the *impenitent* shall not perish, and that *idolators* shall inherit the kingdom of God, *Luke* xiii. 3. and *1 Cor.* vi. 9.

(3) If the incestuous *Corinthian* had been cut off while he defiled his father's bed, the justification granted

granted him at his first conversion, far from saving him in the day of judgment, would have aggravated his condemnation, and caused him to be counted *worthy of a much sorer punishment*, than if he never had *known the way of righteousness*—never been justified: Unless you can prove, that Christ would have acquitted him upon the horrid evidence of apostasy and incest, which appears to me as difficult a task, as to prove that Christ and Belial are one and the same filthy God.

(4) If *David* and *Bathsheba* had been run through by *Uriah*, as *Zimri* and *Cosbi* were by *Phineas*; and if they had died in their flagrant wickedness; no previous justification, no calvinian imputation of righteousness, would have secured their justification in the last day. For, upon the evidence of adultery and premeditated murder, they would infallibly have been condemned; according to those awful words of our Lord, *I come quickly, to give EVERY MAN* (here is no exception for the *pleasant children*) *according as HIS work shall be*, not according as MY work has been. *Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may enter in through the gates into the city; for without are dogs, WHOREMONGERS, and MURDERERS.* Rev. xxii. 12, &c.

Should you say, honored Sir, It is provided in the decree of absolute election, that adulterers, who once walked with God, shall not die till they have repented; (1) I demand proof that there ever was such a decree. In the second Psalm, indeed, I read about God's DECREE respecting Christ and mankind; but it is the very reverse of Calvin's decree, for it implies *general redemption and conditional election.* *I will declare the DECREE: Thou art my Son; I will give thee the HEATHEN for thine inheritance, and the UTMOST parts of the earth for thy possession.—Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way.*

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(2) This evasion is founded upon a most absurd supposition, which sows pillows to the arms of backsliders and apostates, by promising them immortality if they persevere in sin. But setting aside the absurdity of supposing, that old *Solomon*, for example, might have kept himself alive till now by assiduously worshipping *Ashtaroath*; or, which is the same, that he might have put off death by putting off repentance, because he could not die till he had repented: I ask, where is this strange gospel written? Certainly not in the old testament; for God asks there with indignation, *When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, SHALL HE LIVE? No: in his sin that he has sinned SHALL HE DIE.* Ezek. xviii. 24. Much less in the new, where Christ protests, that he will *spue lukewarm believers out of his mouth*, and that *every branch in him which bears not fruit, shall be taken away, or cut off*: An awful threatening this, which was executed even upon one of the twelve apostles; for our Lord himself says, *Those that thou GAVEST me I have kept, and none of THEM is LOST BUT Judas, who fell finally, since he died in the very act of self-murder, and is particularly called the son of perdition.*

But granting you, that lest *Lot, David, and Solomon* should be condemned by works in the day of judgment, they were to be immortal till they repented and did their first works; this very supposition indicates, that till they repented they were sons of PERDITION, according to that solemn declaration of Truth manifest in the flesh, *Except ye repent, ye shall all PERISH.*

As if you were aware of this difficulty, p. 149, you have recourse to a noted distinction in *Geneva logic*, by which you hope to secure your favourite doctrines, as well as fond *Rachel* once secured her favourite teraphim. You say, "that though a sinner" (*David* for instance, or *Solomon*) "be justified IN

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THE SIGHT OF GOD by *Christ alone, he is declaratively justified by works both here and at the day of judgment.*"

Now, honored Sir, this necessarily implies, that though *David* in *Uriah's* bed, and *Solomon* at the shrine of *Ashtaroth*, are justified in the sight of God by *Christ's* chastity and piety imputed to them; yet, before men, and before the Judge of quick and dead, they are justified by the evidence of their own chastity and piety. This distinction, one of the main supports of Calvinism, is big with absurdities; for if it is just, it follows,

(1) That while God says of *Solomon*, worshipping the goddesses of the *Zidonians*, he is still a true believer, *he is justified from all things*; *Christ* says, *By his fruit ye know him*; he is an impenitent, unjustified idolator; and *St. James*, siding with his Master, says roundly, that *Solomon's faith*, being now *without works, is a dead, unjustifying faith*, by which, as well as by his bad works, he is condemned already. Now, Sir, it remains, that you should give up antinomian Calvinism, or tell us who is grossly mistaken, God or *Christ*: for upon your scheme, God says of an impenitent idolator, who once believed in him, "He is fully justified by the perfect law of liberty;" and *Christ* says, "He is fully condemned by the same law;" and reason dictates, that both parts of a full contradiction cannot be true.

Do not say, honored Sir, that, upon the calvinian plan, the Father and the Son never contradict one another in the matter of a sinner's justification; for if the Father justifies by the imputation of an external righteousness, which constitutes a sinner righteous while he commits all sorts of crimes; and if the Son, on the other hand, condemns a sinner for his *words*, much more for the commission of adultery, idolatry, and murder; their sentence must be as frequently different, as a believer acts or speaks  
contrary

contrary to the law of liberty. For Christ, being *the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever*, cannot justify, he must condemn *now*, as well as *in the day of judgment*, every man who now acts or speaks wickedly.

Should you attempt to account for the Father's imaginary justification of an impenitent idolator, by bringing in *Calvin's* decrees, and saying, that God reckoned *Solomon* a converted man at the shrine of *Ashtaroth*, because he had absolutely decreed to give him restoring grace: I reply, that supposing such decrees are not imaginary, is it not absurd to say, God reckons that cold is heat, and confounds January with July, because he has decreed that summer shall follow winter? Therefore which way soever you turn, absurdities or impieties stare you in the face.

(2) The unreasonableness of Calvinism will appear to you more glaring still, if you suppose a moment that *David* died in *Uriah's* bed. For then, according to *Dr. Crisp's* justification by the imputation of Christ's chastity, he must have gone straight to heaven; and, according to our Lord's condemnation, by the evidence of personal adultery, he must have gone straight to hell. Thus, by the help of *Geneva* logic, so sure as the royal adulterer might have died before *Nathan* stirred him up to repentance, I can demonstrate, that *David* might have been saved and damned, in heaven and in hell at the same time.

(3) Your distinction insinuates, that there will be two days of judgment; one to try us secretly BEFORE GOD, by imputed sin and imputed righteousness; and the other, to try us publicly *before men and angels*, by personal sin and personal righteousness: A new doctrine this, which every christian is bound to reject, not only because the scripture is silent about it, but because it fixes a shocking duplicity of conduct upon God; for it represents him, first, as

absolutely saving or damning the children of men, according to his own capricious imputation of Christ's righteousness, or of Adam's sin; and then, as being desirous to make a show of justice *before men and angels*, by pretending to justify or condemn people according to their works, when in fact, he has already justified or condemned them without the least respect to their works; for say Bishop Cowper and Mr. Hill, *In the act of justification, good works have no place*: and, indeed, how should they, if free grace and free wrath have unalterably cast the lot of all, before the foundation of the world—or in other terms, if *finished* salvation and *finished* damnation have the stamp of God, as well as that of Calvin?

(4) According to your imaginary distinction, Christ, as King of Saints, frequently condemns, for inherent wickedness, those whom he justifies, as a priest, by imputed righteousness; and so, to the disgrace of his wisdom, he publicly recants, as a Judge, the sentence of compleat justification, which he privately passes as a God. Permit me, honored Sir, to enforce this observation by the example of *Judas*, or any other apostate. I hope nobody will charge me with blasphemy, for saying, that our Lord called *Judas* with the same *sincerity*, with which he called his other disciples. Heaven forbid, that any christian should suppose, the Lamb of God called *Iscaiot* to get him into the pit of perdition, as a fowler does an unhappy bird which he wants to get into a decoy. *Judas* readily answered the call, and undoubtedly *believed in Christ*, as well as the rest of the apostles: for St. *John* says, *This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory, and his disciples, of whom Judas was one, believed in him*. His faith was true, so far as it went; for he was one of the *little flock* to whom it was God's good pleasure to give the kingdom, Luke xii. 32. Our Lord pronounced him *blessed* with the rest of his

his disciples, *Mat. xiii. 16.* and conditionally promised him one of the twelve apostolic thrones in his glory, *Mat. xix. 28.*

If you say, that "he was *always* a traitor and an hypocrite," you run into endless difficulties; for, (1) You make Christ countenance, by his example, all bishops, who knowingly ordain wicked men; all patrons, who give them livings; and all kings, who prefer ungodly men to high dignities in the church. (2) You suppose, that Christ, who would not receive an occasional testimony from an evil spirit, not only sent a *devil* to preach and baptize in his name, but at his return encouraged him in his horrid dissimulation, by bidding him *rejoice that his name was written in heaven.* (3) You believe, that the *faithful and true Witness, in whose mouth no guile was ever found,* gave this absurd, hypocritical charge to a goat, an arch-hypocrite, a *devil*: "Behold, I send you forth as a SHEEP in the midst of wolves; but fear not, the hairs of your head are all numbered. A sparrow shall not fall to the ground without YOUR FATHER, and ye are of more value than many sparrows. Do not premeditate, it shall be given you what you shall speak: for it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you."

When our Lord spoke thus to *Judas,* he was a *sheep,* i. e. he heard Christ's voice, and followed him. But, alas! he was afterward taken by the bright shining of silver and gold, as *David* was by the striking beauty of *Uriah's* wife. And when he had admitted the base temptation, our Lord, with the honesty of a Master, and tenderness of a Saviour, said, *Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?* He has let the tempter into his heart. This severe, though indirect reproof reclaimed *Judas* for a time; as a similar rebuke checked *Peter* on another occasion. Nor was it probably till near the end of our Lord's

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ministry,



ministry, that he began to be unfaithful in the manner of unrighteousness: and even then Christ kindly warned, without exposing him.

Some, indeed, think that our Lord was partial to Peter; but I do not see it: for with equal love and faithfulness he warned all his disciples of their approaching fall, and mentioned the peculiar circumstances of Judas's and Peter's apostasy. — "Ay, but he prayed for Peter, that his faith might not fail." — And is this a proof, that he never prayed for Judas? That he always excepted him, when he prayed for his disciples, and that he would have excepted him, if he had been alive when he interceded for all his murderers? — "However, he looked at Peter, to cover him with penitential shame." — Nay, he did more than this for Judas: for he pointed at him, first indirectly, and then directly, to bring him to a sense of his crime. But supposing our Lord had not at all endeavoured to stop him in his dreadful career: Would this have been a proof of his reprobating partiality? Is it not said, that the Lord weigheth the spirits? As such, did he not see that Judas offended of malicious wickedness, and calm deliberation: and that Peter would offend merely through fear and surprize? Supposing therefore he had made a difference between them, would it be right to account for it from calvinian election and reprobation, when that difference might so naturally be accounted for from the different state of their hearts, and nature of their falls? Was it not highly agreeable to the notions we have of justice, and the declarations we read in the scripture, that our Lord should reprobate or give up Judas, when he saw him immoveably fixed in his apostasy, and found that the last hour of his day of grace was now expired?

From all these circumstances, I hope I may conclude, that Judas was not always an hypocrite; that he

he may be properly ranked among apostates, that is, among those who truly *fall from God*, and therefore were once truly in him; and that our Lord spoke no untruth, when he called the Spirit of God the Spirit of *Judas's* Father, without making any difference between him and his other disciples.

If you ask, how he fell? I reply, that overlooking an important part of our Lord's pastoral charge to him, *He that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved*, he dallied with worldly temptations, till the evil spirit, which was gone out of him, entered in again, with seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and took possession of his heart, which was once swept from reigning sin, and garnished with the graces which adorn the christian in his infant-state. Thus, like *Hymeneus, Philetus, Demas*, and all other apostates, by putting away a good conscience, concerning faith he made shipwreck, and evidenced the truth of God's declaration, *When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his sin that he hath sinned shall he die.*

"Nay, *Judas* kept his master's money, and was a thief; therefore he was always an hypocrite, an absolute reprobate."

To show the weakness of this objection, I need only retort it thus. *David* set his heart upon his neighbour's wife, as *Judas* did upon his master's money, and like him betrayed innocent blood; therefore he was always an hypocrite, an absolute reprobate. If the inference is just in one case, it is undoubtedly so in the other.

"But *David* repented, and did his first works."

I thank my objector for this important concession. Did *Judas* perish? It was then because he did not do his first works, though he repented. And is *David* saved? It is because he not only repented, but did also his first works; or, to use your own expres-

expressions, because he recovered "justifying faith, which cannot be without good works." Thus, when he had recovered justifying faith *before God*, he could again be justified by the evidence of works, both *before his fellow mortals*, and that God who *judges the world in righteousness*, and who sentences every man according to *his own works*, and not merely according to works done by *another* near 6000 or 1800 years before they were born. Thus the royal adulterer, who died a justified, chaste penitent, can, through the merits of Christ, stand before the throne in a better and more substantial righteousness, than the fantastic robe in which you imagine he was cloathed, when his eyes were full of adultery and his hands full of blood — an airy, loose, flimsy robe this, cut out at *Geneva and Dort*, not at *Jerusalem or Antioch* — a wretched contrivance, the chief use of which is to cover the iron-clay feet of the Calvinian Diana, and afford a safe asylum, a decent canopy to the *pleasant children*, while they debauch their neighbours wives, and hypocritally murder them out of the way.

O ye good men, how long will you inadvertently represent our God, who is *glorious in holiness*, as the pandar of vice? and Christ's immaculate righteousness, as the unseemly cloak of such *wickedness as is not so much as named among the Gentiles*? O that salvation from this evil were given unto *Israel out of Sion*! O that the Lord would deliver his people from this preposterous error! O that the blast of divine indignation, and the sighs of thousands of good men, lighting at once on the great image, might tear away the loose robe of righteousness, which *Calvin* put upon her "in a winter season!" Then could all the world read the mark of the beast and the fiend, which she wears on her naked breast: *Free adultery, free murder, free incest, any length of sin for the pleasant children,*  
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*the little flock of the elect: Free wrath, free vengeance, free damnation for the immense herd of the reprobates!*

But to return to *Judas*, the first of all christian apostates: Waving the consideration of his justification in his infancy, I observe, that as he had once true faith, he undoubtedly *believed to righteousness*, and consequently *it was imputed to him for righteousness*. Now, if this means, that God put upon him a loose robe of righteousness, which for ever screened him from condemnation, and under which he could conceal a bag of stolen money, as easily as you suppose *David* hid the ewe-lamb which he conveyed away from *Uriah's* pasture; it follows, upon your scheme, that *justification being one single immutable act, in which works have no place, Judas is still compleatly justified before God*, by Calvinian imputation of righteousness; although christians have hitherto believed, works have so important a place in justification, that the Apostate is no less *condemned before God*, than before men and angels, by his avarice and treason.

Let those who can split a hair, as easily as an eagle can find her passage between east and west, take the chosen apostle, who did not make his election sure by the works of faith; and let them split him as under: So shall happy *Iscaiot*, the dear elected child of God, wrapped in imputed righteousness, and carried by everlasting love, infallibly go to heaven *without works*, in consequence of his calvinian justification *before God*: While poor reprobated *Judas*, for accomplishing God's decree, shall infallibly go to his own place, in consequence of his condemnation by the evidence of wicked works.

Thus, honored Sir, by fixing my plain engine, *common sense*, upon the immoveable point which you have granted me, *i. e.* *St. James's* justification by works, I hope I have not only removed the rock of offence

offence from off Mr. *Wesley's* Anti-Crispian propo-  
 sitions, but heaved also your great Diana, and her  
 brother Apollo, (I mean unconditional *Election*, and  
 absolute *Reprobation*) from off the basis of orthodoxy,  
 on which you suppose they stand firm as the pillars  
 of heaven. May the God of pure, impartial love,  
 whom they have so long indirectly traduced, as a  
 God of blind dotage to hundreds, and implacable  
 wrath to millions of his creatures, in the very same  
 circumstances—the God whom those *gracious* doc-  
 trines have represented as fond *Eli*, and grim *Apol-  
 lyon*—may He, I say, arise, for his name's sake,  
 and touch the *Geneva* Colossus with his own omni-  
 potent finger: So shall it in a moment fall from the  
 amazing height of reverence to which *Calvin*, the  
 Synod of *Dort*, and *Elisha Coles* have raised it: and  
 it's undeceived votaries shall perceive, they had no  
 more reason to call *Geneva* impositions *the doctrines of  
 grace*, than good *Aaron* and the mistaken Israelites, to  
 give the tremendous name of *Jehovah* to the ridicu-  
 lous idol, which they had devoutly set up in the  
 absence of legal *Moses*: So, giving glory to God,  
 they shall confess, that the robe of their image, with  
 which some so officiously cover impenitent adulter-  
 ers and murderers, is no more like the true wedding  
 garment; than the imaginary appearances of armed  
 men in the clouds, are like the multitude of the  
 heavenly host.

While you try to defend this robe, and I to tear  
 it off the back of antinomian *Jezebel*, let us not neg-  
 lect *putting off the old man, putting on Christ Jesus*;  
 and *walking IN HIM* as *St. Paul*, or *WITH HIM* as  
*Enoch, arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, which is  
 the righteousness imparted to the saints, when Christ is  
 formed in their hearts by faith, and imputed to them so  
 long as they walk in their measure as he also walked.*  
 That notwithstanding our warm controversy, we  
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may walk in love with each other, and all the people  
of God, is the prayer of,

Honored and dear Sir,

Your obedient and devoted Servant  
in St. James's gospel,

JOHN FLETCHER.

LETTER

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## L E T T E R VII.

TO RICHARD HILL, Esq;

Honored and dear Sir,

THE fourth letter of your *Review* you produce, as " a FULL and PARTICULAR ANSWER " to what I have advanced against Dr. *Crisp's* scheme of *finished salvation*, and *finished damnation*. But, to my great surprize, you pass in profound silence over my strongest arguments. Had I been in your place, I would have paid some regard to my word, printed in capitals in my title-page: I would have tried to prove, that, upon the Doctor's scheme, St. *Paul* might, consistently with wisdom, exhort the *Philippians*, to *work out their* [finished] *salvation with fear and trembling*. And if I could not have made it appear, that our Lord has *finished* his work, as an interposing Mediator, a teaching Prophet, and a ruling King; I would either have given up the point, or endeavoured to shew, that he has finished it at least as a Priest.

But even this you could not do, without setting aside two important parts of his priestly office: for the same Jesus, who offered up himself as the true paschal Lamb, is now exalted at the right hand of God, to *bless* us as our Melchisedec, and *make intercession for us* as our Aaron, saying daily concerning a multitude of barren fig-trees in his vineyard, *Let them alone this year also, till I shall dig about them:*  
*And*

*And if they bear fruit well: And if not, then after that thou shalt cut them down.* Now if he daily carries on his own personal work of salvation, not only as a Prophet and a King, but also as a Mediator and a Priest; common sense dictates, that "*his personal work*" is no more finished than *our own*; and that the doctrine of *finished salvation* is founded upon a heap of palpable mistakes, if by that expression you mean any thing more than a *finished atonement*.

But, overlooking these insurmountable difficulties, you open your "FULL and PARTICULAR answer" by saying, p. 62, 63. "FINISHED SALVATION is the grand fortress, against which all your artillery is played, and at which your heavy bombs of bitter sneer and cutting sarcasm are thrown—Yet this very expression, in its full extent, I undertake to vindicate; and in so doing shall fly to the sword of the Spirit: and the Lord enabling me to wield it aright, I doubt not but I shall put to flight the armies of the aliens." Let us now see how you manage your sword, put us to flight, and establish finished salvation.

I. Page 63, "*When the Lord of Glory gave up the ghost, he cried, It is finished. And what was finished? Not merely his life; but THE WORK WHICH WAS GIVEN HIM TO DO. And what was this work, but the salvation of his people? One would have imagined, that the Lord's own use of this expression might have silenced every cavil.*"

The Lord's own use of this *contested* expression, *Finished salvation!* Pray, dear Sir, where does he use it? Certainly not in the two passages you quote, *I have finished the work thou gavest me to do* previously to my entering upon my passion: and, *It is finished:* that is, All the prophecies relative to what I was to do, teach, and suffer *before* my death, are accomplished. Those scriptures do not in the least refer to the work of *salvation* on our part; nor do they

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even take in the most important branches of *salvation's* work on Christ's part. To assert it, is to take a bold stride into Socinianism, and maintain, it was not needful to our salvation that Christ should *die*, and *rise again*. For when he said, *I have finished the work thou gavest me to do*, he was not yet entered upon his passion: nor had he *DIED* for our sins, much less was he yet *RISEN* for our justification, when he said upon the cross, *It is finished*. To suppose then, that salvation's work on Christ's part was *finished*, not only before his resurrection, but also before his death, is to set aside some of his most important works; in direct opposition to the scriptures, which testify, that he *DIED*, *the just for the unjust*; and affirm, that *if he is not RAISED*, *our faith is vain, we are yet in our sins*. Thus, Sir, you have so unhappily begun to "wield your sword," as to cut down, at the first stroke, the two grand articles of the christian faith, the *death* and *resurrection* of Jesus Christ.

II. Page 33, To mend the matter, you have recourse to the mysterious doctrine of the decrees; and because "*All events are present unto God, and were so from eternity to eternity*," you affirm, that "*The glorification of the elect is as much FINISHED as their predestination*." By the same rule of Geneva logic, I may say, that because God has decreed, the world *shall melt with fervent heat*, the general conflagration is as much finished as the deluge. Were ever more strange assertions obtruded upon mankind?

If this illustration does not convince you of your mistake, I turn the tables, and make your blood run cold with the dreadful counterpart of your own proposition. "*The DAMNATION of the NON-elect [born or unborn] is as much FINISHED as their predestination*." And are these the *good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people*? And is this the comfortable

portable gospel of free grace, which we are to *preach to every creature*? Alas! my dear Sir, you wield your sword so unskilfully, as absolutely to cut down all hopes and possibility of mercy for millions of your fellow-creatures; even for all the poor reprobates on the left side of the ship, who, "from eternity to eternity," were irresistibly enclosed in the net of *finished damnation*.

III. P. 63, To support your unscriptural assertion, you produce "Rom. viii. 29. *Whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*" Indeed, Sir, the apostle no more meant to insinuate by these words, that David was *justified*, and *glorified*, when he wallowed in the filth of adultery and murder; than that Judas was *condemned*, and *damned*, when he *left all to follow Christ*. He only lays before us an account of the method, which God follows in the eternal salvation of obedient, persevering believers; who are the persons that, as such, he *predestinated to life, according to his foreknowledge, and the counsel of his holy will*. These he *called*, but not these alone. When they *made their calling sure, by believing in the light of their dispensation, these he also justified*. And when they *made their justification sure, by adding to their faith virtue, &c. these he also glorified*: For the souls of departed saints are actually *glorified* in Abraham's bosom; and living saints are not only *called*, and *justified*, but also in part *glorified*; for, *by the Spirit of GLORY and of God, which rests upon them, they are changed into the divine image from GLORY to GLORY; yea, they are already ALL-GLORIOUS within*.

How much more reasonable and scriptural is this sense of the apostle's words, than that you fix upon them, by which you would make us believe, that, on the one hand, Solomon's *salvation* (including his *justification* and *glorification*) was *finished*, "in  
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*the full extent of the expression,*" when he worshipped the abomination of the Zidonians, and gloried in his shame: While, on the other hand, Demas's damnation was finished, when he was St. Paul's zealous companion in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ? O, Sir, have you not here also inadvertently used *the sword of the Spirit*, to oppose *the mind of the Spirit*, and make way for barefaced Antinomianism? You proceed.

IV. P. 63, "*The same apostle, in his epistle to the Ephesians, speaking to believers, addresses them as already (virtually) SEATED IN HEAVENLY PLACES IN CHRIST JESUS.*" Hence you infer, that their salvation was finished, "*in the full extent of the expression.*" But your conclusion is not just: for the apostle, instead of supposing their salvation finished, exhorts them *not to steal, not to be drunk with wine, and not to give place to the devil* by fornication, uncleanness, filthiness, or covetousness: *for this ye know, adds he, that no unclean person, &c. hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ:* So far is he from being "*already virtually seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.*"

What need is there of *darkening counsel by a word without knowledge?* By the dark word "*virtually?*" While the Ephesians *kept the faith*, did they not *set their affections on things above?* Were not their hearts in heaven with Christ, agreeably to our Lord's doctrine, *Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also?* And by a *lively faith, which is the substance of things hoped for*, did they not already share the glory of their exalted head? Will you still endeavour to persuade the world, that when David defiled his neighbour's bed, he was "*seated in heavenly places in Christ?*" Is it not evident, that these, and the like expressions of St. Paul, must not be understood of idle, antinomian speculations; but of such a real change, as our church mentions in the collect  
for

for Ascension-day? " Grant that as Christ ascended-  
 " into the heavens; so we may also in HEART and  
 " MIND thither ASCEND, and continually DWELL?"  
 Such powerful exertions of faith, hope, and love,  
 as are described in the 77th hymn of the Rev. Mr.  
*Madan's* collection?

By *faith* we are come  
 To our permanent home,  
 By *hope* we the rapture improve:  
 By *love* we still rise,  
 And look down on the skies—  
 For the heaven of heavens is *love*!

But this is not all: If the elect, whether they be drunk or sober, chaste or unclean, " are already " virtually seated in heavenly places in Christ," according to the doctrine of *finished salvation*; are not poor reprobates, whether they pray or curse, repent or sin, *already virtually seated in hellish places in the devil*, according to the doctrine of *finished damnation*? O Sir, when you use " the sword of the Spirit" to storm the New Jerusalem, and cut the way through law and gospel before an adulterer in *flagrante delicto*, that he may *virtually* [that is, I fear, comfortably and securely] *fit in heavenly places in Christ*, do you not dreadfully prostitute God's *holy word*? inadvertently fight the battle of the rankest Antinomians? and secure the foundation of Mr. *Sandiman's*, as well as Dr. *Crisp's* increasing errors? But you have an excuse ready:

V. P. 63, " Christ has purchased the Spirit, to " work mortification of sin, &c. in the hearts of " his children: and in this respect their sanctifica- " tion is really as much *finished* as their justifica- " tion." I reply, (1) If their *justification* by works is not *finished* before the day of judgment, as our Lord informs us Matt. xii. 37. your observation

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proves

proves just nothing. (2) The scriptures, in direct opposition to your scheme, declare, that the Spirit *strives with*, and consequently was purchased for ALL; those who *quench it*, and *sin against the Holy Ghost*, not excepted. Therefore, neither the sanctification, nor salvation of sinners, is absolutely secured by the *purchase* you mention. If it were, all the world would be saved. But, alas! many *deny the Lord that BOUGHT them*, and by *doing despite to the SPIRIT OF GRACE* purchased for them, *bring upon themselves SWIFT DESTRUCTION*, instead of *finished salvation*. Here then, the sword which you wield, flies again to pieces, by clashing with the real sword of the Spirit, brandished by St. Peter and St. Paul.

VI. P. 64, You bring in "The immutability of God's counsel confirmed by an oath," and add, "The will and testament is signed, sealed, and properly attested.—THE WHOLE AFFAIR IS FINISHED. There remains nothing to do but to take possession." I thank you, dear Sir, for this concession: Something then "remains to do:" We must at least "take possession;" and if we neglect doing it, farewell *finished salvation*: We shall as much fall short of the *heavenly*, as the Israelites, who perished in the wilderness, because they refused to take possession, fell short of the *earthly Canaan*.

Again, we grant, that God's "Will and testament is finished, and sealed by Christ's most precious blood;" and that "the everlasting covenant is ordered in all things, and sure:" But if part of that *will and covenant* runs thus: *You are saved by grace through FAITH—You are kept by the power of God through FAITH—If ye continue in the FAITH—FAITH without WORKS is dead—Wherefore WORK OUT your own salvation with fear and trembling—For him that sinneth, I will blot out of my book—*

If

*If ye walk contrary to me, I will walk contrary to you* — I will cut my staff, BEAUTY, asunder, that I may break my covenant which I have made with all the people, Zech. xi. 10. — And ye shall know my breach of promise, Numb. xiv. 34. I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord having SAVED the people out of the land of Egypt, afterwards DESTROYED them that BELIEVED NOT — Although through FAITH they kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest the destroyer should touch them; and did ALL drink the same spiritual drink (for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them; and that rock was CHRIST) — Now all these things happened to them for examples; and they are written for our admonition. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall: — If part of God's will and covenant, I say, runs thus; is it not absurd to suppose, that any man's salvation is finished, while he, not only does not comply with the gracious terms of God's "sure covenant," but notoriously incurs the dreadful threatenings recorded in his unalterable "will and testament." Here then, instead of "turning to flight the armies of the aliens," you have given us weapons to beat you out of the field. But you soon come back again to say:

VII. P. 64, "Certain it is, that the salvation of every soul given by the Father to the Son, in the eternal covenant of Redemption, is as firmly secured, as if those souls were already in glory." The certainty which you speak of, exists only in your own imagination. Judas was given by the Father to the Son; and yet Judas is lost. If the salvation of some people "was as firmly secured from the beginning, as if they had already been in glory," all the gospel ministers who have addressed them at any time as *children of wrath*, have been preachers of lies, and the Holy Ghost witnesses to an untruth, when he testifies to the unregenerate elect, that they  
are

are in danger of hell. But this is not all: upon your dangerous scheme the foundations are thrown down; man is no more in a state of trial; the day of judgment will be a mere farce; and the scriptures are a farrago of the most absurd cautions, and the most scandalous lies: for they perpetually speak to believers, as to persons in danger of *falling*, and *being cut off*, if they do not walk circumspectly; and they assert, that some *perish for whom Christ died*; and that others, by *denying the Lord who bought them*, bring upon themselves *swift destruction*.

But pray, Sir, when you tell us, “ The salvation  
“ of every soul given by the Father to the Son, in  
“ the eternal covenant of redemption, is as firmly  
“ secured, as if those souls were already in glory;” do you not see the cloven foot on which your doctrine stalks along? Permit me to uncover it a moment, and strike my readers with salutary dread, by holding forth the inseparable counterpart of your dangerous opinion. ‘ Certain it is, that the DAM-  
‘ NATION of every soul given by the Father to the  
‘ DEVIL, in the eternal covenant of REPROBATION, is  
‘ as firmly secured, as if those souls were already in  
‘ HELL.’ Shame on the man that first called such horrid tenets *the doctrines of GRACE*, and *the FREE gospel of Jesus Christ!* Confusion on the lying spirit, who broke out of the bottomless pit, thus to blaspheme the Father of mercies, delude good men, and sow the tares of Antinomianism! O, Sir, when you plead for such doctrines, instead of “ wielding aright  
“ the sword of the Spirit,” do you not plunge it in muddy, stygian waters, till it is covered with sordid rust, and reeks with poisonous error? But you pursue:

VIII. P. 64, “ To scruple the use of that expres-  
“ sion, FINISHED SALVATION, argues the greatest  
“ mistrust of the Mediator’s power, and casts the  
“ highest reflection upon his infinite wisdom, by  
“ supposing

" supposing that he did not count the cost before he  
 " began to build, and therefore that either his own  
 " personal work, or that which he does in his  
 " members [for they are only parts of the same sal-  
 " vation] is left UNFINISHED." If we do not ad-  
 mit your doctrine, honored Sir, it is not because we  
 mistrust the Mediator's " power," and have low  
 thoughts of his " wisdom:" but because we cannot  
 believe, that he will use his *power* in opposition to  
 his *wisdom* and *truth*, in taking the elect by main  
 force into heaven, as a strong man takes a sack of  
 corn into his granary; much less can we think, that  
 he will use his *omnipotence* in opposition to his *mercy*  
 and *justice*, by placing millions of his creatures in  
 such forcible circumstances, as *absolutely necessitate*  
 them to sin and be damned, according to the hor-  
 rible doctrine of *finished damnation*.

Nor do we suppose, that Christ unwisely forgot  
 to " count the cost." No: from the beginning he  
 knew, that some would abuse their liberty, and bury  
 their talent of good will, and gracious power to some  
 unto him, *that they might have more abundant life*. But  
 far from being disappointed, as we are when things  
 fall out contrary to our fond expectation, he declared  
 beforehand: *I have laboured in vain, yet surely my*  
*work is with my God*. Isa. xlix. 4. As if he had said,  
 ' If I cannot rejoice over the obstinate *neglecters of my*  
 ' *great salvation*; if my kindly dying for their sins,  
 ' excepting that *against the Holy Ghost*; and my sin-  
 ' cere calling upon them to turn and live, prove  
 ' useless to them, through their doing *despite to the*  
 ' *Spirit of grace*, and committing the *sin unto death*;  
 ' yet my work will not be lost with respect to my  
 ' *God*. For my impartial, redeeming love will ef-  
 ' fectually *stop every mouth*, and abundantly secure  
 ' the honor of all the divine perfections, which  
 ' would be dreadfully sullied, if by an absolute de-  
 ' cree, that *all should necessarily fall in Adam*, and  
 ' that



\* that millions should *never* have it in their power  
 \* to rise by Me, I had set my seal to the horrible  
 \* doctrine of *finished damnation.*'

Here then, in flourishing with your sword, you  
 have *beaten the air*, instead of *turning to flight the ar-*  
*mies of* — 'those who are not clear in the doctrine  
 \* of absolute predestination, whom you call' — "*ali-*  
 \* *ens*;" and in a quotation, p. 37, "absolutely  
 \* place among the numerous hosts of the Diabolo-  
 \* nians, who by the best of laws must die as elec-  
 \* tion-doubters."

IX. P. 64, "If any thing is left unfinished, Christ  
 would never have said, **HE THAT BELIEVETH**  
 " **HATH EVERLASTING LIFE:** it is already *BEGUN*  
 " in his soul." Well, if it is but *begun*, it is not yet  
 " **FINISHED.** But you add, "It is so certain in re-  
 " version, that nothing shall deprive him of it." —  
 True, *if he continues in the faith, and abides in Christ,*  
 hearing his voice, and following him: for who  
 shall pluck you out of the Redeemer's hand? —  
*Who shall harm you, if ye be followers of that which is*  
*good? But if the believer makes shipwreck of the faith,*  
*and ends in the flesh, after having begun in the Spirit,*  
*with all apostates he shall of the flesh reap destruction.*  
 Again,

*Everlasting life*, in the passage you quote, undoubt-  
 edly signifies a *title* to eternal bliss, as it appears from  
 these words of our Lord, *He that has left brethren,*  
*&c. for my sake, shall receive in the world to come* **ETER-**  
**NAL LIFE;** and from these words of St. Paul, *Ye*  
*have your fruit unto holiness, and the end* **EVERLAST-**  
**ING LIFE:** Now if we give over *following after ho-*  
*liness*, and do not continue to *leave all for Christ's sake,*  
 may we not forfeit our *title* to glory, as the servant  
 who had ten thousand talents forgiven him, forfeited  
 his pardon and the privilege annexed to it, by tak-  
 ing his fellow-servant by the throat, and arresting  
 him for an hundred pence? But supposing the ex-  
 pression:

pression EVERLASTING LIFE means, as you intimate, the life of God "already begun in the soul," agreeably to these scriptures, *The life that I live, I live by faith in the Son of God; for the just shall live by faith;* how can you infer, that the life of faith is inamissible? If you can believe, that every child quickened in the womb, grows up to be a *man*, because he has *human* life in embryo; I will grant, that no soul, quickened by the seed of grace, can miscarry, and that the seed of the word brings forth fruit to maturity in every sort of ground.

Should you reply, 'That the life of faith, or spiritual life, cannot be lost, because it is of an *eternal* nature;' I deny the consequence. Suppose I have lost an everlasting jewel, do I not quibble myself out of my invaluable property, if I say, "I have not lost it, for it is *everlasting*?" Did not Satan and Adam lose their spiritual life? Do not all apostates lose it also? Is there a damned soul but what has lost it twice; once in Adam, and the second time by his own personal transgressions? Are not all men who burn in fire unquenchable, trees *plucked up by the roots*; not because they *died in Adam*, but because they are *twice dead*: because they personally *destroyed themselves*, and when Christ gave them a degree of life, *would not come to him, that they might have it more abundantly*? Thus, by *resisting to the last the quickening beams of the Spirit that strove with them*, they *quenched him in themselves*, and became apostates. If Christ is the *light and the life of men*, and if he *enlightens every man that comes into the world*, are not all the damned, apostates? Have they not all fallen from some degree or other of quickening grace? Have they not all buried one or more talents? And is it not Satan's master-piece of policy, to make good men assure quickened sinners, that they cannot lose their life, no not by plunging into the whirlpools of adultery, murder, and incest?

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The ancient serpent deceived our first parents by saying, *Ye shall not surely die*, if ye eat of the forbidden fruit: But now, it seems, he may take his rest; for, O astonishing! gospel ministers do his work: they inadvertently deceive the very elect, and *overthrow the faith of some*, by making them the very same false promise.

I have already observed, that he who believeth is said to *have everlasting life*; not only because, while he *keeps the faith*, he has a title to glory, but because living faith always works by *love*, the grace that *never faileth*, the grace that lives and abides for ever, not indeed in this or that individual, during his state of probation; but in the kingdom of heaven, among the spirits of just men made perfect in love, and confirmed in glory. However, you still urge, "To say that *everlasting life* can be lost, is a contradiction in terms: if it is *everlasting*, how can it be forfeited or lost?" How! Just as the Jews forfeited *the land which God gave to Abraham for an everlasting possession*, Gen. xvii. 8. Just as the seed of Phineas lost *the EVERLASTING priesthood*, Numb. xxv. 13. Just as the Israelites *broke the EVERLASTING covenant*, Isai. xxiv. 5. Just as Hymeneus and Philetus forfeited the everlasting privileges of believers; that is, by *making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience*. Here, then, the edge of your own sword is again blunted, and the stroke given to the "aliens" easily parried, with the unbroken sword of the Spirit; I mean, the word of God illustrated by itself, and taken in connection with itself. However, you proceed:

X. P. 64, "The chosen vessel Paul tells his beloved Timothy, that God HATH saved us, and called us with an holy calling, &c." Hence you conclude, that if we are elect, our *salvation is finished*. I grant, that God HATH saved us from hell, placed us in a state of salvation begun, and called us  
with

with an holy calling, to work out our salvation with fear and trembling; under some dispensation of that " grace which was given us in Christ before the world began; according to God's own purpose," that Christ should be the Saviour of all men, especially of them that believe. But, alas! though many are thus called, yet but few are chosen; because few walk worthy of their high vocation, few make their calling and election sure. Numbers like David and Solomon, Demas and Saphira, believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away; some of whom, instead of rising again, draw back unto perdition.

Hence " the chosen vessel Paul" himself cries to halting believers, *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?* So far was he from imagining that the salvation of some, and the damnation of others, were " as firmly secured," as if the one " were already in heaven," and the others in hell! So little did he think, that to preach the gospel was to present the elect with nothing but the cup of *finished salvation*, even when they take away the wives and lives of their neighbours; and to drench the reprobates with the cup of *finished damnation*, even while they ask, seek, knock, and endeavour to make their *mock-calling* sure!

Certain it is, that if the apostle spoke of your *finished salvation*, when he said, *God hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling*, reprobated myriads may reasonably give over wrestling with almighty, everlasting wrath, and cry out, ' He hath *damned* us, and called us with an *unholy*, hypocritical, and ' lying calling, according to his own purpose and ' wrath, which was given us in Adam before the ' world began.' O Sir, by this frightful doctrine you give a desperate thrust to the hopes which millions entertain, that God is not yet absolutely merciless towards them, and that they may yet repent and be saved: but happily for them, it is with  
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the dagger of error, and not with " the sword of the Spirit."

XI. P. 65, " But farther. Believers are said to " *be saved by faith, and to be kept by the power of God " through faith unto salvation.* Now true faith and " salvation are here inseparably linked by the apostle." Inseparably linked! Pray, Sir, where is the inseparable link? I see it not. Nay, when I consult the apostles, on whose strained words you raise your argument, they rise with one consent against your doctrine. The one says: Some branches in Christ *were broken off because of unbelief; thou standest by faith; (undoubtedly by true faith) nevertheless, fear lest he also spare not thee. Behold his goodness towards thee, if thou continue in his goodness: Otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.* The other declares, *If after they [fallen believers, whom he does not call " pleasant," but cursed children] have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, [that is, through true faith] they are again entangled therein, and overcome; the latter end is worse with them than the beginning,* 2 Pet. ii. 20. compared with 2 Pet. i. 2, 8, 9, 10. Thus, Sir, St. Paul and St. Peter, whom you call to your assistance, agree to wrench your sword out of your own hand. But you soon take it up again:

XII. P. 61, " Christ being styled not only the " author, but the FINISHER of our faith, he must " be, consequently, the FINISHER of our SALVA- " TION." So he undoubtedly is, when we are *workers together with him,* that is, when, using the gracious talent of will and power, which he freely gives us, *we work out our own salvation with fear and trembling.* But if we bury that talent, do despite to the Spirit of grace, forget that we were washed from our sins, and wallow again in the mire of iniquity; Christ, the author of the faith which we destroy, profiteth us nothing: we are fallen from grace.

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Is it right to rock feeble believers in the cradle of carnal security, by telling them, they can never lose the faith; when, part of St. Paul's triumphant song, just before he received the crown of martyrdom, was, *I have kept the faith*? What wonder was it, that he should have kept, what even the carnal, incestuous Corinthian could *never lose*! When the scriptures mention, not only those who have kept the faith, but those who have made shipwreck of it and a good conscience—those who believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away—and those who one day believe, another day have little faith, and by and by have no faith;—are we not wise above what is written, and sow we not antinomian tares, when we give lukewarm Laodiceans to understand, they can never lose what, alas! they have already lost?

If Christ was to believe in his own blood for us, I grant, that the work of faith and salvation could not miscarry. But what ground have we to imagine that this is the case? Did the apostles charge Christ, or sinners, to believe, under pain of damnation? If believing is entirely the work of Christ, why did he marvel at the unbelief of the Jews? Did you ever marvel, at the sessions, that the constables in waiting did not act as magistrates? Did you ever send them to jail for not doing *your* work, as you suppose Christ sends unbelievers to hell for not believing, that is, upon your scheme, for not doing *his own work*?

While we readily grant you, that the talent of *faith*, like that of *industry*, is the free GIFT OF GOD, together with the time, opportunity, and power to use it; should you not grant us, that God treats us as rational, accountable creatures? That he does not use the gift of faith for us? That we may bury our talent of faith, and perish; as some bury their talent of industry, and starve? And that it is as absurd to

say, the faith of every individual in the church is inamissible, because Christ is the author and finisher of our faith; as to affirm, that no individual ear of corn can be blasted, because Christ [who upholds all things by the word of his power] is the unchangeable author and *finisher* of all our harvests?

Once more permit me, honored Sir, to hang the millstone of reprobation about the neck of your Diana, to cast her back with that cumbrous weight into the sea of error, from whose scum she, like another Venus, had her unnatural origin. If the salvation of the elect is *finished*, because 'Christ is the author and finisher of their faith;' it necessarily follows, that the *damnation* of the reprobates is also *finished*, because 'Christ is the author and finisher of their unbelief.' For he that absolutely withholds faith, causes unbelief, as effectually as he that absolutely withholds the light, causes darkness.

If, in direct opposition to the words of our Lord, *John* iii. 18. you say, with some Calvinists, that 'Christ does not damn men for *unbelief*, but for their *sins*;' I reply: This is mere trifling. If Christ absolutely refuses them power to believe in the light of their dispensation, how can they but sin? Does not St. Paul say, that *without faith it is impossible to please God*? Is not unbelief at the root of every sin? Did not even Adam eat the forbidden fruit through unbelief? And is not *this our only victory, even our faith*?

An illustration will, I hope, expose the emptiness of the pleas, which some urge in favour of *unconditional reprobation*, or, if you please, *non-election*. A mother conceives an unaccountable antipathy to her sucking child. She goes to the brink of a precipice, bends herself over it with the passive infant in her bosom, and, withdrawing her arms from under him, drops him upon the craggy side of a rock, and thus he rolls down from rock to rock, till he lies at the  
bottom

bottom beaten to pieces, a bloody instance of *finished destruction*. The judge asks the murderer, what she has to say in her own defence. The child was mine, replies she, and I have a right to do what I please with my own. Besides, I did neither throw him down, nor murder him: I only withdrew my arms from under him, and he fell of his own accord. In mystic Geneva, she is honorably acquitted; but in England, the executioner is ordered to rid the earth of the cruel monster. So may God give us commission to rid the church of your Diana, who teaches, that he, the *Father of mercies*, does by millions of his passive children, what the barbarous mother did by one of hers: affirming, that he unconditionally withholds grace from them; and that, by absolutely refusing to be 'the author and finisher of their faith,' he is the absolute author and finisher of their unbelief, and consequently of their sin and damnation!

XIII. However, without being frightened at these dreadful consequences, you conclude as if you had won the day: P. 65, "Now I appeal to any candid judges, whether I have not brought sufficient authority, from the best of authorities, God's unerring word, for the use of that phrase, *finished salvation*," which, p. 63, "in its full extent I undertook to vindicate." I cordially join in your appeal, honored Sir, and desire our unprejudiced readers to say, if you have brought one *solid* proof from God's unerring word, in support of your favourite scheme, which centers in the doctrine of *finished salvation*: and if that expression, when taken "in its full extent," is not the stalking horse of every wild Nicolaitan ranter; and the dangerous bait, by which Satan, transformed into an angel of light, prevails upon unstable souls to swallow the silver hook of *speculative*, that he may draw them into all the depths of *practical* Antinomianism.



XIV. I do not think it worth while to dwell upon the lines you quote from Mr. *Charles Wesley's* hymns. He is yet alive to tell us what he meant by, "It's finish'd, it's past, &c." And he informs me, that he meant, "The sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, which Christ made upon the cross for the sins of the whole world, except doing despite to the Spirit of grace, or the sin against the Holy Ghost." The atonement, which is a considerable part of the Redeemer's work, is undoubtedly *finished*; and if by a figure of poetry, that puts a part for the whole, you chuse to give the name of *finished salvation* to a *finished atonement*, I have already observed, (Third Check, p. 112) that we will not dispute about the expression. We only intreat you so to explain and guard it, as not to give sanction to "antinomian dotages," and charge the God of love with the blasphemy of *finished damnation*.

XV. The calvinistical passage, which you produce from the Christian Library, is unguarded, and escaped Mr. *Wesley's* or the printer's attention. One sentence of it is worthy of a place in the *index expurgatorius*, which he designs to annex to that valuable collection. Nevertheless, two clauses of that very passage are not at all to your purpose. "Christ is now thoroughly furnished for the carrying on of his work — He is actually at work." Now if Christ is actually *at work*, and *carrying on his work*, that work is not yet *finished*. Thus, even the exceptionable passage which you, or the friends who gave you their assistance, have picked out of a work of fifty volumes, shews the absurdity of taking the expression, "finished salvation, in its full extent."

Should you say, "Christ is thoroughly furnished for his work, (namely, the salvation of the elect) therefore that work is as good as finished:" I  
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once more present you with the frightful head of the Geneva-Medusa, and reply, 'Christ is thoroughly furnished for his work, (namely, the damnation of the reprobates) therefore that work is as good as finished.' Thus all terminates still in uncovering the two iron-clay feet of your great image, absolute election and absolute reprobation, or, which is all one, *finished salvation* and *finished damnation*.

O Sir, the more you fight for Dr. *Crisp's* scheme of *free grace*, the more you expose his scheme of *free wrath*. I hope my judicious readers are shocked at it, as well as myself. Your "sword" really "puts us to flight." We start back—we run away: but it is only from *the depths of Satan*, which you help us to discover in *speculative Antinomianism*, or *barefaced Calvinism*.

XVI. If you charge me with "calumny" for asserting, that *speculative Antinomianism*, and *barefaced Calvinism*, are one and the same thing; to clear myself, I present you with the CREED of an honest, consistent, plain-spoken Calvinist. Read it, dear Sir, without prejudice, and say, if it will not suit an abettor of *speculative Antinomianism*, and, upon occasion, a wild ranter, wading through all the depths of *practical Antinomianism*, as well as an admirer of "the doctrines of grace."

*Five letters*, 1 edit. p. 33, 34, 27. 'I most firmly believe, that the grand cause of so much lifeless profession, is owing to the sheep of Christ being fed in the barren pastures, and muddled waters of a *legalized* gospel. The doctrines of grace are not to be kept out of sight, for fear men of corrupt minds should abuse them. I will no more be so fearful to trust God with his own truths, as to starve his children and my own soul: I will make an open confession of my faith.'

(1) 'I believe in God the Father almighty, who, from all eternity, unconditionally predestinated  
' me

¶ me to life, and absolutely chose me to eternal sal-  
 vation. Whom he once loved, he will love for  
 ever; I am therefore persuaded, [p. 28, 31.] that  
 as he did not set his love on me: at first for any  
 thing in me, so that love, which is not at all de-  
 pendent upon anything in me, can never vary on  
 account of my miscarriages; and for this reason,  
 when I miscarry, suppose by adultery or murder,  
 God ever considers me as one with his own Son,  
 who has fulfilled all righteousness for me. And  
 as he is *always well pleased* with him, so with me,  
 who am absolutely *bone of his bone and flesh of his  
 flesh.* [p. 26, 31.] There are no lengths, then, I  
 may not run, nor any depths I may not fall into,  
 without displeasing him; as I see in David, who,  
 notwithstanding his repeated backslidings, did not  
 lose the character of the man after God's own heart.  
 I may murder with him, worship Ashtaroth with  
 Solomon, deny Christ with Peter, rob with Onesi-  
 mus, and commit incest with the Corinthian, with-  
 out forfeiting either the divine favour, or the  
 kingdom of glory. *Who shall lay any thing to the  
 charge of God's elect?* to the charge of a believer?  
 to my charge? For,

(2) P. 26, 27, 32. 'I believe in Jesus Christ,  
 that, *by one offering, has for ever perfected me; who  
 am sanctified in all my sins — In him I am compleat in  
 all my iniquities.* What is all sin before his aton-  
 ing blood? Either he has fulfilled the whole law,  
 and borne the curse, or he has not. If he has not,  
 no soul can be saved; if he has, then all debts  
 and claims against his people and me, be they  
 more (suppose a thousand adulteries, and so many  
 murders) or be they less, (suppose only one rob-  
 bery) be they small or be they great, be they be-  
 fore or be they after my conversion, are for ever  
 and for ever cancelled. I set up no more moun-  
 tainous distinctions of sin, especially sins after con-  
 version.

'version. Whether I am dejected with Elijah un-  
 'der the juniper-tree, or worshipping Milcom with  
 'Solomon; whether I mistake the voice of the  
 'Lord for that of his priest, as Samuel, or defile my  
 'neighbour's bed as David; I am equally accepted  
 'in the Beloved. For in Christ I am chosen, loved,  
 'called, and unconditionally preserved to the end.  
 'All trespasses are forgiven me -- I am justified from  
 'all things -- I already have everlasting life. Nay,  
 'I am now (virtually) set down in heavenly places  
 'with Christ; and as soon shall Satan pluck his  
 'crown from his head, as his purchase from his  
 'hand.'

P. 27, 28. 'Yes, I avow it in the face of all the  
 'world; no falls or backslidings can ever bring me  
 'again under condemnation: for Christ hath made  
 'me free from the law of sin and death. Should I  
 'out-sin Manasses himself, I should not be a less  
 'pleasant child: because God always views me in  
 'Christ, and in him I am without spot, or wrinkle,  
 'or any such thing. Black in myself, I am still  
 'comely through the comeliness put upon me: and  
 'therefore, he *who is of purer eyes than to behold ini-*  
 '*quity*, can, in the midst of all adulteries, murders,  
 'and incests, address me with, *Thou art all fair, my*  
 '*love, my undefiled; there is no spot in thee!*' And,

(3) 'I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of  
 'grace, against whom I can never sin, [p. 26.]  
 'whose light and love I can never quench, to  
 'whom I can never do despite, and who, in his  
 'good time, will *irresistibly and infallibly* [Review,  
 'p. 38.] work in me to will and to do. In the  
 'mean time, I am perfectly secure; for I can never  
 'perish, my *salvation* being already *finished* in the  
 'full extent of the expression. *Review*, p. 63. &c.'

'Once indeed I supposed, that *the wrath of God*  
 '*came*, at least for enormous crimes, *upon the children*  
 '*of disobedience*; and I thought it would come upon  
 me,

me, if I committed adultery and murder: but now I discover my mistake, and believe, [p. 28 and 25] it is a *capital error* to confound me and my actions. While my murders, &c. certainly displease God, my person stands always absolved, always compleat, always pleasant in the everlasting righteousness of the Redeemer. I repeat it, [2d edit. p. 37] It is a *most pernicious error* of the school-men, to distinguish sins according to the *fact*, and not according to the *person*. He that believeth hath as great sin as the unbeliever: nay, his sins, (p. 32) for the matter of them, are perhaps *more heinous and scandalous* than those of the unbeliever; but although he daily sinneth, perhaps as David and the Corinthian, by adultery, murder, and incest, he *continueth godly*.

‘ Before I was acquainted with the truth, I imagined, that sin would dishonour God, and injure me: but since the preachers of *finished salvation* have opened my eyes, I see how greatly I was mistaken. And now I believe, that God will over-rule my sin [whether it be adultery, murder, or incest] for his glory, and my good.’

(1) ‘ For his glory. P. 26, 30, 31, 32. God often permits his own dearest children to commit adultery, robbery, murder, and incest, to bring about his purposes. He has always the same thing in view, namely, *his own glory* and *my salvation*, together with that of the other elect. This Adam was accomplishing when he put the whole world under the curse—Onesimus when he robbed Philemon his master—Judah when he committed incest with Tamar—and David when he committed adultery with Bathsheba. — How has many a poor, faithless soul even blessed God for Peter’s denial? — As for the incestuous Corinthian, the tenderness shown him after his crime, has raised many out of the mire, and caused them to recover their first love.’

(2) ‘ For

(2) ' *For my good.* P. 32. God has promised to  
 • make *all things work for good to me;* and if all  
 • things, then my very sins and corruptions are in-  
 • cluded in the royal promise. Should I be asked,  
 • what particular good sin will do me in time and  
 • in eternity? I answer: A grievous fall [suppose  
 • into adultery, murder, or incest] shall serve to  
 • make me know my place, to drive me nearer to  
 • Christ, to make me more dependent upon his  
 • strength, to keep me more watchful, to cause me  
 • to sympathize with the fallen, and to make me  
 • sing louder to the praise of free, sovereign, restoring  
 • grace, throughout all the ages of eternity. Thus,  
 • although I highly blame (p. 33) those who round-  
 • ly say, *Let us sin that grace may abound,* I do not  
 • legalize the gospel, but openly declare, (p. 27)  
 • that if I commit adultery, murder, or incest, be-  
 • fore or after my conversion, grace shall irresistibly  
 • and infallibly abound over these, and all my other  
 • sins, be they small or be they great, be they more  
 • or be they less. My foulest falls will only drive  
 • me nearer to Christ, and make me sing (p. 32)  
 • his praises *louder* than if I had not fallen. Thus  
 • [to say nothing of the *sweetness* and *profit* which  
 • may now arise from sin] adultery, incest, and  
 • murder shall, upon the whole, make me holier  
 • upon earth, and merrier in heaven.'

• I need not tell *you*, honored Sir, that I am in-  
 debted to you for all the doctrines, and most of the  
 expressions, of this dangerous confession of faith.  
 If any one doubts of it, let him compare this creed  
 and your letters together. Some clauses and sen-  
 tences I have added, not to "misrepresent and  
 "blacken," but to introduce, connect, and illus-  
 trate your sentiments. You speak, indeed, in the  
*third* person, and I in the *first*, but this alters not the  
 doctrine. Besides, if the privileges of a lean be-  
 liever belong to me, as well as to David; I do not  
 see

See why I should be debarred from the fat pastures you recommend, (p. 34) which, I fear, are so very rich, that if the leanest sheep of Christ do but range, and take their fill in them, they will in a few days wax wanton against him, but at the sheep which do not bleat to their satisfaction, attack the under-shepherds, and grow so excessively fat as to out-kick Jeshurun himself.

XVII. Some half-hearted Calvinists, who are ashamed of their principles, and desirous to conceal their Diana's deformity, will probably blame you, Sir, for having uncovered the less frightful of her feet, and shown it naked to the wondering world. But to the apology which you have already made about it, I hope I may, without impertinence, add one or two remarks.

(1) Whoever believes, either the doctrine of *unconditional election*, or that of *righteousness absolutely imputed* to apostatizing believers, or that of the *infallible perseverance* of all who were *saints* yesterday, and to-day commit adultery, murder, or incest; and, in a word, whoever believes the doctrine of *finished salvation*, implicitly receives two thirds of the antinomian creed which you have helped me to. And those who have so strong a faith, and so large a conscience, as to swallow *so much*, [together with the doctrine of *finished damnation*, *eternal wrath* flaming against myriads of unborn creatures, and *everlasting fire* prepared for millions of passive, sensible machines, which have only fulfilled God's *secret* and *irresistible* will] might, one would think, receive the *whole creed* without any difficulty. For why should those who can swallow five or six camels as a glib morsel, strain at three or four gnats, as if they were going to be quite choaked? Again,

(2) If Calvinism is true, you are certainly, honored Sir, the honest and consistent calvinist, so far as consistency is compatible with the most inconsistent of all schemes. Permit me to produce one instance,

instance, which I hope will abate the prejudices, that some unsettled Calvinists have conceived against you, for speaking quite out with respect to the excellent effects of sin in believers.

If man is not a *free* agent, [and undoubtedly he is not, if from all eternity he has been *bound* by ten thousand chains of irresistible and absolute decrees] it follows, that he is but a curious machine, superior to a brute, as a brute is superior to a watch, and a watch to a wheel-barrow. Upon Calvin's principles, this wonderful machine is as much guided by God's invisible hand, or rather by his absolute decrees, as a puppet by the unseen wire, which causes its seemingly spontaneous motions. This being the case, it is evident, that God is as much the author of our actions, good or bad; as a show-man is the author of the motions of his puppets, whether they turn to the right or to the left. Now, as God is infinitely wise, and supremely good, he will set his machines upon doing nothing but what, upon the whole, is *wisest* and *best*. Hence it appears, that if the doctrine of absolute decrees, which is the fundamental principle of Calvinism, is true; whatever sin we commit, we only fulfil the absolute will of God, and do that which, upon the whole, is *wisest* and *best*; and that you have not unadvisedly pleaded for Baal, but rationally spoken for God, when you have told us, what great advantages result from the commission of the greatest crimes. In doing this strange work, then, you have acted only as a consistent predestinarian; and though some *thoughtless* calvinists may, yet none that are *judicious* will blame you, for having spoken agreeably to the leading principle of "*the doctrines of grace.*"

I have observed, that speculative Antinomianism, or barefaced Calvinism, stalks along upon the doctrines of *finished salvation* and *finished damnation*, which we may consider as the two feet of your great

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Diana;



Diana; and that the preceding creed, which is drawn up for an *elect*, uncovers only her *handsome* foot, FINISHED SALVATION. To do my subject justice, I should now make an open show of her *cloven* foot, by giving the world the creed of a *reprobate*, according to the dreadful doctrine of FINISHED DAMNATION. But as I flatter myself, that my readers are already as tired of Calvinism as myself, I think it is needless to raise their detestation of it, by drawing before their eyes a long chain of blasphemous positions, capable of making the hair of their heads stand up with horror. I shall, therefore, with all wise calvinists, draw a veil over the hideous sight, and conclude by assuring you, few people more heartily wish you delivered from speculative Antinomianism, and possessed of *salvation* truly *finished* in glory, than,

Honored and dear Sir,

Your affectionate and obedient Servant, in  
the bonds of what you call the "*legalized*  
"*gospel*,"

J. F.

LETTER

## L E T T E R VIII.

TO RICHARD HILL, Esq;

Honored and dear Sir,

**H**AVING endeavoured in my last to convince you out of your own mouth, that undisguis'd Calvinism and speculative Antinomianism exactly coincide; before I turn from you to face your brother, I beg leave to vindicate *good works* from an aspersion, which zealous Calvinists perpetually cast upon them: for as *practical* Antinomianism destroys the fruits of righteousness, as a wild boar does the fruit of the vine; so *speculative* Antinomianism besprinkles them with filth, as an unclean bird does the produce of our orchards.

Hence it is, that, though you charge me [Review p. 69] with "vile slander," for insinuating, that "our free-grace preachers" do not "raise the superstructure in good works:" p. 41, as if you wanted to demonstrate *the truth* of my "vile slander," you say, "Though we render the words *καλα εργα*, *good works*, yet the exact translation is *ornamental works*; and truly, when brought to the strictness of the law, they do not deserve the name of *good*. But, however grating the expressions may sound, to those who hope to attain a second justification by their works, yet we have scripture authority to call them dung, dross, and filthy rags."

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Now,

Now, Sir, if scripture authorizes us to call them thus, they are undoubtedly very usefess, loathsome, and abominable; and the Minutes, which highly recommend them, are certainly *dreadfully heretical*. I must then lose all my controversial labour, or once more take up the shield of truth, and quench this *fiery* (should I not say, this “*filthy*”) *dart*, which you have thrown at St. James’s *undefiled* religion. I begin with your criticism.

I. “Though we render the words *καλα εργα*, good works, yet the exact translation is *ornamental works*.” I apprehend, Sir, you are mistaken: The greek word *καλος* exactly answers to the hebrew [tub] which conveys the joint ideas of *goodness* and *beauty*. Before there was any “*filthy rag*” in the world, *God saw every thing that he had made; and behold, it was [tub mad] very good*, which the Septuagint very exactly render *καλα λιαν*. Fully to overthrow your criticism, I need only observe, that *good works* are called *good* with the very same word, by which the *goodness* of the law, and the *excellence* of the Lawgiver, are expressed: for St. Paul speaking of the law, Rom. vii. 16. says, that it is *καλος*, *GOOD*: and our Lord, speaking of himself, says, *ωτι ο ποιμην ο καλος*, the *GOOD shepherd*. Now, Sir, as you are too pious to infer from the word *καλος*, that neither the law nor Christ “*deserve to be called good*;” I hope you will be candid enough, to give up your similar inference concerning *good works*.

Inconsistency is the badge of error. You give us, if I mistake not, a proof of it, by telling us with one breath, that “*good works* do not deserve “the name of *good*,” but that of “*ornamental*;” and with the next, that scripture authorizes us to call them “*dung, dross, and filthy rags*.” Are then *dung, dross, and filthy rags* ORNAMENTAL things? Or did you try to render Geneva-criticism as famous as Geneva-logic? But,

II. You

II. You have recourse to divinity as well as to criticism: for you say, "When *good works* are brought to the strictness of the law, they do not deserve the name of *good*." I answer: If our Lord himself called them *good*, it does not become us to insinuate, that in so doing he passed a wrong judgment, and countenanced "proud justiciars" in their legal error. With respect to the "strictness of the law," which you so frequently urge, your frightful notions about it, cannot drive us into Antinomianism; because we think, that Christ and St. Paul were better acquainted with the law than Calvin and yourself. If *all the law and the prophets hang on the grand commandment of love*, as our Lord informs us; and if *he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law*, as the apostle declares; we see no reason to believe, that the law condemns, as "*dung*," the labour of that love by which it is fulfilled; and rejects, "as *filthy rags*," works which Christ himself promises to crown with eternal rewards. You probably reply:

III. "Many pharisees go to church without devotion, and many fornicators give alms without charity, fancying, that *such good works* make amends for their sins, and merit heaven." *Good works* do you call them! The scriptures never gave them that honorable name. They are the hypocritical righteousness of unbelief, and not *works meet for repentance*, or the *fruits of the righteousness of faith*. Treat them as you please, but spare *good works*. It is as unjust to asperse *good works* on their account, as to hang the honest men who duly carry on the king's coinage at the mint, because the villains, who counterfeit his majesty's coin, evidently deserve the gallows.

IV. Should you object, that "The best works have flaws, blemishes, and imperfections; and therefore may properly be called *dung*, *drofs*, and

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"filthy

"*filthy rags*:" I deny the consequence. The best guineas may have their flaws: nay, some dust or dirt may accidentally cleave to them; but this does not turn them into *dross*. As therefore a good guinea is gold, and not *dross*, though it has some accidental blemishes: So, God himself being judge, a *good work* is a *good work*, and not a *filthy rag*, though it is not free from all imperfections.

V. Not so, do you say: "We have scripture authority to call *good works* FILTHY RAGS." You build, it seems, your mistake upon Isai. lxiv. 6. *All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags*: a passage which, upon mature consideration, I beg leave to rescue from the hands of the Calvinists. The Jews were extremely corrupted in the days of Isaiah: hence he opens his prophecy by calling the rich, *Ye rulers of Sodom*, and the poor, *Ye people of Gomorrah*. And what says he to them? *How is the faithful city become an harlot! Righteousness lodged in it, but now murderers!* Yet these murderers hypocritically went on keeping their *sabbaths and new moons*. They *fasted*, but it was *for strife*, and *to smite with the fist of wickedness*. They made many prayers, and offered multitudes of sacrifices, but *their hands were full of blood*. Nor did they consider, that he, who, under these circumstances, *sacrifices an ox, is as if he slew a man*.

This corruption of the Jews, though general, was not universal: for *the Lord of hosts had left to them a remnant*, though very small. Now Isaiah, one of that very little flock, being humbled at the sight of the general wickedness of his people, confesses it in the first person, [*we*] as ministers always do on such occasions; and he uses the word *all*, because the *small remnant* of the righteous was as lost in the multitude of the wicked. The verse, taken in connection with the context, runs thus: 'Thou meet-  
'est him that rejoiceth, and worketh righteousness,  
' those

those that remember thee in thy ways. But, alas!  
 'we are not the people. Behold, thou art wroth,  
 'for we have have sinned. We are all as an un-  
 'clean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as fil-  
 'thy rags. Therefore, instead of meeting us, as  
 'thou dost the righteous, thou hast hid thy face  
 'from us, and hast consumed us because of our ini-  
 'quities. We all do fade as a leaf; and our ini-  
 'quities, like the wind, have taken us away: So  
 'far are we from resembling the righteous, who are  
 'like a tree planted by the water-side, whose leaf  
 'does not wither.' Who does not see, that the  
 prophet here opposes the happiness of the righteous  
 to the misery of the wicked? And that it is the *hy-*  
*pocritical righteousnesses* of the ungodly, and not the  
*precious obedience* of believers, which he compares to  
*filthy rags*?

VI. However "We have scripture authority to  
 "call good works *dross*." Your mind, I suppose,  
 runs upon Isa. i. 22, 25. where God expostulates  
 with the obstinate Jews, by saying, *Thy silver is be-*  
*come DROSS*, thy righteousness is all hypocrisy: yet,  
 if thou returnest, *I will purge away thy DROSS*, I  
 will make thee truly righteous. Is it not evident,  
 that it is hypocrisy, and *bad* works, not *good* works,  
 which God here calls *dross*? Will he, think you,  
*purge away GOOD works* from his people? Is it not  
 enough, that armies of Antinomians do the devil  
 that service? Must we also suppose, that God pro-  
 mises to be his drudge?

VII. But "We have scripture authority to call  
 "good works *dung*." Not at all: for the two pas-  
 sages you probably think of, are against you. In  
 the first, God speaks to the disobedient Jews, and  
 says, *If ye will not hear, and give glory to my name, I*  
*will send a curse upon you: Yea, I have cursed your*  
 *blessings already. Behold, I will spread upon your faces*  
*the DUNG of your solemn feasts*, Mal. ii. 3. Now,  
 Sir,

Sir, who does not see by the context, that festivals kept by *curfed* hypocrites are "called dung," and not the solemn worship performed by penitent believers?

If you quote Phil. iii. 8. it will be to as little purpose. Do you rightly understand that passage? *I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but DUNG, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ.* You know, Sir, that the apostle once made far too much of his privileges as a Jew, his morals as an honest man, and his observance of the law as a strict disciple of Moses. And you remember, that when he wrapped himself up in that kind of external righteousness, his heart breathed nothing but contempt towards Christ, and slaughter against his people: What wonder is it then, that he should count such a righteousness, together with all earthly, perishing things, loss and DUNG for Christ! Who does not see, that it was not the precious *righteousness of faith*, which consists in pardon, acceptance, and power to do good works; but the paltry righteousness of an unbeliever, a blasphemer, a murderer?

Should you say, that when the apostle declares, he counts ALL things but dung, that he may be found in Christ, he certainly includes good works, and counts them dung: I reply: You have as good reason to say, that he certainly includes repentance, faith, obedience, grace, and glory, and counts them dung also.

Some gentlemen invite you to go a hunting, or play at cards, to keep you from the sessions; and you answer, 'I am determined to do my duty. 'Once your sports were gain to me, but now I account 'them but loss of time: yea, doubtless, I count ALL  
' things.

' things, that stand in competition with my office,  
 ' vile and contemptible as *dung*: they no more tempt  
 ' me to pursue them, than yonder dunghill tempts  
 ' me to take my rest: I am ready to trample upon  
 ' them as filthy dust, rather than not be found upon  
 ' the bench, doing my duty as a magistrate; not ac-  
 ' cording to my own former, mistaken notions of  
 ' justice, but according to the equitable laws of my  
 ' country.' Now, Sir, should I not very much  
 wrong you, if I inferred from your generous answer,  
 that you call *doing justice DUNG*? And do you not  
 greatly wrong St. Paul, when, upon a pretence  
 equally frivolous, you insinuate, that he gave to  
*good works* such an injurious name? that he called  
 the will of God, done in faith by the Spirit of  
 Christ, *dung*?

Again, when the apostle prayed to *be found in  
 Christ, not having his own pharisaic righteousness; which  
 was of the letter of the law, but the righteousness which  
 is of God by faith*; is it not evident, that [besides  
 the desire of being still found pardoned and accepted  
 through faith in Christ] he wished to be found to  
 the last, a *branch grafted in the true vine*, by faith?  
 a living branch, filled with the righteous sap of *the  
 root that bore him*? a branch made fruitful by the  
 principle of all acceptable righteousness, which is  
*Christ in us, the hope of glory*? and, to use his own  
 words in this very epistle, a *branch filled with the  
 fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ to the  
 glory of God*? Phil. i. 11. compared with ch. iii. 9.

Let men of reason and religion say, if this sense  
 is not more agreeable to the letter of the scripture  
 in general, and the apostle's words in particular,  
 than the fantastic imputation of righteousness, which  
 Calvinists build upon them: An imputation this,  
 which constitutes a man righteous, while he com-  
 mits adultery, murder, or incest. Is it not deplora-  
 ble, that such an unscriptural and unnatural idea  
 should



should ever have entered the mind of pious men? Especially when St. John says, *Little children, let no man deceive you: he that does righteousness, and not barely he for whom Christ hath done righteousness, is righteous?* Is it not lamentable, that good men, influenced by prejudice, should be able to persuade thousands, that St. John meant, ‘*Let not Mr. Wesley deceive you; he that actually liveth with another man’s wife, worships abominable idols, and commits incest with his father’s wife, may not only be righteous, but compleat in imputed righteousness — in a righteousness which exceeds, not only the righteousness of the pharisees, but the personal righteousness of converted Paul, and of the brightest angel in glory!*’

O Sir, if you have told it in Paris, tell it not in Constantinople, lest the daughters of the Mahometans bless God, that, lewd and bloody as their prophet was, he never so far lost sight of morality and decency, as to give Mussulmen a *cloak*, under the specious name of a “*robe of righteousness*,” under which they can curse, swear, and get drunk; commit adultery, robbery, murder, and incest; without being less *righteous*, than if they had kept all the commandments of God; less in favour with the Most High, than if they personally abounded in all the works of piety, mercy, and self-denial, which adorned the life of Jesus Christ; and less interested in *finished salvation*, than if they were already in glory. O Sir, is not this doctrine more dangerous than that of transubstantiation? Is it not more dishonorable to Christ, more immoral, and consequently more pernicious to society? And would it not absolutely destroy the morals of all those who receive it, if our Lord, for his name’s sake, did not in mercy deny to thousands of them, *sense or attention*, to draw a dreadful conclusion from their dreadful premises; while he graciously gives to thousands  
more,

more, hearts infinitely better than their immoral principles!

Having thus endeavoured to rescue the passages on which you found your assertion concerning good works, and proved, there is not one scripture which gives you the least authority to call them either *dung, dross, or filthy rags*: to convince you, that an heap of impious absurdities lies concealed under that doctrine, permit me to produce some of the scriptures, where GOOD works are mentioned; and to substitute to that phrase the hard names, which, you tell us, the scripture authorizes you to call them.

*Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, i. e. YOUR DUNG, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. — She has wrought a good work, i. e. a FILTHY RAG, upon me against my burial. — Dorcas was full of good works, i. e. of DUNG and RAGS. — God make you to abound in every good work, i. e. in every sort of DUNG and DROSS. — We are created in Christ Jesus to good works, i. e. to FILTHY RAGS, which God hath prepared for us to walk in. — Walk worthy of the Lord, being fruitful in every good work, i. e. in every FILTHY RAG. — God establish you in every good work, i. e. in DUNG of every sort. — Provoke one another to love and good works, i. e. to DROSS and RAGS. — Be zealous of good works, i. e. of FILTHY RAGS. — Be rich in good works, i. e. in DROSS. — Be a pattern in good works, i. e. in FILTHY RAGS. — Be careful to maintain good works, i. e. DUNG. — Let the Gentiles by your good works, i. e. YOUR DUNG, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. — Be thoroughly furnished to every good work: Be perfect in every good work, i. e. in DUNG and DROSS of every kind. — Blessed are they that die in the Lord, for their works, i. e. their DUNG and RAGS, follow them. — God is not unrighteous, to forget your work, i. e. your DUNG, that proceedeth*

*ceedeth of love. — The Gentiles should do works, i. e. DUNG, meet for repentance. — Esteem ministers highly in love for their work's, i. e. their DUNG's sake. — If he have not works, i. e. DUNG, can faith save him? — Faith without works, i. e. without FILTHY RAGS, is dead. — By works, i. e. DUNG, was Abraham's faith made perfect. — He and Rahab were justified by works, i. e. by FILTHY RAGS. — He that believeth in me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these, i. e. FILTHIER RAGS, and more ORNAMENTAL DUNG, shall he do. — This is the work, i. e. the DUNG, of God, that you believe, &c.*

Indeed, Sir, I am almost ashamed to take up the "filthy rag" of this bad divinity, though it is only with the point of my pen, to hold it out a moment to public view, that the world may be sick of barefaced Antinomianism. I drop it again into the sink of defiled religion, out of which Dr. Crisp raked it; and beg, for the honor of Christ and your own, that you would no more recommend it as *pure* gospel.

And now, dear Sir, permit me to expostulate a moment with you. Against whom have you employed your pen, when you have taught the world to call good works *dung, dross, and filthy rags*; pretending to have authority from the scripture thus to revile the best thing under heaven? Is it only against the "proud justiciars?" Is it not also indirectly, though I am persuaded undesignedly, against the adorable Trinity? Has not the Father created us to GOOD WORKS? Did not the Son redeem us, that we might be a people zealous of GOOD WORKS? And does not the Holy Ghost sanctify us, that "all our WORKS being begun, continued, and ended "in him, we may glorify God's holy name," and cause it to be glorified by all around us?

What harm did good works ever do you, or any one, that you should decry them in so public a manner as you have done? Did you ever duly consider

consider their nature and excellence? Or have you condemned them in a hurry, without so much as casting an attentive look upon them? Permit me to bring them to you, as God brought the beasts of the field to Adam, that he might give them names according to their nature; and tell me which of them you will call *dung*, which *drofs*, and which *filthy rags*.

First then, what objection have you against the GOOD WORKS of the HEART? against *awaking* out of sin, *returning* to God, *repenting*, offering the sacrifice of a contrite spirit, and *believing* unto righteousness? What objection against *trusting* in the Lord Jehovah, in whom is everlasting strength? *casting* the anchor of our hope within the veil? *loving* God for himself, and all mankind for God's sake? Do you see any of *these* good works of the heart, that look like a "filthy rag?"

No sooner is the *inward man of the heart* truly engaged in any one of the preceding works, than the outward man is all in motion. *The candle of the Lord is not lighted* within the soul to be put under a bushel, and extinguished; but to be set as on the candlestick of the body, that it may give light to all around, and that men seeing our light, may glorify our heavenly Father. Hence arise several classes of external good works.

Consider the man of God as he is clothed with a corruptible body, which must be nourished without being pampered. *He keeps it under* by moderate fasting or abstinence. *He daily denies himself, and takes up his cross*. He works with chearful diligence. He eats, drinks, or sleeps, with gladness and singleness of heart; and if he is sick, he bears his pain with joyful resignation, *doing or suffering all to the glory of God*, in the spirit of sacrifice, and in the name of the Lord Jesus.

View him in his own family. Not satisfied with mental prayer, he bends the knee to his Father

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who sees in secret; and not contented with private devotions, he reads to his assembled household select portions of God's word, and solemnly worships him with them in spirit and in truth. Nor does he think, that doing his duty towards God excuses him from fulfilling it towards his neighbour. Just the reverse. Because his soul is all reverence to his heavenly Father, it is all respect to his earthly parents. Because he ardently loves the bridegroom of souls, he feels the warmest regard for his wife, he bears the tenderest and yet the most rational affection to his children. Nor is he less desirous his servants should serve God and work out their salvation, than he is that they should serve him and do his own work. Hence arise his familiar instructions, mild reproofs, earnest entreaties, encouraging exhortations. His strict honesty and meekness of wisdom, his moderation and love of peace, are known to all around him; and even those who despise his piety, are forced to speak well of his morals.

Behold his works as a member of society in general. In his little sphere of action, he *makes his star to shine upon the just and upon the unjust*; his charity is universal. To the utmost of his ability he opposes vice, countenances virtue, promotes industry, and patronizes despised piety. Humble faith kindles him into *a burning and shining light*; he is a *minister of the God of all mercies, he is a flaming fire*. He feeds Christ in the hungry, gives him drink in the thirsty, clothes him in the naked, entertains him in strangers, attends him on sick beds, visits him in prisons, and comforts him in the mournful apartments, where the guilty are stretched on the rack of despair, or where the godly, forsaken of their friends, pledge their dying Lord with the dregs of the cup of sorrow. How easily does he overlook the unkindness of his neighbours! How readily

readily does he forgive injuries! How cordially heaps he coals of melting kindness upon the heads of his enemies! How sincerely does he pray for all his slanderers and persecutors! And how ardently desire to grow in grace, and endeavour to adorn more and more the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things!

Consider him as a member of a religious society. How excellent, how divine are his works! He respectfully holds up the hands of his minister, and kindly bears the burdens of his brethren. He watches over them for good, rejoices with those that rejoice, and mourns with those that mourn. He compassionately sympathizes with the tempted, impartially reproveth sin, meekly restores the fallen, and cheerfully animates the dejected. Like undaunted Caleb, he spirits up the fearful; and like valiant Joshua, he leads them to the conquest of Canaan, and goes on from conquering to conquer.

And suppose he *went on even unto perfection*, and *took the kingdom of heaven by violent faith*, and humble, patient, importunate prayer; would you call him a *filthy rag-man*, and insinuate, that he had only done a *dung-work*? O Sir, if you can so publicly eall good works *drofs*, *dung*, and *filthy rags*; and [what is worse still] assert, that the Holy Ghost in the scriptures authorizes you so to do; who will wonder to see you represent the doctrine of Christian Perfection as a pernicious popish heresy, which turns men "into *temporary monsters*?" Would you be consistent, if you did not rise against it with the collected might of credulous uncharitableness, and barefaced Antinomianism? For.

What is, after all, the perfection that Mr. Wesley contends for? Nothing but two *good works*, productive of ten thousand more; or, if you please, two large *filthy rags*, in which ten thousand other *filthy rags* are wrapped, that is, *loving God with all*

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our hearts, and our neighbour as ourselves. It is nothing but perfect love, shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us, making us stedfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, always ZEALOUS OF GOOD WORKS, always the reverse of the easy elect, who, by means of Calvin's contrivance, are "all fair and undefiled," while they wallow in the adulterer's mire, and the murderer's gore. Or, in other terms, it is nothing but *Christ*, through the Holy Spirit, dwelling in our hearts by faith, and making us always zealous of good works. Now if good works are dross, dung, and filthy rags; it is evident, that perfection is a rich mine of dross; an heap of dung, as immense as that which Hercules got out of Augcas's stables; and a vast store-house of filthy rags, spun by "proud justiciars," as cobwebs are by venomous spiders.

In this wrong view of *christian perfection*, I no more wonder to see multitudes of careless professors agree, like Pilate and Herod, to destroy it out of the earth; nor am I surprized to hear even good, mistaken people cry out, *Down with it! Down with it!* While I complain of their want of candor, I commend their well-meant zeal, and wish it may flame out against objects worthy of their detestation; against *perfection* itself, suppose it is what they imagine. Yes, If it is a mine of "dross," let them drown it; I give my consent; but let them do it with floods of scripture and argument. If it is a *dunghill*, in the church; let them carry it out, and permit even the *swine*, which come from wallowing in the mire, to shake themselves upon it; I will not say it is improper. If it is a *repository of filthy rags*, more infectious than those which convey the jail-distemper or the plague; let them agree to set fire to it, and burn it down to the ground: but let them do it with *fire from the altar*, and not with tongues set on fire of prejudice or malice.

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But if Christian Perfection is (next to angelic perfection) the brightest and richest jewel, which Christ purchased for us by his blood; if it is the internal kingdom of God ruling over all; if it is Christ fully formed in our hearts, the full hope of glory; if it is the fulfilment of the promise of the Father, i. e. the Holy Ghost given unto us, to make us abound in righteousness, peace, and joy through believing; and, in a word, if it is the *Shekinah*, filling the Lord's human temples with glory; is it right, Sir, to despise it as some do, or to expose it as you have so frequently done?

Should you apologize for your conduct, by saying, "I have only treated YOUR perfection, as you have treated OUR finished salvation, and OUR imputed righteousness:" I reply: The case is widely different. I hope I have made it appear, that you have not one single text in all the bible, to prove, that a bloody adulterer [*in flagrante delicto*] stands compleat in imputed righteousness; and that the salvation of idolatrous and incestuous apostates, who now work out their damnation with both hands, is actually finished in the full extent of the expression. The whole stream of God's word runs counter to these "antinomian dotages." Nor are they less repugnant to conscience and common sense, than to the law and the prophets. But you cannot find one word in all the scriptures, against the pure love of God and our neighbour, against perfect love, which is all the perfection we encourage believers to press after. The law and the gospel, the old and the new testament, are equally for it. All who are filled with the Spirit, sweetly experience it. An heathen, that fears God and regards man, could not speak evil of it, but through misapprehension. And even while, through the amazing force of prejudice, you write against it with so much severity, it recommends itself to your own reason and conscience.

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Are you not then, dear Sir, under a mistake, when you think, you may take the same liberty with God's undeniable truth, which I have taken with Dr. Crisp's indefensible error?

Permit me to state the case more fully still. Mr. Wesley cries to believers: "It is your privilege, so to believe in Christ, and receive the Spirit, as to love God with all your hearts, and your neighbours as yourselves." And you say to them: "Mr. Wesley is blinder than a Papist, regard not his heretical words. Your salvation is finished. Whatever lengths you go in sin, you are as sure of heaven as if you were already there. It is your privilege, to commit adultery, murder, and incest, not only without fearing that the Lord will be displeased with you; but conscious that, *black as ye are in yourselves* by the actual commission of these crimes, *through Christ's comeliness put upon you, God can address each of you with, Thou art all fair, my love, my undefiled; there is no spot in thee!*" [Five letters, p. 28.] Now, Sir, are you not a partial judge, when, by way of retaliation, you serve the holy doctrine maintained by Mr. Wesley, as I have served the unholy tenet propagated by Calvin and yourself?

Think you really, that because a judge, after a fair trial, justly condemns a notorious robber to be hanged; another judge, to retaliate, has a right to quarter a good man after a mock trial, or rather without any trial at all? And do you suppose, that because Jehu deservedly made the *house of Baal* a draught-house; or because Josiah burned dead men's bones upon the unhallowed *altar in Bethel*, to render it detestable to idolaters; Antiochus had a right to turn *the temple of the Lord* into a sty, and to pollute the *altar of incense*, by burning "dung and filthy rags" upon it, that true worshippers might abominate the offering of the Lord, and loath the holy of holies? Thus however have you,  
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inadvertently I hope, treated *good works* and *christian perfection*, which are ten thousand times more sacred and precious in the sight of God, than *the holy*, and *the most holy place* in the temple of Jerusalem.

And now, dear Sir, please to look at the preceding list of the good works, which adorn the Christian's breast, or blazon his shining character; and tell us, if there is one, which, upon second thoughts, you object against as a *nuisance*: one which you would *put away* like "DROSS:" one which you would have carried out of his apartment as "DUNG," or removed from his pious breast as a "FILTHY RAG."

Methinks I hear you answer, "Not one: May they all abound more and more in my heart and life! in the hearts and lives of all God's people!" Methinks, that all the Church militant and triumphant cry out, *Amen!* A divine power accompanies their general exclamation. The veil of prejudice begins to rend. Your honest heart relents. You acknowledge, that Calvinism has deceived you. You retract your unguarded expressions. *The Spirit of holiness*, whom you have grieved, returns. The heavenly light shines. The antinomian charm is broken. "Dross" is turned into *fine gold*; "dung" into *savoury meat*, which every believer loveth next to the *bread of life*; and "filthy rags" into the *linen fine and white*, which is the *righteousness of the saints*, and the *robe made white in the blood of the Lamb*. Far from pouring contempt, through voluntary humility, upon this precious garment; you give praise to God, and in humble triumph put it on together with the Lord Jesus Christ.

In that glorious dress you *walk with Christ in white*, and *in love* with Mr. Wesley. Paris, and the convent of Benedictine monks, disappear. *The New Jeru-*

*Jerusalem, and the tabernacle of God come down from heaven. Leaving the things that are behind, you solemnly hasten unto the day of the Lord. Following peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord, you daily perfect it in the fear of the Lord. You feel the amazing difference there is between a real and an imaginary imputation of righteousness. You tear away, with an holy indignation, the pillow of finished salvation from under the head of Laodicean backsliders, who sleep in sin; and of bloody murderers, who defile their neighbour's bed. You set fire to the fatal canopy, under which you have inadvertently taught them to fancy, that the holy and righteous God calls them, *My love! my undefiled!* even while they wallow in the poisonous mire of the most atrocious wickedness. And to undo the harm you have done, or remove the offence you have given by your letters; you show yourself reconciled to St. James's pure religion; you openly give Mr. Wesley the right hand of fellowship, and gladly help him to *provoke* believers to uninterrupted love and good works, i. e. to CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.*

Such is the delightful prospect which my imagination discovers through the clouds of our controversy; and such are the pleasing hopes, that sometimes sooth my polemical toil, and even now make me subscribe myself with an additional pleasure,

Honored and dear Sir,

Your affectionate Brother and obedient Servant,  
in the bonds of a pure gospel,

J. F.

LETTER

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## L E T T E R IX.

To Mr. ROWLAND HILL.

Dear Sir,

**Y**OUR uncommon zeal for God, so far as it is guided by knowledge, entitling you to the peculiar love and reverence of all that fear the Lord; I should be wanting in respect to you, if I took no notice of the arguments, with which you are come from *Cambridge* to the help of your pious brother. In the FRIENDLY REMARKS that you have directed to me, you say with great truth, page 31, "The principal cause of controversy among us, is the doctrine of a second justification by works. Thus much you vindicate throughout, that a man is justified before the bar of God a second time by his own good works."

So I do, dear Sir; and I wonder how any christian can deny it, when Christ himself declares, *In the day of judgment by THY words shalt thou be justified, &c.* Had he said, *By MY words IMPUTED TO THEE thou shalt be justified,* you might indeed complain. But now, what reason have you to assert, as you do, that I "have grossly misrepresented the scriptures," and "made universal havock of every truth of the gospel?" The first of these charges is heavy, the second dreadful; let us see by what arguments they are supported.

After throwing away a good part of your book in passing a long, calvinian, juvenile sentence upon  
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my Spirit as a writer, you come at last to the point, and attempt to explain some of the scriptures, which you suppose I have "misrepresented."

I. Page 32. "Not every one that saith unto me, LORD, LORD, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that DOETH the will of my Father, Matt. vii. 21. And what is this" [*say you*]. "more than a description of those that are to be saved?"

What, Sir, is it nothing but a *description*? Is it not a solemn declaration, that no practical Antinomian shall be saved by faith in the last day? And that Christ is really a LORD and a King, who has a LAW; which he will see obeyed? Had he not just before (verse 12.) admitted the LAW and the Prophets into his gospel dispensation, saying, *All things which ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets?* Are we not under THIS law to him? And will he not command his subjects, who obstinately violate it, to be brought and slain before him?

Again, when he declares, that they who hate a brother and call him, THOU FOOL! are in danger of hell-fire as murderers; do we not expose his legislative wisdom, as well as his paternal goodness, by intimating, that, without having an eye to the murder of the heart or of the tongue, he only describes certain reprobated wretches, whom he unconditionally designs for everlasting burnings?

What I say of a *punishment threatened*, is equally true of a *reward promised*; as you may see by the following illustration of our controverted text. A General says to his soldiers, as he leads them to the field of battle, *Not every one that calls me, Your Honor, Your Honor! shall be made a captain, but he that fights manfully for his king and country. You say, "What is this more than a description of those that shall be promoted?"* And I reply, If warlike exploits have absolutely nothing to do with their promotion; and if the General's declaration is only a de-

a *description* of some favourites, whom he is determined to raise at any rate; could he not as well have *described* them by the colour of their hair, or height of their stature? And does he not put a cheat upon all the soldiers, whom he is absolutely determined not to raise; when he excites them to quit themselves like men, by the fond hopes of being raised? Apply this simile to the case in hand, and you will see, dear Sir, how frivolous, and injurious to our Lord, is your intimation, that one of his most awful royal proclamations is nothing but an empty *description*. O Calvinism! Is this thy reverence for Jesus Christ? Hast thou no way of supporting thyself, but by turning *the Lord of glory* into a *Virgil*? The supreme Lawgiver of men and angels, into a maker of *descriptions*?

II. Much of the same nature is the observation which you make page 37, upon these words of our Lord, *They that have done good, shall go into life everlasting; and they that have done evil, into everlasting punishment*: You say, "What does this text prove more than has been granted before? What does it more than *characterize* those that shall be *saved*?" Nay, Sir, it undoubtedly *characterizes* also those that shall be *damned*; and this too, by as *essential* a character, as that according to which the king would appoint some of his servants for a gracious reward, and others for a capital punishment, if he said to them, *They that serve me faithfully, shall be richly provided for: and they that rob me, shall be hanged*. If such *characterizing* as this passes at *Geneva* for a bare *description* of persons, whom royal humour irrespectively singles out for a reward, I hope the time is coming when, at *Cambridge*, it will pass for a clear declaration of *the reason* why some are rewarded, or punished, rather than others; and for a proof, that the king is no more a capricious dispenser of rewards, than a tyrannical inflicter of punishments.

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III. Page 33, After mentioning those words of *St. Paul*, *Without holiness no man shall see the Lord*; and those words which *St. James* wrote to believers, *Be ye DOERS of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves*; you say, "What is this to the purpose, respecting a second justification? Just about as much as, *Now an omer is the tenth part of an ephah.*" Now, Sir, although I do not immediately rest the cause upon such scriptures, I maintain, that they are much more to the purpose of our second justification by works, than *Moses's* definition of an *omer*.

Will you dare to say, dear Sir, that impious *Jezebel*, and unconverted *Manasses* were persons "just about as" properly qualified for justification in the great day, because they had "an omer" in their palace, as pious *Deborah*, and holy *Samuel*, who had HOLINESS in their hearts, and were DOERS of the word in their lives? And when the apostle declares, that *Christ is the author of eternal salvation to them that OBEY him*, does he mean, that to obey is a thing just about as important to eternal salvation, as to know that a bushel holds four pecks, and an ephah ten omers? Were ever holiness and obedience inadvertently set in a more contemptible light? For my part, if by our words we shall be justified in the day of judgment, I believe it shall be by our words springing from HOLINESS of heart: and therefore I cannot but think that holiness will be more to the purpose of our justification by works in the great day, than all the omers and ephahs, with all the notions about imputed righteousness and finished salvation, in the world.

IV. Page 33, After quoting that capital passage, *Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers shall be justified*, *Rom. ii. 13.* you say, "This certainly proves that the doers of the law shall be justified." Well then, it directly proves a justification by works. But you immediately insinuate, the "impossibility of salvation by the law." I readily grant, that in the day  
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of conversion, we are justified by faith, not only without the deeds of the ceremonial law, but even without a previous observance of the law of love: But the case is widely different in the day of judgment; for then, *by thy WORDS shalt thou be JUSTIFIED.* Now, Sir, it remains for you to prove, that the apostle did not speak the text under consideration, with an eye to our final justification by works.

In order to this, page 33, you appeal to "*the place which this text stands in,*" and "*the connexion in which the words are found.*" I answer,

(1) This text stands in the epistle to the Romans, to whom the apostle says, *Love is the fulfilling of the law;—he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law, Rom. xiii. 8, 10.* Now, if he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law, you must show, that it is impossible to love another; or acknowledge, that there are persons who fulfil the law: and consequently persons, who can be justified as DOERS of the law. Nay, in the very chapter such persons are thus mentioned. *If the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, and fulfil the law, shall it not judge thee who dost transgress the law? That is, Shall not a Cornelius, an honest heathen that fears God and works righteousness, rise in judgment against thee who committest adultery; vainly supposing that Abraham's chastity is imputed to thee? Rom. ii. 26, 27.* But,

(2) Going back to the beginning of the chapter where our controverted text stands, I affirm that "*the connexion in which it is found*" establishes also justification by works IN THE GREAT DAY: and to prove it, I only lay the apostle's words before my judicious readers. *Thou art inexcusable, O Jew, whosoever thou art that JUDGEST, or condemnest the heathens who do such things, and doest them thyself. The JUDGMENT of God is according to TRUTH, and not according to thy antinomian notions, that thou wast unconditionally elected in Abraham; that thou standest compleat in his righteousness; and that thy sal-*

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vation was finished when he had offered up Isaac. Be not deceived, *God will render to every man according to his DEEDS, [and not according to his notions:]* To them, who by patient continuance in WELL DOING seek for immortality, he will render eternal life: Anguish to every man that DOES evil; but glory to every man that WORKETH GOOD.—for not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the DOERS of the law shall be JUSTIFIED—IN THE DAY when he shall JUDGE the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel. Rom. ii. 1, 16.

Now, Sir, is it not evident from “*the connexion*” to which you appeal, that Mr. Henry did not pervert the text, when he had the courage to say upon it, “*It is not hearing but DOING that will save us*” in the great day? Hearing mixed with faith, saves us indeed INSTRUMENTALLY in the day of conversion; but in the day of judgment neither hearing nor faith will do it, but *patient continuance in well doing*, from the principle of a living faith in Christ, will have that honor.

V. Page 34, after criticizing in the same frivolous manner as your brother, on Rev. xxii. 14. *Blessed are they that keep his commandments, &c.* you add, “*This is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his son Jesus Christ;*” and omitting what immediately follows, *and love one another as he gave us commandment;* you ask, “*What then is the conclusion?*” “*To believe is the great New Testament command of God.*” No, Sir, according to 1 John iii. 23. the text you have quoted by halves, that commandment is *to believe and to love*, or to believe with a *faith working by love*. Our Lord informs us, that *on the grand commandment of love, hang all the law and the prophets*. St. Paul says, *Though I have ALL FAITH, yet if I have not love, I am nothing*. *Devils believe*, says St. James. To believe then, without loving, is not doing God’s commandments, but doing the devil’s work. Besides, the word *commandments*, being in the

the plural number, denotes more than *one*, and therefore is incompatible with solifidianism.

To add, as you do, "*They that believe WILL and MUST obey,*" as if they could not help it, is supporting one mistake by another. That they *may, can,* and *should* obey, we grant; but that they *will,* and *must,* are two articles of Calvin's creed, to which we cannot subscribe: For, to say nothing of daily experience, we read in the scripture dismal accounts of those fallen believers, who, instead of *adding to their faith, virtue, &c.* proceeded so far in WILFUL DISOBEDIENCE, as to worship the abomination of the Zidonians, shed innocent blood, forswear themselves, and defile their father's bed.

It follows then still from Rev. xxii. 14, that although "*upon believing, not for obeying, we are initiated into all the new-covenant blessings*" in the day of conversion; yet in the great day, only upon persevering in faith and obedience shall we *have right*, or, if you please, "*privilege, power, and authority, through our Surety, to partake of the tree of life.*" For he that ENDURETH unto the end, the same shall be saved; and Christ is the author of eternal salvation to none but them that OBEY him.

VI. Page 36, "you quote against yourself, Rev. "xiv. 13. *Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord.* "Their blessedness arises from their dying in the "Lord." Granted. But how shall it be known they died *in the Lord*? *The Spirit says, Their works* (not their faith) *do follow them,* namely, in order to their final justification. To this you reply, "Their "works do not go before them—but follow after, to "PROVE that they were in the Lord, whose prerogative alone is to justify the ungodly." I answer,

(1) When you grant, that WORKS prove that we are *in the Lord* if they are good, or in the wicked one if they are evil, you give up the point.

(2) Do you not confound truth and error! Because in the day of conversion God justifies the ungod-

ly, who renounces his ungodliness to believe in Jesus, does it follow, that Jesus will *justify the ungodly* in the day of judgment? Is not the insinuation as unscriptural as it is dangerous? Does not our Lord himself say, that far from justifying them, he will bid them *Depart from him into everlasting fire*?

(3) Your observation, that works *follow* the righteous, and "*do not go before them*" is frivolous: for what matters it, whether the witnesses by whose evidence a prisoner is to be acquitted, follow him to the bar, or are there before him? Is their *following* him a proof that he is not justified by their instrumentality? To support your cause by such arguments, will do it no service.

VII. Page 37, you think to set aside these words of Solomon, *Keep God's commandments, for this is the whole [duty] of man; for God shall bring every work into judgment, whether it be good or bad*, by just saying, "This passage asserts, that we are to be accountable for our actions." Then it asserts the very thing for which it was produced: for how can those be really accountable for their actions, who can never be justified or condemned by their words, never be rewarded or punished according to their works? Here then again you grant what we contend for.

VIII. Page 38, 1 Cor. vii. 19. *Circumcision is nothing—but the keeping the commandments of God.* "This passage (*say you*) would equally as well prove the supremacy of the Pope, as your doctrine of a second justification by works."

I answer (1) If you compare this text with *Eccl. xii. 13, 14. Rev. xxii. 14. and Mat. xii. 37.* you will see it is very much to the purpose. (2) *Love is keeping of the commandments.* If I have not love, which is the *keeping of the commandments*, I am only *a tinkling cymbal*. Now, Sir, you must prove, that God will justify *tinkling cymbals* by imputed righteousness in the great day; or acknowledge, that the  
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*keeping of the commandments*, or, which is the same, love, makes more towards our final justification, than towards placing his Holiness the Pope in the pretended chair of St. Peter. (3) If *he doers of the law shall be finally JUSTIFIED*, and none but they; and if *keeping the commandments* is the same thing as being a *doer of the law*; you boldly hoist the Geneva flag, when you insinuate, that *the keeping of the commandments* has no more to do with our final justification, than with the supremacy of the Pope. Lastly, if *keeping the commandments* will have nothing to do with our *justification* in the last day, by a parity of reason, *breaking of them* will have nothing to do with our *condemnation*. Thus we are insensibly come to the dreadful counterpart of your comfortable doctrine, that is, absolute reprobation, free wrath, and finished damnation. And when the apostle says, *God shall judge the world in righteousness*, should he not rather, according to your plan, have said, in UNRIGHTEOUSNESS?

IX. Instead of answering such passages as these, *Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every man as his work shall be:—He that knoweth the heart, shall render to every man according to his works:—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 hath DONE, whether it be good or bad:—The Father, without respect of persons, judgeth according to every man's work:—The dead were judged out of the things written in the books, according to their works*: Instead, I say, of answering such passages, you leap over fifty pages of my book, to blame me (p. 35) for saying, after St. Peter, Acts ii. 40. *SAVE YOURSELVES from this untoward generation*.

Granting you, Sir, that the Greek word means literally, *Be ye saved*; yet you wrong our translation, when you say, that its language is “glaringly  
M 3 “incon-

“inconsistent.” The words that immediately precede, *He exhorted them, saying, Save yourselves, &c.* convinced our translators of the absurdity of exhorting people to be saved, that could absolutely do nothing in order to salvation. And you make Calvinism ridiculous before all Cambridge, when (p. 36) you make *σωθητε*, *Be ye saved*, or, when spoken in a way of exhortation, *Save yourselves*, to mean, “Know, that ye cannot save yourselves.”

P. 35, you say, “Let the context illustrate this: ‘Thousands were pricked to the heart; they ask, what they shall do, doubtless meaning, to be saved. The apostle directs them immediately to ‘Jesus for salvation.’ What! Without *doing* any thing towards it! No such thing. To the overthrow of your criticism, and of Calvinism, he sets them immediately upon *doing*. Their question was, ‘What shall we do to be saved?’ and the immediate answer is, ‘Repent and be baptized.’ Just as if he had said, *Be ye saved, or save yourselves by repenting and coming to Christ in the ordinance of baptism: Or, to use the words of Christ to the people of Capernaum, and those of St. Paul to the jailor of Philippi, ‘Do the work of God,’ i. e. the work which God first calls for: ‘Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shalt be saved.’*”

You add, this “language” [*Save yourselves*] “ill becomes the mouth of inspiration.” I am sorry, Sir, you should be so exceedingly positive. I rather think, that *your* “language ill becomes the mouth of” *modesty*. Does not St. Jude say, *SAVE SOME with fear?* Does not St. Paul mention his endeavours to *SAVE SOME of his own flesh*, Rom. xi. 14. and his *becoming all things to all men, that he might SAVE SOME*, 1 Cor. ix. 22? Does he not speak of a husband saving his wife, and of a wife saving her husband, 1 Cor. vii. 16? Does he not write to the Philippians, *Work out your own salvation?* And to Timothy,

Timothy,

Timothy, *In DOING this thou shalt SAVE THYSELF, and them that hear thee?* 1 Tim. iv. 16. You are too good a scholar, Sir, to say, that *σωσις σελυτο* "is passive;" and too modest a divine to insinuate, upon second thoughts, that St. Paul speaks like an heretic, and you like an apostle.

X. After opposing our doctrine of justification by the evidence of works in the last day, as warmly as your pious brother; you give your public assent to it as well as he. Page 34, Speaking of the day that shall declare every man's work, and the fire that shall try of what sort it is, you say, "Who that reads the bible denies, that every man's works shall be examined as a proof of his faith, and that upon their evidence the judge will pass sentence?"—Undoubtedly you mean, sentence of absolution or condemnation, according to our Lord's words, *By thy words shalt thou be JUSTIFIED, or CONDEMNED*, Mat. xii. 37.

Now, Sir, this is the very doctrine which we maintain—as you may see Second Check, p. 21 and 29—the very doctrine for which you represent me to the world as a papist, and a fierce enemy to the gospel. Gentle reader, take notice of my capital crime. I have dared to vindicate a truth, which [my opponent himself being judge] "no man that reads the bible denies." Is this a dreadful heresy! O Sir, when this shall be known in our universities, will not Oxford cry to Cambridge, and Cambridge echo back to Oxford, the substance of your book, and the title of mine? *Logica Genevensis!*

XI. Now that you have granted the doctrine of justification by the evidence of works in the day of judgment; let us see how you endeavour to keep your system in countenance. Page 34 you say, contrary to your own concession, "Though works have not the least to do in justifying our persons, yet

“ yet they will appear to the justifying of that faith, “ as found, by which alone we are to be saved.”

To cut you off from this last subterfuge, I observe, (1) That works will have as much “ to do” in justifying our *persons* in the last day, as faith in justifying them at our conversion. (2) This doctrine, of faith being justified by works in the day of judgment, is irrational: for faith shall then be no more; and common sense dictates, that Christ, the wisdom of God, will not lose time in justifying or condemning a grace which shall not exist. (3) It is quite unscriptural: Our Lord says, *By thy words shalt thou [not thy faith] be justified.* St. Paul says, *The doers of the law [not their faith] shall be justified.* And St. James declares, that *Rahab [not her faith] and Abraham [not his faith] were justified by works* in the day of trial. (4) Your scheme fathers nonsense upon that apostle; for if *faith* is justified by works, and not *a man*, it follows, that when St. James says, *Ye see then how that by works A MAN is justified, and not by faith only*, it is just as if he said, “ Ye see then how that by works *faith* is justified, and not by faith only.” (5) If the believer’s faith is justified in the last day, and not the believer himself; by a parity of reason, the unbeliever’s unbelief will be condemned, and not the unbeliever himself. (6) We have as good ground to assert, that the faith of believers shall be *saved* in the last day, and not their persons; as you to maintain, that the faith of believers shall be *justified*, and not their persons. Thus, according to your curious doctrine, Faith, not Believers, shall go to heaven; and Unbelief, not Unbelievers, shall depart into hell.— Lastly, if “ works have not the least to do in *justifying* our persons” in the great day; it follows, they will not have the least to do in *condemning* them. Thus are we come again to the doctrine of finished damnation; and thus you point-blank contradict

tradict your own scriptural concession, " Upon the  
" evidence of works the judge will pass sentence."

From the preceding pages it appears, [if I am  
not mistaken] that justification, by works, i. e. by  
the works of faith in the last day, is a solid anvil,  
which the twelve strokes of your hammer have  
settled more than ever upon its firm basis, *the word  
of God, that abideth for ever.* To this anvil I shall  
by and by bring Calvinian Antinomianism, and en-  
deavour to work it, in meekness of wisdom, with  
a hammer, I hope, a little heavier than your own.

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Having answered your objections to what you  
justly call " the principal cause of controversy  
" among us," I may make one or two observations  
upon the *friendliness* of your FRIENDLY Remarks.

Candid reader, if thou hast read my Checks  
without prejudice, and attentively compared them  
with the word of God; wouldst thou ever think,  
that the following lines contain an extract from the  
*friendly* sentence, which my young opponent passes  
upon them? " Hard names—Banter—Sarcasm  
" —Sneer—Abuse—Bravado—Low arts  
" of slander—Slandrous accusation—Oppro-  
" brious name—Ill-natured satire—Odious,  
" deformed, detestable colours—Unfair and un-  
" generous treatment—Terms void of truth—  
" Unmerciful condemnations—False humility—  
" Irritating spirit—Provoking, uncharitable style  
" —Continual sneers—Most odious appella-  
" tions—Abusive words—Notorious scanda-  
" lizing—Lines too dreadful to be transcribed,  
" unworthy of an answer, beneath contempt—  
" Most indecent ridicule—A wretched conclu-  
" sion, as bitter as gall—and, Slanders which  
" ought even to make a Turk blush."

If



If thou canst not yet see, gentle reader, into the nature of Mr. R—l—d H—'s *Remarks*, peruse the following *friendly* sentences. “ In regard to the “ fopperies of religion, you certainly differ from “ the popish priest of Madeley—You have made “ universal havock of every truth of the gospel— “ You have invented dreadful slanders—You “ plentifully stigmatize many with the most unkind “ language—You have blackened our principles, “ and scandalized our practice—You place us in “ a manner among murderers—It shocks me to “ follow you—Our characters lie bleeding under “ the cruelty of your pen, and complain loudly “ against your great injustice—Blush for the cha- “ racters you have injured by the rashness and bit- “ terness of your pen—You have invented a set “ of monsters, and raised an hideous ghost by your “ own spells and incantations of banter and con- “ tempt—Numberless sneers, taunts, and sarcasms “ dreadfully decorate the whole of your perform- “ ance: they are nothing better than infernal terms “ of darkness, which it is hateful to transcribe— “ Your Second Check, I fear, must prove the con- “ cluding bar of separation,” *i. e.* of *excommunication*.

When I cast my eyes upon this extract, I cannot help crying out, If this is my antagonist's *friendliness*, alas! what will be his *displeasure*! And what have I done to deserve these tokens of calvinian benevolence? Why are these flowers of Geneva rhetoric so plentifully heaped upon my head? And why—But I must not complain; for my friendly opponent has patiently stay'd till the publication of the Second Check, to talk of a “ concluding bar of separation:” But if I am a reprobate, upon his scheme of *unconditional* election, and *gratuitous* reprobation, Calvin's God put the *concluding bar of separation* between me and himself, not only before I wrote the  
*second*

*second* Check, but thousands of years before I drew my *first* breath. When I consider this, far from feeling the least resentment against Mr. H——, I see it my duty to thank him, for shewing much greater patience towards me than the God whom he worships; and I wonder, that his severe principles should not be productive of more *unfriendly Remarks*, than those which he is pleased to call *friendly*.

Yes, Sir, though I thought at first, that the title of your book was ironical, I now believe it literal, and am persuaded you *really* meant to shew me much *friendliness*. For a temporary excommunication, yea a “concluding bar of separation,” *must* appear an *act of grace*, to one who truly relishes the *doctrines of limited grace* and unprovoked wrath.

I do not hereby intimate, that I have done nothing displeasing to you. Far from insinuating it, I shall present my readers with a list of the manifold, but well-meant provocations, which have procured me your public correspondence. I say, *well-meant provocations*; for all I want to *provoke* any one to, is *love and good works*. And may not a minister use even the *rod* for that purpose? If you think not, please to inform me what the apostle meant, when he said, *What will ye? Shall I come unto you with the rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?*

(1) I have written my Checks with the *confidence* with which the clear dictates of reason, and the full testimonies of scripture, usually inspire those who love what they esteem truth more than they do their dearest friends.

(2) After speaking most honorably of *many Calvinists*, even of all that are *pious*, I have taken the liberty to insinuate, that the schemes of *finished salvation*, and *imputed righteousness*, will no more save a Calvinist guilty of *practical Antinomianism*, than the doctrine of *general redemption* will save an ungodly

godly Remonstrant. Thus I have made no difference between the *backsliding elect* of the Lock, and the *apostates* of the Foundery, when death overtakes them in their sins, and in their blood.

(3) I have maintained, that our Lord did not speak an untruth, when he said, *In the day of judgment, by thy words shalt thou be justified*; and that St. Paul did not propagate heresy, when he wrote, *Work out your own salvation*.

(4) I have sprinkled with the salt of † irony, your favourite doctrine, (Friendly Remarks, p. 39) "Salvation wholly depends upon the purpose of God according to election, without any respect to what may be in them," i. e. *the elect*. Now, Sir, as by the doctrine of undeniable consequences, he who receives a guinea with the *king's head* on the one side, cannot but receive the *lions* on the other side: so he that admits the preceding proposition, cannot but admit the inseparable counter-

part,

† If I make use of *Irony* in my Checks, I can assure thee, reader, it is not from "*spleen*," but *reason*. It appears to me, that the subject requires it, and that *ridiculous Error* is to be turned out of the temple of Truth, not only with scriptural argument, which is *the sword of the Spirit*; but also with *mild Irony*, which is a proper scourge for a glaring and obstinate mistake. I have already observed, that our Lord himself used it with his apostles, when he came out of his agony and bloody sweat. Some other remarkable instances of it we find in scripture. 1 Kings xxii. 15. Micaiah, a prophet of the Lord, being requested by king Ahab, and pious king Jehoshaphat, to tell them, whether Israel should go against Ramoth-gilead to battle; he *ironically* answered; *Go, and prosper; for the Lord shall deliver it into the hands of the king!* Well known is that solemn, though ironical, or, as Mr. H— would call it, *sarcastic* reproof of Solomon to a young prodigal, *Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, let thine heart cheer thee, and walk in the way of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes.* Ecc. xi. 9. From these examples I conclude, that an irony dictated by love, not only is no sign of "a bad spirit," but is an useful figure of speech, especially where the rapid progress of a preposterous error, calls for the *sharp rebukes* mentioned by St. Paul in my motto.

part, namely, the following position, which every attentive and unprejudiced person sees written in blood upon that side of Calvin's standard which is generally kept out of sight, ' Damnation wholly depends upon the purpose of God according to reprobation, without respect to what may be in the reprobates.' Here is no " inventing a monstrous creed," but merely turning the leaf of your own, and reading what is written there, viz. *Damnation finished*, evidently answering to *finished salvation*.

(5) You have done more, says my opponent, (p. 47) " You scarce write a page without unjust reflections: To follow you through all your accusations would be endless. One passage, however, which seems to me to shine conspicuous among the rest for *calumny* and *falshood*, as the moon does among the stars, shall be the last we will notice."

I say, Second Check, p: 59, " How many intimate, that Christ has fulfilled all righteousness, that we might be the children of God with hearts full of unrighteousness?" And you reply, " *How many? There are a generation it seems of these black blasphemers.*" [I would say, of these mistaken Calvinists.] " *Produce but a few of them.*"

Well, Sir, I produce first the author of P. O. next yourself, and then all the Calvinists who admire your brother's fourth letter, where he not only *insinuates*, but openly attempts to prove, that David was *a man after God's own heart*, a *pleasant child* of God, and that he *stood absolved and compleat in the everlasting righteousness of Christ*, while his eyes were full of adultery, and his hands full of blood: consequently, while his heart was full of all unrighteousness. Now, Sir, if this was the case of David, it may not only be that of *many*, but of *all* the elect. They may all be the children of God,

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not

not only with hearts full of unrighteousness, but even while they cloak adultery with deliberate murder.

Now pray, Sir, do you not shew yourself completely master of Geneva logic, when you assert, that what is so abundantly demonstrated by your brother's letters, and the well-known principles of all *sound* Calvinists, is a *calumny and falshood* as conspicuous as the luminary that rules the night? This imaginary moon of *calumny*, which you discover through the telescope of calvinian prejudice, will help my judicious readers to guess at the magnitude of the stars of *falshood*, with which you say, almost all the pages of my book are bespangled.

I conclude, dear Sir, by intreating you not to put any longer a wrong construction upon the Helvetic bluntness, with which I continue to expose barefaced Antinomianism. Do not account me *an enemy*, because I tell you the truth as it is in the epistle of St. James: And deprive me not of an interest in your valuable friendship, merely because I follow the word of God, and the dictates of my conscience.

I can with truth assure you, dear Sir, that your groundless charges of "*calumny, falshood, bitterness, injustice,*" &c. instead of "*putting a concluding bar of separation*" between us, only gives me an opportunity of fulfilling delightfully that precept of the evangelical law, according to which we shall be justified in the great day, *Forgive one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.* I confirm my love towards you, by rejoicing in all your *pious* labours, and sincerely wishing you the most unbounded success, whenever you do not give up the right "*foundation,*" or substitute Dr. Crisp to St. James, and Calvin's narrow election to the free gospel of Jesus Christ.  
And

And if I may trust the feelings of my own heart,  
which continues quite open towards you, I remain  
just as if you were not my opponent,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate Friend and obedient  
Servant in a pure gospel,

J. F.

N 2                      LETTER

## L E T T E R X.

To Mr. RICHARD and Mr. ROWLAND HILL.

Honored and dear Opponents,

**D**O you hate that foul monster Antinomianism? I know you cordially hate *practical*, and would cheerfully oppose *doctrinal* Antinomianism, if it were not inseparably connected with the favourite doctrines you have embraced. Yes, your true regard for holiness would make you wish me success, if [while I attack *fn*, our common adversary] *Calvinism*, which passes with you for *Christianity*, did not justly appear to you to be sapped in its very FOUNDATION. For, to my great astonishment, I find, that Calvin's doctrine of *unconditional election*, and Dr. Crisp's doctrine of *finished salvation*, are now substituted to Jesus Christ, and openly made the FOUNDATION of the present Calvinists. "*Finished salvation, and electing love*, (says Mr. Hill, Friendly Remarks, p. 19) *is their foundation.*" Is it indeed? Alas! I really thought, that all the Calvinists still maintained, with Mr. Wesley, that *other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is JESUS CHRIST*, 1 Cor. iii. 11. but I now fear, the breach between is wider than I imagined; for it seems we disagree no less about the *foundation*, than about the superstructure; and my younger opponent does me justice when he adds, "*Surely you never*

never mean to praise the Calvinists for guarding THIS FOUNDATION." No indeed, Sir, no more than I would praise them for placing two of Rachel's teraphim upon the Mediator's throne.

You are both conscious, that your two favourite doctrines will appear empty dreams, if the doctrine of the justification of *all* infants without faith is true; much more if the doctrine of the justification of adult persons by works, both in the day of trial and in the day of judgment, is scriptural. You agree, therefore, to bear your public testimony against the Third Check, where these doctrines are set in a clearer point of view than in my preceding publications. Permit me to remind my readers of the reasonableness of the assertions which have so greatly excited your surprize.

In the Third Check, p. 47 and 48, to make my readers sensible, that Calvinism has confusion, and not scripture, for its foundation, I made a scriptural distinction between the four degrees that constitute a saint's eternal justification, and each of these degrees I called *a justification*, because I thought I could speak as the oracles of God, without exposing the truth of the gospel to the smiles of Christian wits.

I. From Rom. v. 18. I proved the justification of infants: *As by the offence of Adam, says the apostle, judgment came upon ALL men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of Christ the free gift came upon ALL men to JUSTIFICATION of life.* In support of this justification, which comes upon ALL men in their infancy, I now advance the following arguments.

(1) The scripture tells us, that *Christ in all things hath the pre-eminence*: But if Adam is a more public person, a more general representative of mankind, than Jesus Christ; it is plain, that, in this grand respect, Adam hath the pre-eminence over Christ. Now, as this cannot be, as Christ is at least equal



to Adam, it follows, that as Adam brought a general condemnation, and an universal seed of death upon *all infants*; so Christ brings upon them a general justification, and an universal seed of life.

(2) I never yet saw a Calvinist, who denied that Christ died for Adam. Now, if the Redeemer died for our first parent, he undoubtedly expiated the original sin, the first transgression of Adam. And if Adam's original sin was atoned for, and forgiven to him, as the Calvinists, I think, generally grant, does it not follow, that although all infants are by nature children of wrath, yet through the redemption of Christ they are in a state of favour or justification? For how could God damn to all eternity any of Adam's children for a sin which Christ expiated? A sin which was forgiven almost 6000 years ago to Adam, who committed it in person?

(3) The force of this observation would strike our Calvinist brethren, if they considered that we were not less in Adam's loins, when God gave his Son to Adam in the grand, original gospel-promise, than when Eve prevailed upon him to eat of the forbidden fruit. As all in him were included in the covenant of perfect obedience, *before* the fall; so all in him were likewise interested in the covenant of grace and mercy, *after* the fall: and we have full as much reason to believe, that some of Adam's children never fell with him from a state of probation, according to the old covenant; as to suppose, that some of them never rose with him to a state of probation, upon the terms of the new covenant, which stands upon *better promises*.

Thus if we ALL received an unspeakable injury, by being seminally in Adam when he fell, according to the first covenant; we ALL received also an unspeakable blessing, by being in his loins when God spiritually raised him up, and placed him upon  
gospel

gospel ground. Nay, the blessing which we have in Christ, is far superior to the curse which Adam entailed upon us : We stand our trial upon much more advantageous terms than Adam did in paradise. For according to the first covenant, *judgment was by ONE offence to condemnation.* One sin sunk the transgressor. But according to *the free gift,* or second covenant, provision is made in Christ for repenting of, and rising from *MANY offences unto justification.* Rom. v. 16.

(4) Calvinists are now ashamed of consigning infants to the torments of hell ; they begin to extend their election to them all. Even the translator of Zanchius believes, that all children who die in their infancy are saved. Now, Sir if all children, or any of them, are saved ; they are unconditionally justified according to our plan : for they cannot be *justified by faith,* according to St. Paul's doctrine, Rom. v. 1. as it is granted, that those who are not capable of understanding, are not capable of believing. Nor can they be *justified by works,* according to St. James's doctrine, chap. ii. 24. for they are not accountable for their works, who do not know good from evil, nor their right hand from their left. Nor can they be *justified by words,* according to our Lord's doctrine, Mat. xii. 37. because they cannot yet form one articulate sound. It follows, then, that all infants must be damned, or justified without faith, words, or works, according to our first distinction. But as you believe they are saved, the first degree of an adult saint's justification, is not less founded upon your own sentiments, than upon reason and scripture.

II. When infants grow up, they are called to *believe in the light* of their dispensation ; and till they do, their personal sins condemn them. Here appears the absolute need of justification by the instrumentality of faith. This justification we preach  
to

to Jews and Heathens, to pharisees and publicans. Upon it we chiefly insist, when we address penitent prodigals, and mourning backsliders. This the apostle chiefly defends in his epistles to the Romans and Galatians. Our church strongly maintains it in her Eleventh Article: and as we are all agreed about it, I shall only refer to some passages where it is evidently mentioned. Rom. v. 1. Gal. ii. 16. Acts xiii. 39.

III. Whoever *hath present access unto that grace wherein they, who are justified by faith do stand*, is also justified BY WORKS. True justification by faith is then inseparable from justification by works; for *faith works by love*, so long as it is *living*; and love is productive of good works. In the apostolic age, as well as in ours, *the love of many grew cold*, and concerning *faith they made shipwreck*, by not adding to it, *brotherly-kindness, godliness, and charity*. But as they still professed the saving *faith of God's elect*, which *works by love*, St. James was directed by the Holy Ghost to enforce the justification of a BELIEVER by works.

Now, dear Sirs, before you can reasonably explode *this justification*, you must execute the antinomian wish of Luther, and tear St. James's epistle out of *your bibles*. But, as we can never give you leave to take this liberty with *ours*, we shall still oppose the justification of evil workers, or practical Antinomians, in the day of trial, by such scriptures as these: *Know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead—Rahab was justified by works—Abraham was justified by works*; and so are all his legitimate children; *for by works a man is justified, and not by faith only*.

IV. As for the last degree of an adult saint's justification, it is so fully established upon the words of our Lord, *In the day of judgment by thy words shalt thou be justified*, that Dr. Owen, and multitudes of the

the Puritan divines, as I have made it appear from their own writings, avowed it as the *gospel truth*, in opposition to Dr. Crisp's *antinomian error*. Nay, during our controversy, truth has prevailed; for, notwithstanding the strong resistance you have made against it, you have both granted all that we contend for; witness the two first letters of this Check.

Now, instead of attempting to prove, at least by *one* argument, that these distinctions are contrary either to scripture or reason, Mr. Hill sen<sup>r</sup>. says, in his *Remarks*, p. 5, 6. "What really surprizes me beyond all the rest, is, your having brought out two new justifications since the Second Check—no apologies can excuse you for having concealed the matter so long." — Mr. Hill jun<sup>r</sup>. adds, in the postscript to his *Friendly Remarks*, p. 65, 66, 67. "Your doctrine is a mysterious jumble—Your three publications contain a sarrago—You are quite become unanswerable—In your First Check, we hear but of one justification; in your Second, you treat us with two; two more are lately invented, and shewed in among the rest — These four justifications may be *doubled* and *doubled*, till they amount to *four-score*—Your imagination is fertile, you can invent them by dozens."

(1) Before I answer these witticisms, permit me to trouble you with a simile. I maintain, that the age of man in general may properly, and at times necessarily must be considered, as made up of four different stages; infancy, youth, ripe years, and old age. Two masters of arts, who would make the world believe, that youth and old age are the same, smile at the absurdity of this fourfold distinction. "How inconsistent are you, say they! Some time ago you spoke of the age of man in general, and told us, it was threescore years and ten. Yesterday you treated us with a dissertation upon youth and  
and

and old age. To-day two more ages, infancy and ripe years, are invented, and shoved in among the rest. Your fertile imagination may double and double these four ages, till they amount to fourscore; nay, you can invent them by dozens." This humorous answer highly delights thousands, and in mystic Geneva such wit passes for argument; but some in England begin to ask, Shall we be for ever the dupes of Geneva logic?

(2) It is a very great mistake, that "*In the First Check we hear but of one justification:*" for though I there treat principally of *justification by faith*, because Mr. Wesley principally meant it in the Minutes; yet, p. 47. the justification of infants is thus described: It is "that general benevolence of our merciful God towards sinful mankind, whereby, through the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, he casts a propitious look upon us, and freely makes us partakers of the light that enlightens every man who comes into the world. This general loving-kindness is certainly previous to any thing we can do to find it; for it always prevents us, saying to us in our very *IN-FANCY, Live, (and)* in consequence of it" our Lord says, *Let little children come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.* This is not all. P. 47 and 48, I particularly describe "*justification by faith*" in the day of conversion, and expressly mention "*justification by words (or works) in the day of judgment:* And common sense dictates, that none can be *justified by works in the day of judgment*, but those who, according to St. James's doctrine, have been *justified by works* in this life. How rash, then, is the assertion, that I have *invented* any new justification since the First Check! How weak is that cause, which a master of arts cannot support but by a witticism, founded upon as palpable a mistake as that "*one and three do not make more than one!*"

And

And is the doctrine of a glorified saint's complete justification changed in the Second Check? No: for the author of P. O. in his answer to that book, (Review, p. 12) upbraids me with saying, (2 Check, p. 6) "*By faith a man is justified at his conversion, but by works he is justified*" (on earth) "*in the hour of trial, as Abraham when he offered up Isaac,*" [or] "*in a court of judicature, as St. Paul at the bar of Festus.*" [And again] "*By works he is justified before the judgment-seat of Christ, as every one will be, whose faith when he goes hence is found working by love.*" I grant, however, that I did not mention the justification of infants in the Second Check; but this does not prove, that I "*concealed a matter of such importance.*" For I had plainly mentioned it in the Vindication, and Mr. Shirley not having opposed it in his Narrative, as he had done *justification by works in the great day*, it would have been absurd to spend time in establishing it.

If you ask, why I have distinguished between justification by works *to-day*, and justification by works *in the day of judgment*: I answer, For two reasons, (1) St. James and Mr. Hill jun<sup>r</sup>. do so: "*Rahab was justified by works, AT THE TIME WHEN she received the spies.*" Friendly Remarks, p. 38. (2) The propriety and importance of this distinction, appear from the following consideration. Many may be justified by works *to-day*, who shall be condemned by works *in the day of judgment*.

Take an instance. When St. Paul chose Demas to be his fellow-labourer, Demas was undoubtedly *justified by works, and not by faith only*; for the apostle would not have been *unequally yoked* with an evil worker, any more than *with an unbeliever*. Nevertheless, in the day of judgment, if we may believe John Bunyan, Demas shall be condemned by his *latter*, instead of being justified by his *former* works.

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But I have said, Second Check, p. 6. that “ a man is justified by faith when his backslidings are healed,” as well as at his first conversion. And as he may fall from, and return to God ten times, a facetious opponent is ready to charge me with holding ten, perhaps “ *threescore justifications*” by faith. Witty, but groundless is the charge; for supposing I lose and find the same guinea ten times, am I not mistaken if I fancy that I have found ten guineas? Or if you draw back *sixty* times from a bright sun-shine into a dark cave, and *sixty* times comes into the sun-shine again, do I not offer violence to reason if I maintain, that you have got into “ *threescore*” sun-shines? Here you say, “ *Illustrations are no proofs at all.*” I grant it: nevertheless, when the proofs are gone before, just illustrations wonderfully help many readers to detect the fallacy of a plausible argument.

But supposing I had not mentioned the different degrees of an adult saint’s justification either in the First or Second Check, would you not, Gentlemen, have exposed Geneva logic, as you have now done your inattention, if you had hoped to set plain scripture aside by saying, ‘ It comes too late. You placed it in the Third Check; it should have been produced in the First?’ Does not such an argument hurt your cause more than a prudent silence would have done?

However, if you cannot put out the candle with which we search the streets of mystic Geneva, and examine the foundation of its towers, you both agree to amuse the Calvinists, by bringing † Mr. Wesley upon the stage of the controversy. He said  
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† The prejudice of my opponents against Mr. Wesley, makes them catch at every shadow of opportunity, to place him in a contemptible light before the world. Witness their exclaiming against him, for having suffered me to make an honourable mention of his labours in the Vindication, to counterbalance a little the  
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above twenty years ago, in one of his journals, " I cannot but maintain, at least till I have clearer light, that THE *justification* which is spoken of by St. Paul to the Romans, and in our articles, is not twofold; it is one and no more." Here Mr. Hill jun<sup>r</sup>. particularly triumphs. By your four degrees of a glorified faint's justification, " *you have thrown your own friend in the dirt, says, he, help him out if you can.*"

To this I answer, that if Mr. Wesley, by the justification spoken of by St. Paul to the Romans, meant that which the apostle *purposedly* maintains in that epistle, and which our church *explicitly* asserts in  
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the loads of contempt poured upon him on all sides. Those gentlemen do not consider, that there are times, when a grey-headed, useful, and yet slighted, insulted minister of Christ, may not only suffer another to speak honourably of his labours, but when he ought to magnify his own office in person.

St. Paul certainly did so, when he said, *In nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles. I have laboured more abundantly than they all. Are they ministers of Christ, I am more: in labours more abundant, &c.*—After the Apostle's example, might not Mr. Wesley himself say, [giving, like him, all the glory to divine grace] " I am in nothing behind the chief of the gospel ministers. I have laboured more abundantly than they all?" Nay, might he not add, " I have broken the ice, and stood in the gap for them all?" Now, if instead of answering for himself, he has permitted me to vindicate his aspersed character, and despised ministry, where is the harm? If Timothy was to let *no man despise his youth*, is Mr. Wesley guilty of an unpardonable crime, because he has permitted me to bear my testimony against the impropriety of *despising his old age*? And does not even young Mr. Hill say much more for himself, than I have done for Mr. Wesley *the aged*? The whole of what I have advanced in his favour, centers in this assertion, *He has DONE MUCH for God.* But my opponent addresses me thus before the public, *Friendly Remarks*, p. 69. " *You know my character, that I have SUFFERED much, VERY MUCH for God.*" And yet this very gentleman takes Mr. Wesley to task, and accuses him of self-importance! O Partiality, how long wilt thou blind and divide us? And how long wilt thou cause the astonished world to say, *See how these sheep bite and devour one another?*



her eleventh article, my vindicated friend speaks a great truth when he says, that *THIS justification is one and no more*; for it is evidently *justification by faith*. But supposing he had not properly considered either the justification of infants without faith and works, or the justification of believers by works in the day of trial, and in the day of judgment; what would you infer from thence? That the scriptures which speak of such justifications, are false? The conclusion would be worthy of Geneva logic. Weigh your argument in the balance of English logic, and you will find it is wanting. Twenty-three, or, if you please, three years ago Mr. Wesley wanted *clearer light*, to distinguish between the justification of a *SINNER by faith*, and the justification of a *BELIEVER by works*: but two years ago God gave him this clearer light, and he immediately called his friends to "*Review the whole affair*," and help him to make a firm stand for St. James's pure religion, against Dr. Crisp's defiled gospel: therefore, say my opponents, St. James's and Jesus Christ's justification of a believer by works, is a "dreadful heresy," and Mr. Wesley is "*thrown in the dirt*." Is the conclusion worthy of two masters of arts? May I not more reasonably draw just a contrary inference, and say, therefore Mr. Wesley shakes the very dust, or, if you please, the very "*dirt*" of Geneva from off his feet, and exhorts his flocks to do the same through the three kingdoms?

II. As our controversy centers in the point of justification by works, both in the day of the trial of faith, and in the day of judgment; whatever my opponents advance against this, I shall endeavour to answer.

"The scriptures [says Mr. Hill sen'. *Remarks*, p. 5.] always speak of justification as perfect, full, and compleat." For an answer to this bold, unscriptural assertion, I refer the reader to the preceding

eeding pages, where he will easily see, that, although God's work is always perfect, so far as it goes; yet, as final justification depends upon perseverance in the faith, and as perseverance in the faith is inseparably connected with *patient continuance in well doing*, it is unscriptural and absurd to assert, that final justification is compleat, before we can say with St. Paul, *I am ready to be offered up; I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith*: or rather, before Christ himself says to us, *Well done, good and faithful servants, enter into the joy of your Lord*.

III. P. 4. "You do us great injustice, in supposing, that we believe, or assert, any souls may strive, reform, and pray, without any possibility of escaping hell. When you made the above assertion, did you not know, in your own conscience, that you charged us wrongfully?"

In the presence of God, I answer in the negative. If you maintain, that Christ never died for a certain, fixed number of men, you must of consequence believe, that those whom he never died for, can never fly from the wrath to come, though they should strive, reform, and pray ever so much.

If you are consistent, you *must* be persuaded, that though Mr. Wesley, for example, has prayed, strove, and reformed for above forty years, yet, if he is not one of what you call "*the happy number*," he shall inevitably be damned.

IV. P. 8. You refer me to your "*striking quotation of Luther, concerning the distinction between a believer and his actions*." I answer, (1) Luther's bare assertions go for nothing with us, when they stand in direct opposition to St. James's epistle, which, in one of his antinomian fits, he wanted to burn out of the way. (2) This assertion contradicts common sense and daily experience, which agree to depose, that, excepting the case of lunatics and

delirious persons, men are like their actions, when those actions are taken together with their principle and design.

V. You add in the same page, "*It was happy for David, that, when he fell so grossly, he had a merciful, gracious, promise-keeping God to deal with; and that he fell not into the hands of Arminians and Perfectionists.*" I retort, "It was happy for Clodius, that, if he turned from his wicked way, he had not an unmerciful, ungracious, and promise-breaking God to deal with, and fell not into the hands of an inexorable Moloch, before whom poor reprobated heathens can find no place for repentance, though they should seek it carefully with tears." As for your insinuation, that Arminians and Perfectionists (as such) are merciless to backsliders, it is groundless: We are taught to *restore the fallen in the spirit of meekness as well as you.* And (to the praise of divine wisdom I write it) we are enabled to do it without encouraging them to return to their wallowing in the mire of sin, by dangerous insinuations, that relapses into it will "work for their good."

VI. While we speak of David and Clodius, it may be proper to dwell a moment upon their case. Clodius, a young heathen, forsakes his one wife, and David, an elderly jew, forsakes his seven wives and ten concubines, to commit the crime of adultery with women whose husbands they have just murdered. I maintain, that David is *more* guilty than Clodius, and that his crime is so much the more atrocious than that of the noble heathen, as he commits it against greater light and knowledge, against greater mercies and more solemn vows, perhaps with more deliberation, and certainly with less temptation from the ferments of youthful blood, and the want of variety.

But you still dissent from me, and persist to say, (p. 9.) that "*David remained absolved from the curse of the*  
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*the law, whilst Clodius lay under it."* And how do you prove it? "*David, say you, was a believer.*" I reply, No, he was an impenitent adulterer, and a treacherous murderer; and these characters are as incompatible with that of a believer, as heaven is irreconcilable with hell, and Christ with Belial. If a man can be a believer, *i. e.* a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven, while he wallows in the filth of adultery, and imbrues his hands in innocent blood, farewell Christianity, farewell heathen morality, farewell common decency: We are come to the nonplus-*ultra* of Antinomianism: Truth and virtue, law and gospel, natural and revealed religion, are buried in a common grave. Alas! my dear Sir, what have you advanced! what can the wildest ranter, what can Satan himself desire more?

A deistical gentleman lately observed, that all religion consisted in morality, and that nevertheless *revelation* was an useful contrivance of wise politicians, to keep the vulgar in awe, and enforce the practice of moral duties among the populace. But, alas! the unhappy turn which you give to revelation, does not even leave it the poor use which a deist will allow it to have. Nay, your scheme, far from enforcing morality, sets it aside at a stroke. For, if a man that actually commits adultery, treachery, and murder, is a pleasant child of God; why should not a drunkard, a swearer, a thief, or a traitor, be also accomplishing God's holy decrees? Why should he not prove his pleasant child, as well as a wanton adulterer, and a perfidious murderer? Is not this stripping *the woman*, the Christian Church, of the glorious garment of holiness, in which she came down from heaven? Is it not exposing her to horrid derision, without so much as a scrap, I shall not say of exalted piety, but even of heathen morality, to keep herself decent before a world of

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mocking infidels? Hath not this doctrine driven Geneva headlong into Deism? And is it not likely to have the same effect upon all, who can draw a just inference from your dangerous premises?

Hitherto protestants in general have granted to the papists, that although good works are not *meritorious* [if any higher idea than that of *rewardable* is fixed to that word] yet they are *necessary* to salvation: but since the doctrine of *finished salvation* pours in upon us like a flood; since good men do not scruple to tell the world, that the salvation of a bloody adulterer, *in flagrante delicto*, is finished, and that he is a pleasant child of God, fully accepted and completely justified, what have good works to do with salvation? We may not only dispense with them, but do the most horrid works. Yea, "*the wheel*" of adultery, treachery, and murder, may "*run round and round again*," for ten months, without interrupting the finished salvation of the elect; any more than praying, weeping, and reforming for ten years, will prevent the finished damnation of the reprobates.

But lest you should say, I "*blind the eyes of the readers by deceitful dust*," I meet you on the solid ground where St. James stood, when he opposed the primitive Antinomians; and, taking that holy apostle's gospel-trump, I found an alarm in Laodicea, and cry out to the drowsy world of Nicolaitan professors, whether they hear the word at the Lock-chapel, or at the Foundery, *Awake ye that sleep, and arise from the dead. Shew your faith by your works. Know ye not, O vain men, that faith WITHOUT WORKS is DEAD*, that it is a putrifying, ill-smelling corpse? Help, ye men of God, help us to bury it out of the way of good works. Let frightened Morality dig a grave; let indignant Piety cast the horrid nuisance into it. And, while we commit it to hell, whence it came, while the *devils, who believe*, feed upon the  
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noisome carcase, let Bishop Cowper himself, attended by the author of P. O. say over the grave, "*Justifying faith whereby we are saved, CANNOT BE without good works.*" *Dead and damnable is the faith which is consistent with adultery and murder.* And let all the Church say *Amen*, and contend for *the faith of God's elect*, the faith maintained by St. Paul and St. James, the faith recommended in Mr. Wesley's Minutes, the living faith that works by obedient love.

VII. P. 10, in defence of your cause, you produce those words of our Lord to the proud pharisees, *Publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of heaven before you.* Surely, Sir, you would not insinuate, that God takes extortioners and strumpets into heaven as such, and that adultery and whoredom are a ready way to glory! I know you start from the horrid insinuation. And, nevertheless, I fear, this doctrine naturally flows from the manner in which the passage is quoted. I always thought those words of our Lord meant, that publicans and harlots could sooner be reclaimed from their execrable courses of life, than self-hardened pharisees from their diabolical pride: and that, while Christ would admit a penitent Magdalen into heaven, he would thrust an impenitent pharisee into hell. But what is this to the purpose? Does this make the case of David, or any other sinner better, while they remain in a state of impenitency?

VIII. P. 9, You have answered this question: "David in Uriah's bed, you say, in a sense was not impenitent. The grace of repentance, &c. did lie like a spark covered with ashes." To this I reply:

(1) If by a spark or seed of repentance you understand a ray of that quickening light, which enlightens every man who comes into the world, and endues him with a gracious capacity of repenting during the day of salvation, we are agreed: supposing you grant us, that while Clodius defiled his  
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neighbour's bed in Rome, he was such a penitent as David when he committed the same crime in Jerusalem.

(2) We deny, that a capacity of repentance is *in a sense* repentance, any more than a capacity of obeying is in a sense obedience. According to your idea of that sort of repentance, which David had when he committed murder, the most abandoned profligates, who have not yet filled up the measure of their iniquities, are all *in a sort* penitent; and Adam when he ate the forbidden fruit was *in a sort* obedient.

(3) Your assertion is unscriptural. You cannot produce one passage to prove, that a murderer, or an adulterer, *in flagrante delicto*, is a penitent in any sense. If David was a penitent, because repentance lay in his heart as a spark BURIED under ashes; I may say, in direct opposition to the words of our Lord, that *the wicked and slothful servant* was in some sense *good and diligent*, because his master's talent lay BURIED in his napkin.

(4) You insinuate, that the *ashes* which covered the spark of David's repentance were "*his sin.*" The comparison is not very fortunate: for ashes frequently preserve the spark which they cover; but the commission of murder always tends to *quench the Spirit*. If you say, that David repented *in some sort* while he sinned, because he undoubtedly sinned with remorse of conscience; I reply, (1) That he seems to have enjoyed his crimes at last, with as much carnal security as Clodius could possibly do. (2) If remorse is confounded with repentance, hell is filled with penitents, and most drunkards and murderers are *in a sort* penitent; for when they sin, they do it frequently with much reluctance.

(5) This scheme of *a sort of repentance*, covered as a spark in the heart of those whose eyes are full of adultery, and hands full of blood, is attended with

with the most fatal consequences. It tends to breed negligence in the heart of believers, and carnal security in the breast of apostates; for how can the former be careful not to lose what is inestimable? And how can the latter endeavour to recover what they have not lost? Again, it supercedes the distinction there is between the righteous and the wicked, and opens the door to the most horrid confusion in the moral world. Has not a traitor as much right to plead the *spark* of loyalty, a drunkard the *spark* of sobriety, and an highwayman the *spark* of honesty, covered under the ashes of his sin; as you have to plead the *spark* of repentance, chastity, and brotherly love, that lay covered in the heart of David during his long apostasy?

(6) But this is not all: If your doctrine is true, that of Christ and his apostles is evidently false. For St. Paul says to the Corinthians, *Examine yourselves, whether you are in the faith.* And he gives them this rule of examination, *Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor adulterers, &c. have ANY inheritance in the kingdom of Christ.* Now, if a man who commits adultery and murder may have a *spark* of grace and repentance, which actually constitutes him a pleasant child of God, how in the world can he know, by the apostle's rule, whether he is in the faith or not? St. John says, with apostolic bluntness, *He that committeth sin is of the devil:* Yes, in Rome, replies one who is versed in your divinity; but in Jerusalem, he that committeth adultery and murder may be *in a sort penitent*, consequently a man after God's own heart. Again, *By their fruit ye shall know them,* says our Lord, when he speaks of *wolves in sheep's cloathing.* Now, it is clear, that if your doctrine is true, even when they commit adultery and murder, it cannot be known whether they are wolves, because the *spark* of chastity and charity that constituted David a pleasant child during his dreadful



dreadful fall, may be concealed under all their de-  
baucheries and barbarities.

IX. P. 13. to enforce your doctrine of a TWO-  
FOLD, and, as it appears to me, JESUITICAL *will in  
God*, you again produce God's forbidding murder to  
free agents: and to this prohibition you oppose the  
murder which the Jews committed as free agents,  
when " *by wicked hands they crucified Christ, who was  
delivered to them by the determinate counsel and foreknow-  
ledge of God.*" I hope, Sir, you would not insinuate,  
that God solemnly forbids murder by his *revealed*,  
and forcibly enjoins it by his *secret will*! To  
what I have already said on the point in the Third  
Check (p. 90.) I now add, (1) God never instigated  
the Jews to murder Christ. On the contrary, he  
frequently restrained them from the commission of  
their intended crime. *Ye seek to kill me*, said Jesus to  
them many months before they actually did it.  
They even made open attempts to stone him, and  
cast him down a precipice, before the time foretold.  
(2) When that time was come, God being about to  
give his Son a ransom for the many, *by his determi-  
nate counsel*, that *one should die for all*; and seeing by  
*his foreknowledge*, that the Jews, who thirsted for his  
blood, would put him to death, he no longer hin-  
dered them from taking him. Thus Jesus went to  
meet their malicious band in the garden of Gethse-  
mane, and said, *I am he whom ye seek.* (3) This  
only shews, that divine Providence sometimes suffers  
moral agents to commit outwardly the sins which  
they have already committed in their own breast:  
and he suffers it, that they may come to condigna  
punishment, or that other wicked men may be pun-  
ished: sometimes also, that good men may be tried,  
hypocrites detected, and the godly made perfect by  
sufferings, like their Lord.

X. P. 13. in support of the same mistake, you  
add, " You believe it to be God's *revealed will*, that  
" every

“ every man should *love* his brother, as himself; yet  
 “ it was certainly according to the *secret will* of God,  
 “ that Joseph’s brethren should *sell*” [why do you  
 not say, *should HATE*] “ him, and that he should go  
 “ into Egypt: otherwise Joseph must have told a  
 “ gross untruth, when he said, *God did send me to*  
 “ *preserve life—it was not you that sent me hither,*  
 “ *but God.*”

To vindicate what I beg leave to call *God’s honesty*, permit me to observe, (1) That I had rather believe, Joseph *told* once a *gross untruth*, than suppose that God perpetually equivocates. (2) You must not raise a doctrine upon two sentences which Joseph spake as a fond brother, rather than as a judicious divine. When he saw his brethren confounded, and when in a cordial embrace he mixed his tears of joy with their tears of shame and repentance, how *natural* was it for him, to draw a veil over their crime, and to comfort them, by observing with what providential wisdom God had over-ruled a circumstance which attended their sin! (3) All that you can therefore infer from Joseph’s case is, that God would have his brothers love him as *free agents*; and that when, as *free agents* they chose to hate and murder him, the Lord, to save his life and bring about his deep designs, excited some compassion in their breasts: Hence they thought it *less cruel*, while the providential appearance of the Ishmaelites made it appear *more profitable*, to sell him as a slave than to starve him to death in a pit. Thus God, contrary to their intention, but not contrary to his own law, sent him into Egypt to preserve life. But what is this to the purpose? Was it God’s *secret, effectual will*, that Joseph’s brethren should *hate* him, while his *revealed will* commanded them to *love* him, under pain of eternal damnation? Before you can establish this doctrine, you must prove, that man is a mere machine, and God a mere Moloch.

XI. But

XI. But to excuse yourself, you ask, p. 12, "By speaking of the *secret* and *revealed* will of God, do I suppose that God has two contrary wills?" Undoubtedly you do, honored Sir, if you are consistent. God's *revealed* will, for example, is, that *all the families of the earth should be blessed in Christ, with the grace that bringeth salvation to all men*: but by his *secret* will, if we may believe Calvin, most families of the earth are absolutely cursed: a decree of preterition eternally excludes them from an interest in Christ, and from the least degree of saving grace.

Again, it is God's *revealed* will, that *all men every where should repent*, under penalty of destruction: but upon your plan of doctrine, it is his *secret effectual will*, that most men, even all the reprobates, shall never repent. And, indeed, how should they, if *he hardens* them either from their mother's womb, or from the loins of their first parent? Once more, it is God's *revealed will*, that all men should believe in the gospel, and be saved as *free agents*, if they submit to his gracious and easy terms: but according to your scheme, it is his *secret indefectible will*, either that there shall be no gospel, or only a lying gospel, for most men; and that there shall be no conditions or terms in the gospel. Hence we are openly told, that God does not treat with the sons of men in a way of condition; his language being absolute, like himself, *I WILL and you SHALL*: That is, "Ye elect, *I WILL* that ye believe and be saved, *and you SHALL* believe and be saved: And ye reprobates, *I WILL* that you sin and be damned, *and you SHALL* sin and be damned." If you do not hold those propositions, you are with reason ashamed of Calvinism; if you hold them, you certainly maintain, that there are two *contrary wills* in God, whether you suppose that you do so or not.

XII. One more observation, and I have done. In your Five Letters you have opposed this proposition, "*Believing is previous to justification,*" and said,

said, " *I deny that believing precedes justification*" in the day of conversion. I have observed in my reply, that this assertion sets aside justification *by faith*; because, if believing does not precede justification, there is no need of believing in order to be justified. " *This is disingenuous, say you, Remarks, p. 10. Where do I assert that justification precedes believing? I believe that true faith and justification are as inseparable as fire and heat.*"

To this I answer, (1) Your comparison is not just. *Fire* is not the *instrument* by which *heat* is apprehended, but the *very fountain* of heat itself: Whereas *faith* justifies, not as being the *very fountain* of justification, but merely as an *instrument* that apprehends the truth of him who *justifies the ungodly that believes in Jesus*. Here, then, you indirectly give to justifying faith the honor due to none but the heavenly Justifier.

(2) We grant you, that as, in the very instant in which we open our eyes, we receive the light, and see: so in the very moment in which we believe, we receive Christ the truth, and are justified. But still you must grant us, that believing is as much *previous* to justification, as opening the eyes is *previous* to seeing. We are *justified by faith*, and common sense dictates, that the instrument by which a thing is apprehended, must exist before it can be apprehended.

Having thus endeavoured to follow you in your retreat, to cut you off from your various subterfuges; and having exposed, with my usual bluntness, the hard shifts you have been obliged to make, in order to keep your doctrine the least in countenance, permit me to assure you, that I still remain, with brotherly love and respect,

Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant in the whole gospel  
of Christ,

J. FLETCHER.  
P LETTER

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## L E T T E R XI.

To Mr. RICHARD and Mr. ROWLAND HILL,

Honored and dear Sirs,

**H**AVING answered the arguments which each of you have advanced against the doctrine of justification by works in the great day, permit me to consider what may farther be advanced against it.

I. We cry to SINNERS, *By grace shall ye be saved, through faith*, in the day of your conversion; but to BELIEVERS we say, *By grace shall ye be saved, through works*, in the day of judgment. *Turn therefore, ye sinners; and ye saints, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.*

“ Saved by grace, through works, in the day of judgment! What a farrago of popery and gospel! Faith and works, what a shocking mixture! *Geminantur tigribus agni.* You have undoubtedly the full consent of “Bellarmine and the scarlet whore” for such a match. But with what detestation would St. Paul enter his protest against it? Does he not declare, that faith and works reciprocally exclude each other? Says he not, *If by grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of WORKS, then it is no more grace, otherwise WORK is no more WORK.*—*If Abraham was justified BY WORKS, he hath whereof to glory, for to him that*

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WORKETH is the reward not reckoned of grace but of debt: But Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. And David also describeth the blessedness of the man to whom God imputeth righteousness WITHOUT WORKS. Hence the apostle concludes, *By grace ye are saved, through faith: not OF WORKS, lest any man should boast.* And again, *Not by WORKS of righteousness which we have done, but of his mercy he saved us, &c.* Now, how does this doctrine of justification and salvation WITHOUT WORKS, agree with your doctrine of justification or salvation BY WORKS in the last day? And how can you reconcile St. Paul, with Bellarmine, Mr. Wesley, and yourself?"

ANS. I. Should you not rather ask, how we can reconcile St. Paul with Jesus Christ, St. James and himself? Is not the second chapter to the Romans as strong for WORKS, as the Minutes, the epistle of St. James, and our Lord's sermon on the mount? Have we not observed, that even in the epistles where the apostle purposely maintains the doctrine of justification by faith in the day of conversion, he writes of works in such a manner as flatly to contradict himself, if they have nothing to do with our final justification in the last day?

Says he not to the believers at Rome, *If ye live after the flesh, or, if ye do not cast off the works of darkness, rioting and drunkenness, strife and envying, &c. ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.* And again, *Be subject to the higher powers: for they that resist them, shall receive to themselves damnation?*

And says he not to the Galatians, *All the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself?* And let no Antinomian persuade you, that the law of obedient love is only "a rule of life." No, it is also a rule of punishment; *For I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past,*

[see how plainly and constantly the apostle preached the law of Christ!] *that they who do such things, they who are guilty of adultery, fornication, hatred, wrath, strife, envying, murder, drunkenness, and such like, shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Fulfil therefore the law of Christ. Let every man prove his own work; for every man shall bear his own burden. Be not deceived; whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap: for he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption, or rather,  $\phi$ σέφωρ, PERDITION: but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting?*

When St. Paul, even in his epistles to the Romans and Galatians, preaches so evidently justification and condemnation by works in the great day, do we not suppose him deprived of common sense, when we represent him as perpetually saying and unsaying, as building up one hour what he pulls down the next?

But as this general answer, though it vindicates our doctrine, does not vindicate the apostle from the charge of contradiction, I beg leave once more to carry the candle of the Lord into the tower of calvinian confusion; thus shall we see the farrago made at Geneva with the words *justification, salvation, works, righteousness of the law, and righteousness of faith.*

It is evident, that every degree of justification is attended with a degree of salvation. Hence, when St. Paul preached to the Jews, *justification by faith*, he said, *To you is the word of THIS SALVATION sent*; and when he wrote to those who were *justified*, he says, *By grace are ye SAVED through faith.* This holds with regard to the justification of infants, for of such is the kingdom of heaven; and by the same rule *eternal salvation* answers to final justification.

This being premised, we may observe, that when the apostle excludes WORKS from having any hand  
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in our justification, or salvation, it is only when he speaks of the justification of *sinners*, whether we consider them as infants or adults. For if he excluded works from the justification of *believers*, either in the day of trial, or in the day of judgment, he would grossly contradict himself: but now he is quite consistent. Mr. Wesley and I, through grace, gladly join him and Titus, when they say, *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, either in our infancy, or before the day of our conversion, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration, that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the HOPE of eternal life.*

But what does the apostle mean here by *the hope of eternal life*? Is it the hope of a Laodicean believer, who makes his boast of "imputed righteousness and finished salvation," while he goes on in strife and envying, perhaps in adultery and murder? Certainly no: this is *the hope of the hypocrite, which shall perish*. The hope according to which we are made heirs of eternal life in glory, is a hope, which if any man hath, he will purify himself even as God is pure; and this hope, far from being contrary to our doctrine of justification by works in the last day, is inseparably connected with *the labour of love*, by which persevering believers shall then be justified.

Enquire we now, what are those works which St. Paul opposes to *faith* and *free grace*; and I observe,

(1) That it is not absolutely every work, or else he would oppose *faith* to itself; for believing is as much a *work* of the heart, as walking to church is a *work* of the feet.

(2) Neither does the apostle oppose to *faith*, *works meet for repentance*; for he strongly recommended them himself, Acts xxvi. 20. Nor the works of upright Gentiles, that *fear God*, and *believe he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him*. If St. Paul



represented *these* works as "dung and filthy rags," he would contradict the angel, who said to Cornelius, *Thy prayers and alms, far from being rejected, are come up for a memorial before God.*

(3) Much less did it ever come into the apostle's mind, to oppose *the work of faith, and the labour of love*, to faith and free grace; for they are no more contrary to each other, than the stalk and the ear are contrary to the root that bears them. Far from despising these works, see how honorably he speaks of them, *We give thanks always for you, remembering without ceasing your WORK of faith, and LABOUR of love in our Lord Jesus Christ.—God is not unrighteous, to forget your WORK and LABOUR that proceedeth of love.—Always abound in the work of the Lord.—Charge the rich, that they be rich in good works, laying up for themselves a good foundation, that they may lay hold on eternal life.*

For want of attending to this, some have preposterously opposed the righteousness of faith to personal holiness. The latter they look upon as the *righteousness which is of the law*, and which the apostle explodes, Phil. iii. 9. Thus they suppose, that St. Paul formed the horrid wish of *not being found clothed with holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord*; not considering, that the pardon of sins, and true holiness, the two inseparable fruits of a living faith, constitute *the righteousness which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith*: a righteousness this, that far exceeds the outside righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, with which the apostle had too long been satisfied, and which he so justly despised after his conversion.

One mistake makes way for another: Those who imagine, that the apostle would not be found in his own inherent righteousness, flowing from Christ formed in his heart by faith, insinuate, that he desired to be *found clothed with the personal actions*

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of our Lord, put upon his soul by as irrational and unscriptural an imputation, as if God had fed Peter, when he was hungry, by imputing to his empty stomach the meals which Christ ate in the days of his flesh; or if he had clothed St. Paul, when he was naked, by laying to his account our Lord's being wrapped up in swaddling cloaths in the stable at Bethlehem.

But to return: The works which St. Paul excludes, are,

(1) The works of the *ceremonial law* of Moses, generally called the *works of the law*. On these works most Jewish converts still laid a very great stress, and some of them went so far in this error, as to say to their Gentile brethren, *Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved*, Acts xv. 1. Hence the apostles wrote, verse 24, *Certain men, subverting your souls, have troubled you, saying, Ye must be circumcised and KEEP THE LAW*. Hence also it is said, that when St. Paul shaved, and was at charges to purify himself in the temple, he walked orderly and KEPT THE LAW, Acts xxi. 24.

(2) The apostle likewise opposes to faith those hypocritical deeds of the *moral law*, those external works of partial piety and ostentatious mercy, by which proud pharisees think to atone for their sins, and purchase the kingdom of heaven. Such works of unbelief and spiritual pride cannot be too much decried. They do infinite mischief: they draw a veil over our apostasy: they breed self-complacence, generate self-conceit, and feed the opposition of pharisees against the gospel. Hence their contempt of Christ, their enmity against his people, their ridiculing the atonement, despising others, and boasting of their own goodness. St. Paul was the more zealous in bearing his testimony against these fruits of self-righteousness, as he knew by fatal experience, that they are the reverse of *fruits meet for repentance*, and  
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of the righteousness which is of God by faith; and that they stood yet in the way of the Jews, as much as they once did in his own.

(3) The apostle excludes also all the works of impious moralists, who make no scruple of robbing God, because they are just to man; all the works of antinomian believers, who, like the Galatians, pray to the Lord, and devour their neighbours; or, like the Jews, *fast to-day and to-morrow strike with the fist of wickedness*; all the works which are not ultimately referred to the glory of God through Jesus Christ; and all the works whose gracious rewardableness is not acknowledged to flow from the original, and proper merit of the Redeemer. These works the apostle justly discards, as contrary to his doctrine of *grace*, because they do not spring from the *grace* of God, but from the *pride* of man. He explodes them as opposite to the *righteousness of faith*, because they are not the works of humble faith, but of conceited unbelief; the constant language of faith being, *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy and truth's sake.*

Let the judicious reader say, if, by thus distinguishing between the justification of a *sinner* in the day of conversion, and the justification of a *saint* in the great day; and by making a proper difference between the works of an humble believer, which the apostle justly extols; and the works of a proud pharisee, which he justly decries; we do not perfectly reconcile him to himself, and sufficiently secure the honor of free grace.

Is it possible to make larger concessions, without sacrificing St. James's epistle to Geneva logic; and our Lord's invaluable Sermon on the Mount, to antinomian obstinacy? If we continue to assert that no sort of works have any thing to do with any sort of justification and salvation, shall we not justly shock the moral and rational part of mankind? Is it not  
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of the Lord, that the contempt which unconverted men show to religious people, rises no higher than it does? And do we not deserve that our candor or good sense should be suspected, when we go about to persuade the world, that half a dozen strained verses of St. Paul, put in the favourite scale of a Geneva balance, are sufficient to outweigh fifty plain texts of the apostle, and the best half of the bible, which testifies, directly or indirectly, that though the final justification and eternal salvation of adult persons are not by the *merit*, yet they are by the *evidence* or *instrumentality* of good works?

II OBJ. There is some plausibility in your answer, but we are still afraid that this doctrine of justification, or salvation, by works in the last day, robs the Lord Jesus Christ of his glory.

ANS. Just the reverse: It delivers him from the *shame* of saving men by unaccountable humour, or damning them with unparalleled cruelty.—But how do you prove your assertion? Of what glory does our doctrine rob the Redeemer? Does it rob him of the glory of atoning for our sins, as our *high Priest*? or leading us into all the truth necessary to salvation, as our *great Prophet*? Does it rob him of the glory of pardoning our sins, and esteeming us righteous when we believe, as the *Lord our righteousness*? Does it rob him of the glory of making us fruitful branches in him, as *the true Vine*? or of rendering to every one according to his works, as an *impartial Judge*? On the contrary, is it not the opposite doctrine, which refuses him the glory of maintaining the honor of his crown, as the *King of kings and the Lord of lords*?

Yes, we affirm, that to reject the doctrine of justification by works in the great day, is to set Christ at nought in the most *glorious* of his offices. Is it not enough, that in the days of his flesh, he was chiefly derided, and crucified as *the KING of the Jews*?

*Jews?* Must he also in the days of his Spirit, be every where *put to open shame* in his regal office? How useless is his sceptre, and contemptible his government, if he gives his subjects only shadows of laws, which amount to no laws at all? And if, leaving his immense dominions in a lawless condition, he saves the happy number of his favourites, and damns the rest of mankind, merely according to Calvin's notions of free grace and free wrath; or, according to Dr. Crisp's scheme of salvation and damnation finished?

To this Mr. Rowland Hill answers before-hand, [*Friendly Remarks*, P. 45, 46.] "You slander the Calvinists.—We grant, that in point of justification," [*and, of course, of condemnation*] "we have nothing to do with the law: [*But*] though we boldly say, we are not under the law as a covenant of works; yet we never were so ignorant and daring as to say, we are not under THE LAW to Christ AS A RULE OF LIFE."

Pardon my freedom, dear Sir, if I tell you without ceremony, that, like thousands more, you have learned to say *Shibboleth*, before you have properly considered the sense of the expression. If you mean any thing by *being under the law to Christ only as a rule of life*, you probably mean, with Dr. Crisp, that Christ has indeed a law; but that, with regard to believers, who are the subjects of his kingdom, this law has no more the divine sanction of a blessing for those who observe it, and of a curse for its violators. And is not this saying, in ambiguous words, that Christ's subjects are absolutely lawless? Let little children pompously give the name of LAWS to rules of play, or rules of grammar; but let not men of sense imitate their mistake, by giving that name to directions of conduct, or *rules of life*, which are no longer enforced by rewards and penalties.

You decry "illustrations," and I do not wonder at it; for they carry light into Babel, where it  
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is not desired. The father of errors begets *Darkness* and *Confusion*. From *Darkness* and *Confusion* springs *Calvinism*, who, wrapping himself up in some garments, which he has stolen from the Truth, deceives the nations, and gets himself revered in a dark temple, as if he were the pure and free gospel.

To bring him to a *shameful* end, we need not stab him with the dagger of "*calumny*," or put him upon the rack of *persecution*. Let him only be dragged out of his obscurity, and brought unmasked to open light. The silent beams of truth will pierce him through! Light alone will torture him to death, as the meridian sun does a bird of night, that cannot fly from the gentle operation of its beams.

May the following *illustration* dart at least one luminous beam into the profound darkness in which your venerable Diana delights to dwell! And may it show the Christian world, that we do not "*slander you*," when we assert, you inadvertently *destroy God's law*, and cast the Redeemer's crown to the ground: and that when you say, "*In point of justification*" [and consequently of condemnation] "*we have nothing to do with the law. We are under the law as a rule of life,*" but not as a rule of judgment; you might as well say, "*We are under no law, and consequently no longer accountable for our actions.*"

The king, whom I *suppose* in love with your doctrines of free grace and free wrath, by the advice of a predestinarian council and parliament, issues out a GOSPEL proclamation, directed "To all his dear subjects, and ELECT people, the ENGLISH." By this evangelical manifesto they are informed, "That in consideration of the prince of Wales's meritorious intercession, and perfect obedience to the laws of England, all the penalties annexed to the breaking of those laws are now abolished with respect to *Englishmen*: That his majesty freely pardons all his subjects,

subjects, who have been, are, or shall be guilty of adultery, murder, or treason: That all their crimes "past, present, and to come, are for ever and for ever cancelled:" That nevertheless, his loving subjects, who remain strangers to their privileges, shall still be served with sham warrants according to law, and frightened out of their wits, till they have learned to plead, they are *Englishmen* [i. e. elect:] and then, they shall also set at defiance all legalists, that is, all those who shall dare to deal with them according to law: And that, excepting the case of the above mentioned, *false* prosecution of his chosen people, none of them shall ever be molested for the breach of any law."

"By the same supreme authority it is likewise enacted, that all the laws shall continue in force against Foreigners, [i. e. Reprobates] whom the king and the prince hate with everlasting hatred, and to whom they have agreed never to shew mercy: That accordingly they shall be prosecuted to the utmost rigour of every statute, till they are all hanged or burned out of the way: And that supposing no personal offence can be proved against them, it shall be lawful to hang them in chains for the crime of one of their forefathers, to set forth the king's wonderful justice, display his glorious sovereignty, and make his chosen people relish the better their sweet, distinguishing privileges as *Englishmen*."

"Moreover, his majesty, who loves order and harmony, charges his loving subjects to consider still the statutes of England, which are in force against Foreigners, as very good *rules of life* for the English, which they shall do *well* to follow, but BETTER to break: because every breach of those rules will *work for their good*, and *make them sing louder* the faithfulness of the king, the goodness of the prince, and the sweetness of this gospel proclamation."

"Again,

“ Again, as nothing is so displeasing to the king as *legality*, which he hates even more than extortion and whoredom; lest any of his dear people, who have acted the part of a strumpet, robber, murderer, or traitor, should, through the remains of their inbred corruption, and ridiculous *legality*, mourn too deeply for breaking some of their *rules of life*, our gracious monarch solemnly assures them, That though he highly disapproves of adultery and murder, yet these breaches of *rules* are not worse in his sight than a wandering thought in speaking to him, or a moment's dulness in his service: That robbers, therefore, and traitors, adulterers and murderers, who are free-born *Englishmen*, need not be at all uneasy, about losing his royal favor; this being utterly impossible, because they always stand compleat in the honesty, loyalty, chastity, and charity of the prince.”

“ Moreover, because the king changes not, whatever lengths the *English* go on in immorality, he will always look upon them as his *pleasant children*, his *dear people*, and men after his own heart; and that, on the other hand, whatsoever lengths Foreigners go in pious morality, his gracious majesty is determined still to consider them as *hypocrites, vessels of wrath*, and *curfed children*, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever; because he always views them compleatly guilty, and absolutely condemned in a certain *robe of unrighteousness*, woven thousands of years ago by one of their ancestors. This dreadful *sanbenetto* † his majesty hath thought fit to put upon them by imputation; and in it, it is his good pleasure that they shall hang in adamantine chains, or burn in fire unquenchable.”

“ Finally, as Foreigners are dangerous people, and may stir up his majesty's subjects to rebellion,

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† A frock, painted with flames and devils, in which heretics are burned by the inquisition.



the *English* are informed, that if any one of them, were he to come over from Geneva itself, shall dare to insinuate, that this most gracious gospel proclamation is not according to equity, morality, and godliness, the first Englishman that meets him shall have full leave to brand him as a papist, without judge or jury, in the forehead or on the back, as he thinks best; and that, till he is farther proceeded with according to the utmost severity of the law, the chosen nation shall be informed, in the *Gospel Magazine*, to beware of him, as a man "who scatters firebrands, arrows, and deaths," and *makes universal havock of every* article of this sweet gospel proclamation. Given at Geneva, and signed by four of his majesty's principal secretaries of state for the predestinarian department."

J<sup>o</sup>. Calvin.

Dr. Crisp.

The Author of P. O.

Ro<sup>d</sup>. Hill.

What would wise men think of such a manifesto? Who does not see, his majesty might as well have informed us at once, that all the laws of the land are now repealed; that instead of being *laws*, they shall be only *moral finger-posts*, directing men in the narrow way of righteousness, or in the broad way of iniquity, if the one pleases them better than the other?

Suppose a courtier asserted, that we are still *under the laws of the land as rules of life*; would not thinking men answer, No: we are now absolutely lawless; for statutes according to which no Englishmen can be prosecuted, much less executed, are *no laws* at all for Englishmen: they are only *directions*, which every one is at full liberty to follow or not, as he pleases. It is not less absurd to give the name of *laws* to rules, which are not enforced with the sanction of proper rewards or penalties, than to call

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Baxter's *Directory*, a code of laws, because it contains excellent *rules of life*.

O ye abettors of Dr. Crisp's mistakes, how long will you regard vain words, and inadvertently pour contempt upon the King of kings? How long will you rashly charge us with robbing him of his glory, because we cannot join you, when, under the plausible pretence of advancing the honor of his *priesthood*, you explain away the most awful protestations which he made as a *prophet*; and rob him of the *royal* glory of punishing his rebellious, and rewarding his faithful subjects according to law, as a righteous king?

Alas! even while you seem zealous for God's *sovereignty*, do you not *unawares* represent Jesus as the weakest of princes, or fiercest of tyrants? Do you not *inadvertently*, [for I know you would not do it *deliberately* for the world] do you not, I say, *inadvertently* crown him with the sharpest thorns that ever grew in the territory of mystic Geneva? Instead of the *sceptre of his kingdom*, which is a *right sceptre*, do you not at one time *put in his hand a reed*, which the antinomian ELECT may insult with more impunity, than the frog in the fable did the royal log sent by Jupiter to reign over them? And at another time, while you give him Nimrod's iron sceptre, do you not *put upon him Nero's purple robe*; and even slip into his loving bosom a black book of horrible decrees, more full of the names of unborn REPROBATES, than the emperor Domitian's fatal pocket-book was full of the names of the poor wretches, to whom in a gloomy day he took an unaccountable dislike, and whom, on this account, as well as to maintain his dreadful sovereignty, he tyrannically appointed for the slaughter? Never, no never shall you be able to do justice to the scripture, and our Lord's kingly office, till you allow, that, agreeably to his evangelical law, he will

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will one day *reward every man according to his works*: And the moment you allow this, you give up what you unhappily call your FOUNDATION, i. e. *unconditional election*, and *finished salvation*: In a word, you allow *justification by works* in the great day, and are as heretical (should I not say? as *orthodox*) as ourselves.

I am,

Honored and dear Sirs,

Your's, &c.

J. F.

LETTER

## L E T T E R XII. \*

*In which the author shows how far the Calvinists and the Remonstrants agree, wherein they disagree, and what makes the latter dissent from the former, concerning the famous doctrine of IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS.*

TO RICHARD HILL, Esq;

Honored and dear Sir,

**A**LTHOUGH I reserve for two separate tracts, my answer to your objections against "the monstrous doctrine of PERFECTION, and my reply to the argument which you draw from our Seventeenth Article, in favour of the doctrine of unconditional ELECTION; the already exorbitant length of this Check calls for a speedy conclusion: and I hasten towards it, by laying before my readers the present state of our controversy; enlarging chiefly upon *imputed righteousness* and *free will*, two points which I have not yet particularly discussed in this piece.

IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS, as it is held by the Calvinists, I have endeavoured to expose in the Second Check, by the most absurd, and yet (upon your plan) most reasonable plea of a barefaced Antinomian, who expects to be justified in the great

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day,

\* This letter was added after the Contents were printed off.

day, by Christ's imputed righteousness *without works*. To this you have answered, (Review, p. 68, &c.) by exclaiming, "*Shocking slander, slanderous banter,*" &c. and I might reply only by crying out, *Logica Genevensis!* But, as honest enquirers after truth would not be benefited, for their sake I shall in this letter show how far we agree, wherein we disagree, and what makes us dissent from you, about the doctrine of *imputed righteousness*.

*We agree*, that all the righteousness which is in the spiritual world, is as much Christ's righteousness, as all the light that shines in the natural world at noon, is the light of the sun. And we equally assert, that, when God justifies a sinner who believes in Christ, he freely pardons his *past* sins, graciously accounts him righteous, and as such, admits him to his favour, only through faith in the Redeemer's meritorious blood and personal righteousness.

To see clearly wherein *we disagree*, let us consider both your doctrine, and ours; touching as we go along, upon the capital arguments by which they are supported.

Consistent Calvinists believe, that if a man is elected, God absolutely imputes to him Christ's personal righteousness, i. e. the perfect obedience unto death which Christ performed upon earth. This is reckoned to him for obedience and righteousness, even while he is actually disobedient, and before he has a grain of inherent righteousness. They consider this imputation, as an unconditional and eternal act of grace, by which, not only a sinner's past sins, but his crimes *present and to come*, be they more or be they less, be they small or be they great, are for ever and for ever covered. *He is eternally justified from all things*. And therefore, under this imputation, he is perfectly righteous before God, even while he commits adultery and murder. Or, to use your own expressions, whatever  
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lengths he runs, whatever depths he falls into, " he always stands absolved, always compleat in the everlasting righteousness of the Redeemer." Five Letters p. 26, 27, 29. In point of justification, therefore, it matters not how unrighteous a believer actually is in himself; because the robe of Christ's personal righteousness, which, at his peril, he must not attempt to patch up with any personal righteousness of his own, is more than sufficient to adorn him from head to foot: and he must be sure to appear before God in no other. In this rich garment of *finished salvation*, the greatest apostates shine brighter than angels, though they are "*in themselves black*" as the old murderer, and filthy as the brute that actually wallows in the mire. This "*best robe,*" as it is called, is full-trimmed with such philacteries as these, "Once in grace, always in grace—Once justified, eternally justified—Once washed, always fair, undefiled, and without spot." And so great are the privileges of those who have it on, that they can range through all the bogs of sin, wade through all the puddles of iniquity, and roll themselves in the thickest mire of wickedness, without contracting the least spot of guilt or speck of defilement.

This scheme of imputation is supported, (1) By scriptural metaphors, understood in a forced, unscriptural sense. Thus when a sound Calvinist reads about the *breast-plate of righteousness*, and the *garment of salvation*; or about *putting on Christ*, *walking in him*, *being in him*, *being found in him*, or *being cloathed with righteousness*, his prepossessed mind directly runs upon his imputation. And if he reads in the Psalms, *I will make mention of thy righteousness, and thine only*, he immediately concludes, that the Psalmist meant the *personal* righteousness of the man Christ: As if David really made mention of *no other* righteousness but that in all the Psalms! Or God had had no righteousness, before the Virgin Mary brought forth her first born Son.

(2) By

(2) By the parable of the man, who was bound hand and foot, and cast into outer darkness, because he had not on a wedding garment, i. e. upon your scheme, because Christ's personal righteousness was not imputed to him. As if the *Prince of peace*, the mild Jesus, who says, *Learn of me, for I am meek*, had kindly invited a man to a feast, and then commanded him to be thrust into hell, merely because he had not on a garment, which he never could procure; a robe, which none but God could cloath him with; and which God determined should never be for him, when he decreed, that Christ should never work out an inch of righteousness for one single reprobate. Does not this exceed Ovid's description of the iron-age? *Non hospes ab hospite tutus*. The bare mention of such a dreadful reflection cast upon God's goodness, and our Lord's hospitality, will amount to a strong argument against your imputation, with those who are yet concerned for God's adorable perfections, and our Lord's amiable character.

(3) By the parable of the prodigal son, who, it is supposed, was cloathed with the "*best robe*" of Christ's personal righteousness. But this notion is overturned by the context itself: for the Father had met, forgiven, and embraced his returning son in his own ragged garment, *before* the "*best robe*" was called for, and put upon him. Whence it would follow, that a sinner may be forgiven without the garment of righteousness; and as compleatly accepted out of Christ, as the prodigal was without the "*best robe*."

(4) By the *goodly raiment of Esau*, in which Jacob got his father's blessing. But Moses's account of the cheat put upon short-sighted Isaac, entirely overthrows the scheme of the Calvinists. The robe which they recommend, is made of Christ's *compleat* and *personal* righteousness: it is long and wide enough

enough, perfectly to cover even a giant in sin: nor must it be patched with any thing else. But Jacob's dress, far from being all of a piece, was a mongrel sort of human and beastly garment. For, when Rebecca had clothed his body with Esau's raiment, *she put goat-skins upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck*, to make them feel like Esau's hairy hands and shaggy neck. And the worst is, that the goat-skins, and not Esau's borrowed dress, deceived the aged patriarch, and got the blessing. Hear the historian. *Jacob went near to his father, and he felt him, and said, The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau; and he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy; so he blessed him*, Gen. xxvii. 22. Thus the skin of a goat, the emblem of a reprobate, unfortunately comes in to patch up your best robe. And I doubt not but, as the typical garment was too scanty to cover Jacob's hands and neck; so the fancied antitype will prove too short, to cover the hands of those, who, like "Onesimus, rob their masters;" and the neck and heels of those, who, like David, are *swift to shed blood*, and *climb up into their neighbour's bed*; if they do not get a more substantial righteousness than that, in which you suppose they stand compleat, while they commit their enormous crimes.

(5) Plain scripture is also brought to support this imputation. David says, Ps. xxxii. 1, 2. *Blessed is he, whose sin is covered: Blessed is the man, unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity*. But, alas for your scheme! it is thrown down by the very next words, *And in whose spirit there is no guile*. Thus, although you would make us believe the contrary, David's own doctrine shows, that he was not *the blessed man, whose sins are covered by non-imputation of iniquity*, when his spirit was full of guile, adultery, and murder. And, indeed, he tells us so himself in this very Psalm, *When I kept silence*, says he, when I har-  
boured



boured guile and impenitency, *day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: But when I acknowledged my sin unto thee, when I parted with my guile, thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.*

(6) However, if David's words are flatly against *your* imputation, it is supposed, that as prefaced by St. Paul, Rom. iv. 6. they make greatly for it, *David describeth the blessedness of the man, to whom God imputeth righteousness without works.* I have already observed, that as the apostle cannot contradict David and himself, he only means, *without the works of the law, as opposed to faith, and to the work of faith.* That this is the true meaning of St. Paul's words, is evident from those which introduce them, *To him that WORKETH NOT, but BELIEVETH, his FAITH is counted for righteousness.* Who does not see here, that BELIEVING, which is the GOOD WORK that begets all others, is opposed to the faithless WORKS, about which the pharisees made so much ado to so little purpose? Who does not perceive, that a man must BELIEVE, i. e. DO THE WORK of God, before HIS FAITH can be counted for righteousness; and consequently, that righteousness is imputed to him who believes, not absolutely without any sort of works; but only *without the works of the law, emphatically called by the apostle works, or deeds of the law, when he contradistinguishes them from faith, and the work of faith?*

(7) To the preceding scriptures our Calvinist brethren add a plausible argument. ' God, say  
' they, may as well impute to us Christ's perfect  
' righteousness in all our sins, and account us com-  
' pletly righteous without one grain of inherent  
' righteousness; as he imputed the horrid crimes of  
' the elect to Christ in all his obedience, and ac-  
' counted him *completely guilty* without one single  
' grain of inherent sin. To deny, therefore, that  
' God imputes righteousness to an elect, while he  
' is

‘ is full of unrighteousness; or to suppose, that he  
 ‘ *imputes sin* to an apostate, who is *sold under sin*, is  
 ‘ but a decent way of denying the imputation of  
 ‘ our personal sins to Christ, and the vicarious sa-  
 ‘ tisfaction which he made on the cross.’

To detect the fallacy of this argument, we need only observe, (1) That God never accounted Christ “*completely guilty*.” Such expressions as these, *He made him sin for us; he laid upon him the iniquities of us all, &c.* are only Hebrew idioms, which signify, that God appointed Christ *a sacrifice for sin*; and that *the chastisement of our forfeited peace was upon him*: which no more implies, that God put on his back, by an absolute imputation, a robe of unrighteousness, woven with all the sins of the elect, to make him *completely guilty*; than St. Luke, when he informs us, that the Virgin Mary offered two young pigeons for her purification, supposes her ceremonial uncleanness was, some how, woven into a couple of little garments, and put upon the back of the two young pigeons, which, by that means, were made *completely unclean*.

I hope the following illustration will convince you, Sir, that such refinements as these are as contrary to sober reason, as to scripture duly compared with itself. Gallio gets drunk, and as he reels home from his midnight revels, he breaks thirty six lamps in the streets, and sends out volleys of curses to the number of two hundred. He is brought before you, and you insist on his going to the house of correction, or paying so much money to buy three dozen of lamps, beside the usual fine for his prophane language. As he is not worth a groat, his sober brother Mitio kindly offers to lay down the sum for him. You accept of the “*vicarious satisfaction*,” and binding the rake to his good behaviour, you release him at his brother’s request. Now, Sir, would you be reasonable, if you reckoned Mitio  
*completely*

*completely guilty* of getting drunk, swearing two hundred oaths, and breaking thirty six lamps? Far from supposing him *guilty* of breaking one lamp, or swearing one oath, even while he makes satisfaction for his brother's wildness, do you not esteem him according to his own excellent character?

And will you defend a doctrine, which charges God with a mistake ten thousand times more glaring, than that you would be guilty of, if you really reckoned Mitio an abandoned rake, and Gallio a man of an exemplary conduct? Will you indeed recommend still as gospel, an opinion, which supposes, that the God of *everlasting, unchangeable love*, once loathed and abhorred his *beloved Son*; and that the God of *invariable truth* could once say to the holy Jesus, "Thou art all foul, O thou defiled object of my hatred, there is no purity in thee;" while he addresses a bloody adulterer with, "*Thou art all fair, my love, my undefiled, there is no spot in thee?*"

A variety of scriptural and rational arguments I have, directly or indirectly, advanced in every Check, against that capital doctrine of yours, "the absolute imputation of Christ's personal righteousness to believers;" whether they live chaste; with their own wives, or entice away other men's wives; whether they charitably assist their neighbours, or get them treacherously murdered. All those arguments center in this. If that doctrine is true, the divine perfections suffer a general eclipse; one half of the bible is erased; St. James's epistle is made void; defiled religion justly passes for "*pure gospel*;" the calvinian doctrine of perseverance is true; and barefaced Antinomianism is properly recommended as "*the doctrines of grace*."

Having thus considered *your* doctrine of *imputed righteousness*, permit me, honored Sir, to submit to your inspection, the harmonizing views that *we* have of God's perfections; while we see him *impute righteousness*

*righteousness* to a man [i. e. reckon a man righteous] so long as he actually believes with a *faith working by obedient love*; and *impute iniquity* to an apostate [i. e. reckon him unrighteous] as soon as he *departs from the faith, to work iniquity, and walk in the ways of unrighteousness*.

We firmly believe, that God's imputation, whether of sin or righteousness, is not founded upon sovereign caprice, but upon indubitable truth. As we are partakers by *generation* of Adam's original pollution, before God imputes it to us, that is, before he accounts us really polluted: so are we partakers by *regeneration* of Christ's original righteousness, before God imputes righteousness to us, that is, before he accounts us really righteous. And therefore a positive and substantial communication of Christ's righteousness apprehended by faith, no less precedes God's imputation of righteousness to a believer, than Bartimeus's receiving his sight, and admitting the light, were previous to God's reckoning that he actually saw.

Although we grant, that the Almighty *calls the things that are not, as though they were*; and that according to his foreknowledge, he frequently speaks of them in the prophetic style, as if they were now, or had been already: yet, when he *reckons* what is, in order to pass sentence of absolution or condemnation, he cannot deny his truth, and reckon a man actually chaste and charitable, that actually commits adultery and murder. We dare not impute this flagrant unrighteousness to God. And as *no guile was found in our Lord's mouth* while he was upon earth, we cannot admit the most distant thought of his being full of guile in heaven: which we apprehend would be the case, if he reckoned that a man, who actually falls from adultery into murder, is actually undefiled, and completely righteous.

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Again,

Again, as Christ bore no manner of vicarious punishment for us; or, which is the same, as our iniquities were not actually laid upon him, till he partook of our frail nature, and was positively interested in our corruptible blood: so by a parity of reason, we are not indulged with the pardon and acceptance, which he merited for us, till we partake of his light and righteousness. Hence appears the weakness of that argument, Righteousness may as well be imputed to us, without any participation of the *divine* nature; as sin was imputed to Christ, without any participation of our *fallen* nature. We absolutely deny the fact on which this argument is founded, and assert with St. Paul, that Christ *was made sin for us*, [i. e. a proper sacrifice for our sins] not by an imaginary robe of unrighteousness, put upon him according to *your* imputation; but by being really *made of a fallen mortal woman*, and *sent in the likeness of sinful flesh*, that he might suffer and die for us; which he could not have done, if he had not assumed our *fallen* nature; *unfallen* man being quite above the reach of pain and death. It is not less certain, therefore, that he was made in the *likeness of sinful flesh*, than it is indubitable, that *he was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin*.

As sure then as Christ was not *made sin* [i. e. a sin-offering] *for us*, by a speculative imputation of our personal sins; but by being actually *made flesh*, clothed with our mortality, and *sent in the likeness of sinful flesh*: so sure are *we made the righteousness of God in him*, not by a speculative imputation of his personal good works, but by being *made partakers of the divine nature, begotten of God, and clothed with essential righteousness*; which is the case, when we *put on the new man, who after God is created in righteousness and true holiness*. Thus it appears to us, that *your* imputation may be demolished, only by retorting 2 Cor. v. 21. the scripture with which it is chiefly

chiefly supported: and, if we are not mistaken, the venerable fabric raised upon that passage, like Mahomet's venerable tomb, hangs in the air without one single prop.

That the seed of righteousness, by which we are first interested in Christ, is universal in all infants, appears to us evident from St. Paul's words, *As by one man's [Adam's] disobedience, the many, the multitudes of mankind, were made sinners, by a seed of sin: so by the obedience of one [Christ] shall the many, the multitudes of mankind, be made righteous by a seed of righteousness to the end of the world, Rom. v. 19.* Hence it is, that righteousness is imputed to all infants, and that, as I have proved, Letter X. they stand justified before God, according to the inferior dispensation they are under.

When they grow up, and *hold the truth in unrighteousness*, by sinning against their light; *personal iniquity is imputed to them*; and till they believe again in the light, and renounce the evil deeds which it reproves, they are *condemned already*. But the moment they truly repent, and unfeignedly believe the gospel belonging to their dispensation, condemnation vanishes; God again *imputes righteousness to them*, that is, for Christ's sake he again pardons their sins, accepts their persons, and considers them as *branches*, that admit the righteous sap of the *true vine*, and bear the *fruits of righteousness*.

Once more; if these branches do not believingly *abide in Christ the vine*, they become such *branches in him, as bear not fruit*. Nay, they bear the poison of unrighteousness; *iniquity therefore is again imputed to them*; and so long as they continue in their sin and unbelief, they are every moment liable to be *taken away, cast into the fire and burned*, John xv. Nevertheless, through the Redeemer's intercession, *God bears long with them*; and, if they *despise not to the last the riches of his forbearance and long-suffering*, duly

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considering

considering how his goodness leadeth them to repentance, their backslidings are healed: they believe again with the heart UNTO RIGHTEOUSNESS: the righteous sap of the true vine has again a free course in their hearts: they again receive *Christ*, who is the end of the law, and the sum of the gospel, for righteousness to every one that believeth: and their faith, which once more admits the beams of the sun of righteousness, is once more imputed to them for righteousness.

This, honored Sir, is the holy imputation of righteousness, which we read of in the oracles of God; and we prefer it to yours for three reasons: (1) It hath truth for its foundation; but your imputation stands upon a preposterous supposition, that *Christ*, the righteous, was an execrable sinner, and that an elect is perfectly righteous, while he commits execrable iniquity. (2) Because it perfectly agrees with *St. James's undefiled religion*, which your scheme entirely overthroweth. And (3) because it is supported by the plainest scriptures.

The Popes have at least the letter of one passage to countenance their monstrous doctrine of transubstantiation. They save appearances, when they make their dupes believe, that a bit of bread is really the body of *Christ*: for, say they, *Christ took bread*, and declared, *THIS IS MY body*. But, O tell it not in Paris, lest the subjects of the triple crown triumph over us in their turn! the *personal* righteousness of *Christ* is not so much as once mentioned in all the bible; with the doctrine of *imputation*: and yet some divines can make whole congregations of men, who protest against the impious absurdities of the church of Rome, believe, that the *imputation* of *Christ's personal* righteousness is a scriptural doctrine, and the very marrow of the gospel. This garment of their own weaving they cast over adulterers and murderers, and then represent the filthy, bloody wretches, as compleat in *Christ's* obedience, perfect in righteousness, and "*undefiled*" before God.

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If I had a thousand tongues, could I employ them more to the glory of Christ, and the good of souls, than by crying to the thousands who are still *sold under sin*, and still take their *carnal ease* in that imaginary garment of righteousness, *Awake to true righteousness, and sin not.* Search the scriptures: where is it said, that Christ's *personal* righteousness was ever imputed to either man or angel? And where is it written, that *righteousness* was ever imputed to any one, farther than he was possessed of, and actuated by, a living, powerful, inherent principle of *righteous faith*?

*To the law and the testimony!* Can any thing be plainer than the two following positions, on which all our doctrine of imputation is founded: (1) Faith is a powerful, quickening, justifying, sanctifying, working, victorious, saving grace. (2) This *faith*, as it springs from, and receives Christ, and his righteous power, is imputed to us for righteousness.

Does not the first of these propositions stand unshaken upon such scriptures as these? *Faith is the evidence of things not seen, and the substance of things hoped for—All things are possible to him that believeth—Whosoever believeth is born of God—All that believe are justified—Purifying their hearts by faith—Sanctified through faith that is in me—This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith—Ye are saved through faith—Faith worketh by love—Remembering your work of faith—Faith without works is dead—He that believeth hath everlasting life—Holding the mystery of faith in a pure conscience, which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck, &c.* Is it not evident from these scriptures, that all who have a living faith, have not only a pardon, but works, especially love, which is the fulfilling of the law — love, the most excellent fruit of righteousness, in which all others are contained? And surely, if they have a pardon, and true, inhe-



rent righteousness, in their Christ-accepting, loving, and obedient faith; that *faith* may well be *imputed to them for righteousness*, or, God may well account them righteous.

Nor is the second proposition, upon which our imputation stands, less clearly laid down in the scriptures. *Abraham believed in the Lord, and he counted †, or imputed it to him for righteousness*, Gen. xv. 6. *What says the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness, i. e. for preceding righteousness, through the remission of his past sins; for present acceptance in the beloved, whom he received; and for present righteousness, through the righteous exertions of a faith that worked by love. Again, To him that believeth, his faith is imputed for righteousness — We say, that faith was imputed to Abraham for righteousness — That he might be the father of all them that believe, that righteousness might be imputed to them also — He was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness — Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed if we believe, Gal. iii. 6. Rom. iv. 3. &c.*

As Moses has led the van of these testimonies in favour of our scriptural imputation, and St. Paul the main body, permit St. James to bring up the rear. *Seest thou, says he, how faith wrought with Abraham's works, and by works was faith made perfect, and the scripture was fulfilled, which says, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness, Ja. ii. 23. The whole is thus summed up by the great defender of free grace, The Gentiles which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which*

† There is but one word in the original, which our translators indifferently render *impute*, *count*, or *reckon*.

which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to it. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith; but as it were by the faithless works, which they did in self-righteous obedience to the letter of the law; trampling under foot the righteousness of faith, which speaketh on this wise, *If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation,* Rom. ix. and x.

Who does not see, in reading these words, that we must do something unto righteousness, as well as unto salvation? Is it not evident, that we must now believe with the heart in order to the former, and make confession with the mouth, as we have opportunity, in order to the latter; and consequently, that righteousness imputed, as well as salvation finished, without any thing done on our part, is a doctrine, that is not less contrary, even to St. Paul's epistle to the Romans fairly taken together, than to that strong rampart of undefiled religion, the epistle of St. James.

However a cloud of objections arises, to keep the light from a prejudiced reader; and as he thinks that three of them are remarkably strong, I beg leave to consider them with some degree of attention.

**I OBJ.** "Your doctrine of justifying, sanctifying, and working faith imputed to us for righteousness, I bear my loud testimony against; because it confounds Righteousness with Sanctification, two gospel-blessings, which are clearly distinguished, 1 Cor. i. 30."

**ANSW.** It would be much better to confound, than to destroy them both; as I fear you do, when you cast a robe of finished salvation, i. e. of complete righteousness and finished holiness over impenitent adulterers and murderers. But be that as it will, your objection

objection is groundless. I have already observed, and I once more declare, that, when we speak of *the righteousness of faith*, we understand three things: (1) The non-imputation, or *forgiveness of the sins that are past*, Rom. iii. 25. (2) Present *acceptance in the beloved*, Eph. i. 6. And (3) a principle of universal righteousness, by which we are interested in Christ's righteousness; just as a branch is interested in the excellence of the vine, that is, by the generous sap, which it actually derives from it; and not by an imaginary imputation of the fine grapes which the vine bore 1700 years ago. *Let no man deceive you: He that DOES righteousness, is a righteous branch; even as Christ is a righteous vine.* 1 John iii. 7. John xv. 5.

On the other hand, when we speak of *Sanctification*, we understand the wonderful change, wrought in us by the working of the above-mentioned *principle of righteousness*; and the internal fruits which it produces, till, by *growing up into Christ in all things*, we come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. It is evident therefore, that, considering *righteousness* and *sanctification* even in their most intimate union, we do not confound them at all; but maintain as clear a distinction between them, as that which subsists between the *sap* derived by a wild branch from the good olive tree, and the *change* produced in that branch upon such a derivation.

II OBJ. Your doctrine is popery refined. By paying *saving* honors to a christian grace, and taking the crown from *Christ*, to set it upon *faith*, you shake the very foundation of the Mediator's throne. If this is not high treason against him, what crime deserves that name?

ANSW. Your fears are laudable, though absolutely groundless. (1) *Faith*, the humble grace that will

will know nothing but Christ, for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, can never dishonor his person, claim his crown, or shake the foundation of his throne. Is it not ridiculous to make so much ado about *faith* robbing Christ of *saving* honors, when Christ himself says, *Thy FAITH hath SAVED thee*, and when the apostle cries out, BELIEVE, and thou shalt be SAVED? Were then Christ and St. Paul two refined papists, and guilty of *high treason* against the Redeemer?

(2) If some will be *wise above what is written*, we dare not. If they are ashamed of the oracles of God, we are not: therefore, whatever they think of us, we must say, with the evangelical apostle, FAITH was imputed to Abraham for righteousness; and to him that believeth, HIS FAITH is imputed for righteousness.

(3) Should you say, that Abraham's faith, or his believing God, signifies either Christ's person or his personal righteousness: We reply, *Credat judeas Apella!* There was indeed a time when Calvinist divines could make simple protestants believe it, as easily as the Pope can make credulous papists believe, that a wafer of the size of half a crown, is the identical body of our Lord: but as many Romanists begin to shake off the yoke of popish absurdities; so many protestants will cast away that of calvinian impositions. And as our fathers taught us to *protest*, that the hocus pocus of a popish priest, cannot turn bread into flesh; so will we teach our children to *protest*, that the bare assertion of a calvinist minister, cannot turn Abraham's faith into Christ's person, or into his personal righteousness: which must however be the case, if these words, *Abraham's faith*, or his believing God, was imputed to him for righteousness, do only mean, as we are confidently told, that "Christ or his personal righteousness, was imputed to Abraham for righteousness."

(4) Does

(4) Does it reflect any dishonor upon Christ, to say with St. Paul, that FAITH is *imputed to us for righteousness*; when *believing* includes its object [*Christ the way, the truth and the life*] as necessarily as eating supposes food; and drinking, liquor? Is it not as impossible to *believe in the light*, without *Christ the light*; or to *believe in the truth*, without *Christ the truth*; as it is to breathe without air, and hear without sounds? Again, if you affirm, that “we warm ourselves by going to the fire,” do you say the foundation of natural philosophy; because you do not say ten times over, that the warming power comes from the fire, and not from our motion towards it? And do we destroy the foundation of Christianity, when we assert, that *Faith working by love* instrumentally saves us, because we do not spend so much time as you in saying over and over, that the *saving merit* and the *saving power* flow from the *Saviour*, and not from our own act of believing? Is not this as clear, as it is that the light flows in upon us from the sun, and not *from* [though it is *through*] the opening of our eyes?

Lastly, Would not physicians make themselves appear very ridiculous, if they distressed their patients, when they were going to take a medicine, with the fear of ascribing their recovery to their taking the remedy, i. e. to “their own doing,” rather than to the virtue of the remedy itself? And are those divines alone partakers of heavenly wisdom, who puzzle sinners that come to Christ, and place a lion in their way, by perpetually injecting into their minds a fear, lest they should ascribe their salvation to *faith*, rather than to the *Saviour* whom *faith* receives? Where does the apostle, whose evangelical sentiments they so deservedly extol, set them the example of such refinements? Is it Rom. iv. where he says directly or indirectly, seven times, that FAITH is *imputed for righteousness*? Is it not strange, that at last “orthodoxy” should consist in fairly

Fairly setting aside, or explaining away the doctrine of St. Paul, as well as that of St. James?

III OBJ. "Your mind is full of carnal reasonings. You do not know either Christ or yourself. If you did, you would never set up the inherent righteousness of faith, which is nothing but our own righteousness, in opposition to imputed righteousness. If you were not quite blind, or "very dark," you would see, that *all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags*; and you would humbly acknowledge, that the only breast-plate and robe of righteousness, which we may with safety and honor appear in before God, are the breast-plate and robe of Christ's *personal* righteousness freely imputed to us, without any of our doings. This *best robe*, which you so horribly bespatter, we must defend against all the Atminians, Pelagians, and Papists in the world."

ANSW. To do this grand objection justice, it will be proper to consider it in its various parts, and give each a full answer.

(1) We acknowledge, that we cannot think nonsense is any more compatible with the wisdom of God, and flat contradiction with his sacred oracles, than adultery is compatible with undefiled religion, and murder with common morality. If these sentiments are "carnal reasonings," we beg leave to continue carnal reasoners, till you can recommend your spiritual reasonings, either by common sense or plain scripture.

(2) You confound, without reason, the inherent righteousness of faith with pharisaic self-righteousness. I have already proved, that the latter, which is the partial, external, and hypocritical righteousness of unbelieving formalists, is the only righteousness which the prophet compares to *filthy rags*. With respect to the former, i. e. our own righteousness of faith, far from setting it up in opposition to imputed righteousness rightly understood, we assert, that

that it is *the righteousness of God*, the very thing which *God imputes to us for righteousness*; the very righteousness which has now the stamp of his approbation, and will one day have the crown of his rewards.

(3) You affirm, that the *breast-plate of righteousness* which St. Paul charges the Ephesians to *have on*, is Christ's *personal* righteousness imputed to us; and we prove the contrary by the following arguments. The apostle, who is the best illustrator of his own expressions, exhorts the Thessalonians to *put on the breast-plate of faith and love*. Now, as we never heard of soldiers having two breast-plates on; the imaginary breast-plate of their general, which they wear by imputation; and the solid plate of metal, which actually covers their breast; we conclude, that the *breast-plate of righteousness*, which St. Paul recommends to the Ephesians, together with the *shield of faith*, is nothing but the *breast-plate of faith and love*, which he recommends to the Thessalonians.

To help my readers to see your doctrine in a proper light, I might say, If the breast-plate of our Lord's personal obedience has no more to do with our breasts, than the personal dinner which he took in the pharisee's house, has to do with our empty stomachs; and the personal garment in which he shone upon mount Tabor, has to do with our naked shoulders; the judicious apostle would probably have called it a *brain-plate*, rather than a *breast-plate*, as having far less to do with the breast and heart, than with the brain and imagination. But as this argument would rather turn upon our translation, than upon the original, I drop it, and present you with one that has more solidity.

If the breast-plate of a Christian warrior, is as far from him in time and place, as the personal righteousness wrought by our Lord in Judea 1760  
years

years ago; his shield may be at the same distance; and so undoubtedly may his helmet and sandals, his belt and sword. Thus, by Calvin's contrivance, you have a soldier of Christ armed cap-a-pee, without one single piece of armour from head to foot. And will you say of these imaginary accoutrements, in which the elect can with all ease commit adultery and incest, that they are *the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left*, in which St. Paul fought his battles, and subdued so many kindreds and nations to his Lord's triumphant cross? Oh! if that champion were yet alive, who said in the midst of Corinth, "*The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power,*" how would he cry in the midst of mystic Geneva, "*The armour of God is not a calvinian notion, but a divine reality!*"

What we are persuaded he would thunder out through the world, we are at last determined to proclaim on the walls of our Jerusalem. "*Soldiers of Christ, have on the TRUE breast-plate of righteousness. Put on the SOLID breast-plate of inherent faith and love. If Satan's temptations are not idle imputations of his dreadful assaults upon Christ; if his darts are really fiery and terrible, throw away calvinian imputation: Cast off the works of darkness; and put on the REAL armour of righteousness, the armour of light, the whole armour of God; so shall you be able to withstand in the evil day; and having DONE ALL, to stand with safety in judgment, and with honor in the congregation of the RIGHTEOUS.*"

(4) We apprehend, that you are not less mistaken about the ROBE, than about the *breast-plate of righteousness*. And we think, we can prove it by the testimony of the three most competent judges in the universe, an Apostle, an Elder before the throne, and the Lamb in the midst of it. Hear we the apostle first.

1. If all the saints were clothed with the robe of Christ's *personal* righteousness, they would all be

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cloathed exactly like Christ. But when St. John had a vision of the Redeemer's glory, he *saw him cloathed with a vesture* DIPT IN BLOOD: *and the armies which were in heaven, followed him cloathed in fine linen, WHITE and clean,* Rev. xix. 13, 14. Now, as the *white robes* worn by the soldiers that compose an army, cannot be the *red robe* worn by the general at the head of that army; we so far give place to what you call "carnal reasonings," as to conclude, that so sure as *white* is not *red*, the robes of the saints, are not the robes of our Lord's *personal* righteousness.

Nay, we, who throw off the veil of prejudice, would be guilty of the very crime you charge us with, were we to entertain that daring idea, Christ's personal righteousness is the obedience of the Son of God, who by living and dying for us, became *the propitiation for the sins of the whole world*. Now, if we pretended, that this identical all-meritorious obedience of Christ unto death, this active and passive righteousness, which made an atonement for all mankind, is fairly made over to, and put upon us: would it not be pretending to merit with Christ, not only our own salvation, but the salvation of all mankind. O Sir, it is you, we are afraid, who affect the Saviour: for by presuming to put on his robes, you claim his mediatorial honors: For after all your fears, lest we should make humble *faith* share the Saviour's glory, or *his glorious apparel*; you not only put it on yourself without ceremony, but throw it also over the shoulders of ten thousand elect, without excepting even those who add drunkenness to thirst, and cruelty to lust.

You will, I hope, see the great impropriety of this conduct, if you consider, that the Redeemer's personal and peculiar righteousness, is his *personal* and *peculiar* glory; and that those who fancy themselves clad with it, (if they do not sin ignorantly) are  
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as guilty of *ridiculous*, not to say *treasonable* presumption before God, as country clergymen would be before the archbishop of Canterbury and the King, if they seriously gave it out, that the sleeves of their surplices are the very lawn sleeves of his Grace; and their gowns and cassocks, the identical coronation-robcs of his Majesty.

The fanciful parsons would no doubt be pitied by all men of sense; and so are we by all our calvinist brethren; but, alas! for a very different reason. They wonder at, and kindly pity us, because we cannot fancy ourselves cloathed with robes a thousand times more sacred than those which Aaron wore on the great day of atonement:—With robes ten thousand times more incommunicable, than the king's coronation robes:—With a divine garment, that in the very nature of things, can absolutely suit none but him, *on whose head are many crowns*, and who hath *ON HIS VESTURE, and on his thigh, a name written, King of kings, Lord of lords, the child born unto us of a virgin, the only-begotten Son of the Father, given to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; the wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace.*

O ye sons of men, how long will you become so vain in your imaginations, as to put on robes, on which the very finger of God has embroidered such incommunicable names with adamant and gold. If you are Saviours of the world, and mediators between God, and man; if you are *Emmanuel's* and Gods over all blessed for ever, wear them; they fit you, and they are your right. But if ye all shall die like men, who cannot atone for one sin; and if the *flesh* of every one of you shall see corruption, touch them not, unless it be with the reverential faith of the Syro-phenician woman. Like her you may indeed steal a cure through them: but O! do not steal them, as those who come in the Redeemer's dress, and say, *I am Christ;*

or those who tell you, *I am carnal sold under sin*, but no matter. I am safe. In the robes of Christ's righteousness, I am as righteous as Christ himself. If nevertheless you are bent upon putting them on by self-imputation, at the peril of your souls throw them not over the shoulders of *impenitent* sinners; lest you *turn the truth of God into a flagrant lie*; lest *professing yourselves wise to salvation, you become fools, and change the glory* [the glorious robe] *of the incorruptible God-man, into the infamous cloak of an incestuous adulterer.*

2. Suppose that still despising the *white robes*, i. e. the evangelical righteousness of the saints, you aspire at being clothed with the Redeemer's *vesture dyed in blood*; permit me to oppose to your error, the testimony of one of the twenty-four elders, who stand nearest the throne, and therefore know best in what robes the saints can stand before it with safety and honor.

*I beheld,* says the beloved disciple, *and lo, a great multitude which no man can number, of all nations, people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with WHITE ROBES*, Rev. vii. 9. By comparing this verse with Rev. xix. 7, 8. it is evident, that *great multitude* were the church triumphant, *the wife of the Lamb, who has made herself ready.* She is composed of souls, who have fulfilled those awful commands, "*O Jerusalem, wash thy heart from iniquity, that thou mayest be saved—Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doing from before my eyes: Come, and let us reason together; though your sins be red as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.*" They continued instant in prayer, that God would wash them thoroughly from their iniquity and cleanse them from their sin: nor did they give over pleading his gracious promises, till the living water, the cleansing blood, the fuller's soap, and the refiner's fire had had their full effect upon them. Therefore to them it was granted,

granted, that they should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for fine linen is the righteousness of the saints.

Now the question between us is, whether the *fine linen clean and white* and the *white robes* mentioned by St. John, are the evangelical, personal righteousness of the saints, or the mediatorial personal righteousness of their Lord: but who shall help us to decide it? One of the elders before the throne, who advances and says unto John, *These, who are arrayed in white robes, are they who come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb*, Rev. vii. 14. Does not this information, given by one to whom the beloved disciple had just said, *Sir, thou knowest*, make it indubitable, that the righteousness which the saints appear in before God, is a righteousness which was once defiled, and therefore stood in need of *washing*. Now, what Christian will assert, that the personal righteousness of the immaculate Lamb of God, had ever *one spot* of defilement?

Again, those robes were *washed, and made white* by the saints: *THEY have washed their robes*. It is evident, therefore, that if those robes were the personal righteousness of Christ, the saints had washed it. And who is the good man, that upon second thoughts, will dare to countenance a preposterous doctrine, which supposes, that the saints have *washed* the defiled righteousness of their Lord, *and made it white*?

Once more: These robes are washed *in the blood of the Lamb*, that is, *in the fountain opened for sin, and for uncleanness*. Now, if they were the robes of Christ's *personal righteousness*, does it not necessarily follow, that Christ opened a fountain to wash *his own* spotted and sinful righteousness? Is it not strange, that those who pretend to a peculiar regard for the Redeemer's glory, should be such great

sticklers for an opinion, which pours such contempt upon him, and his *glorious apparel*?

3. If the testimony of St. John, and that of one of the twenty-four elders, is not regarded; let our Lord's repeated declaration, at least, be thought worthy of consideration. All our righteousness flows from him, as all the sap of the branch flows from the vine. Therefore, speaking of righteousness, he says, *Buy of ME white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear*, Rev. iii. 18. But that this *white raiment* cannot be his *personal* righteousness, we prove, first, from his own words mentioned in the same chapter, *Thou hast a few names in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments*, Rev. iii. 4. Now, if these *garments* were the robes of Christ's *personal* obedience, which neither man nor devil can defile, how came our Lord to make it matter of praise to a *few names*, that they had not *defiled* them? If David could not in the least, bespatter them by all his crimes, was it a wonder that some persons should have kept them clean? Is it not rather surprising, that *any names* in *Sardis* should have *defiled garments*, which remain "*undefiled and without spot*," even while those who wear them, welter in the mire of adultery, murder, and incest?

Once more: Our Lord says, *Behold I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments; lest he walk naked and they see his shame*, Rev. xvi. 5. Who does not see here, that the *garments*, which we are to keep with *watchfulness*, are garments which may be spotted or stolen? Garments of which we may be so totally stript, as to be *seen walking naked*? Two particulars, that perfectly suit our *personal* righteousness of faith; but can never suit the *imputed* righteousness of Christ; that "*best robe*," which neither man nor devil can steal, neither adultery nor murder defile.

Having

Having spent so much time with my Objector, I beg leave to return to you, honored Sir, and to conclude this essay upon *imputed righteousness*, by summing up the difference which subsists between us on that important subject; and inviting men of candor to determine, who of us have reason, conscience, and scripture on their side.

You believe, that the uninterrupted good works, and the atoning sufferings of Christ, which made up his *personal righteousness* while he was upon earth, are imputed to the elect for compleat and eternal righteousness, be their own personal righteousness what it will: insomuch that, as you express it, *Five Letters*, p. 27; and 29. "All debts and claims against them, be they more or be they less, be they small or be they great, be they before or be they after conversion, are for ever and for ever cancelled: They always stand absolved, always compleat in the everlasting righteousness of the Redeemer." And you think, that this *imputed righteousness* composes the robes of righteousness, in which they stand before God, both in the day of conversion and in the day of judgment.

On the other hand, we believe, that, for the alone sake of Christ's atoning blood and personal righteousness, our personal *faith, working by obedient love, is imputed to us for righteousness*. And we assert, that this living *faith working by obedient love*, together with the privileges annexed to it [such as *pardon through, and acceptance in the beloved*] makes up the robe of righteousness washed in the blood of the Lamb, in which true believers now walk humbly with their God, and will one day triumphantly enter into the glory of their Lord.

I hope, honored Sir, that when we speak of *personal faith, love, and righteousness*, you will do us the justice to believe, we do not mean, that we can have either faith, love, or righteousness of ourselves,

or

or from ourselves. No: they all as much flow to us from Christ, *the true vine*, and *the Sun of righteousness*; as the sap and fruit of a branch come from the tree that bears it, and from the sun that freely shines upon it. Without him we have nothing but helplessness; we can do nothing but sin: but with him we can do all things. If we call any graces *personal* or *inherent*, it is not then to take the honor of them to ourselves; but merely to distinguish them from *imputed righteousness*, which is nothing but the imputed assemblage of all the graces that were in our Lord's breast 1750 years ago.

As some of my readers may desire to know exactly, wherein the difference between *personal* and *imputed* graces consists; I shall just help their conception by three or four scriptural examples. Joseph struggling out of the arms of his tempting mistress, has *personal* chastity, a considerable branch of *personal* righteousness: And David sparing his own flock, and taking the ewe-lamb that lay in Uriah's bosom, is compleat in *imputed* chastity, which is a considerable part of *imputed* righteousness. — Solomon chusing wisdom, and dedicating the temple, has *inherent* wisdom and piety: but when he chuses pagan wives, and with them worships deformed idols, he has *imputed* wisdom and piety. — Again, when Peter confesses that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, he *personally* wears the girdle of truth: but when he denies his Lord with oaths and curses, saying, "I know not the man," he wears it only by *imputation*. — Once more: When David killed proud Goliath with his own sword, he stood compleat in the *personal* righteousness we plead for: but when he killed brave Uriah with the sword of the children of Ammon, he stood compleat in what our opponents extol as "the best robe."

And now, ye unprejudiced servants of the most high God, ye men of candor and piety, scattered through

through the three kingdoms, to you, under God, we submit our cause. Impartially weigh the arguments on both sides; and judge whether the robe recommended by our brethren, deserves to be called "*the best robe,*" because it is really *better* than the robes of *righteousness and true holiness*, which we recommend; or only because it is *best* calculated to pervert the gospel, dishonor Christ, disgrace undefiled religion, throw a decent cloak over the works of darkness, render Antinomianism respectable to injudicious protestants, and frighten moral men from Christianity, as from the most immoral system of religion in the world.

By this time, honored Sir, you are perhaps ready to turn objector yourself, and say, "You slander our principles. '*The doctrines of grace,*' are doctrines according to godliness. Far from opposing *inherent* righteousness in its place, we follow after it ourselves; and frequently recommend it to others. *Imputed righteousness* is highly consistent with *personal holiness.*"

To this I answer: I know a mistaken man, who believes, that he has right to all his neighbour's property, because St. Paul says, *All things are yours*: and nevertheless he is so honest, that you may trust him with untold gold. Just so it is with you, dear Sir. You not only believe, but publicly maintain, that an elect who seduces his neighbour's wife, *stands compleat in the everlasting*, personal chastity of Christ; and that a fall into adultery *will work for his good*: and yet, I am persuaded that if you were married, you would be as true to your wife, as Adam was to Eve before the fall. But can you in conscience apologize for your errors, and desire us to embrace them, merely because your conduct is better than your bad principles?

Again, "You frequently recommend holiness," and perhaps give it out, that the shortest way to it,  
is



is to believe your doctrines of *imputed* righteousness, and *finished* salvation. But this, far from mending the matter, makes it worse. As fishes would hardly swallow the hook, if a tempting bait did not cover it, and intice them: So the honest hearts of the simple, would hardly jump at *imputed righteousness*, if they were not *deceived by fair speeches* about *personal holiness*: Thus good food makes way for poison, and the right robe decently wraps fig-leaves and cobwebs.

Once more.: Every body knows, that bad guineas are never so successfully put off, as when they are mixed with a great deal of good gold: but suppose I made it my business to pass them, either ignorantly or on purpose, would not the public be my dupes, if they suffered me to carry on that dangerous trade, upon such a plea as this, "I am not against good gold: I pass a great deal of it myself: I have even some about me now: I frequently recommend it to others; neither did I ever decry his majesty's coin?" Would not every body see through such a poor defence as this? And yet, poor as it is, you could not, with any show of truth, urge the last plea: for in order to pass your notions about *imputed righteousness*, you have publicly spoken against *inherent righteousness*, and all its fruits. In the face of the whole world you have decried the coin, that bears the genuine stamp of our Lord's goodness: you have called *good works*, "*dung, dross, and filthy rags*;" and, what is still worse, you have given it out, that you had "*scripture authority*" so to do.

Should you, to the preceding objection, add the following question; "If you were now dying, in which robe would you desire to appear before God? That of Christ's *personal* righteousness imputed to you, without any of your good works? Or, that of your own self-righteousness and good works, without the blood and righteousness of Christ?" My answer is ready.

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I would be found in *neither*, because *both* would be equally fatal to me : for the robe of an Antinomian is not better than that of a Pharisee ; and all are *foolish virgins* who stand only in the one or in the other. Were I then come to the awful moment you speak of, I would beg of God to keep me from all delusions, and to strengthen my heart-felt faith in Christ ; that I might be found clothed like a *wise virgin*, with a robe washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb ; that is, with the righteousness of a living faith working by love : For such a faith is the blessed reality, that stands at an equal distance from the antinomian and pharisaic delusion. And, I say it † again, this righteousness of faith includes, (1) A pardon through the blood and righteousness of Christ ; (2) acceptance in the beloved ; and (3) an universal principle of inherent righteousness : for *the kingdom of God is not meat and drink*, much less whim and delusion ; but **RIGHTEOUSNESS, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.**

But perhaps you ask : “ Which would you depend upon for pardon and acceptance in a dying hour ; your own inherent righteousness of faith, or the atoning blood and meritorious righteousness of Jesus Christ ? ” If this is your question, I reply, that it carries its own answer along with it. For if I have the inherent righteousness of a living faith, and if the very nature of such a faith is [as I have † already observed] to

† I have, on purpose, been guilty of several such repetitions not only because the same answers frequently solve different objections ; but because I should be glad to stop the mouths of some of my *readers*, if I may give that name to prejudiced persons, who cast a careless, and perhaps a malignant look over here and there a page ; and without one grain of candor condemn me for not saying in *one* letter, what I have perhaps already said in *half a dozen*. In these *perilous times* we must run the risk of passing for *fools* with men of unbiassed judgment, that we may not pass for *heretics* with some of our brethren. And  
it

to depend upon nothing but *Christ for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption*; is it not absurd to ask, whether I would depend on any thing else? Suppose I have faith working by humble love, do not I know, that the moment I rely upon myself, or my works as the *meritorious* cause of my acceptance, I put off *the robe made white in the blood of the Lamb*, and put on the spotted robe of a proud pharisee?

However, it is by such self-contradictory objections, and false dilemmas, that the hearts of the simple are daily deceived; as well as by *fair speeches*, which carry an appearance of great self-abasement, and of a peculiar regard for the Redeemer's glory. Who can tell how many pious souls are driven by the tempter upon one rock, through an excessive fear of dashing against the other? Every judicious moderate man,

Aurcam quisquis mediocritatem  
Diligit,

sees their well-meant error, and can say to each of them,

Procellas  
Cautas horrescis, nimium premendo  
Littus iniquum :

Left you should be found in the odious apparel of a pharisee, you put on unawares the modish dress of an Antinomian.

But, O thou man of God whosoever thou art, have nothing to do with the one or the other; except

it is well if, after all our repetitions, we are not still charged with not holding what we have so frequently asserted. For alas! what repetitions, what scriptures, what exhortations can reach breasts, covered with a shield of prejudice, which bears such a common motto as this, "Non persuadebis etiamsi persuaseris?" I could wish, that such readers as will not do justice to the arguments of our opposers, as well as to our own, would never trouble themselves with our books.

cept it be to decry and tear them both. In the mean time, be thou really *found in Christ*, not having *thine own pharisaic righteousness, which is of the letter of the law*; nor yet notions about righteousness imputed to thee in the antinomian way; but *the substantial, evangelical righteousness which is through the faith of Christ—the righteousness which is of God by faith—the true armour of righteousness*, with which St. Paul cut in pieces the forces of Pharisaism *on the right hand*, and St. James those of Antinomianism *on the left*.

Rejoicing, dear Sir, that, if our arguments should strip you of what appears to us an *imaginary garment*, you *shall not be found naked*; and, thanking the God of all grace, for giving you, and thousands of pious Calvinists, a more *substantial robe* than that for which you so zealously plead; in the midst of *chimerical imputations* of “calumny,” I remain, with *personal and inherent truth*,

Honored and dear Sir,

Your affectionate brother, and obedient  
servant in our common Lord,

J. F.

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LETTER

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## L E T T E R   X I I I .

*Containing a view of the present state of the controversy, especially with regard to FREE WILL; and a CONCLUSION, descriptive of the loving, apostolic method of carrying on controversy—expressive of brotherly love and respect for all pious Calvinists—and declarative of a desire to live with them upon peaceable and friendly terms.*

TO RICHARD HILL, Esq;

Honored and dear Sir,

**H**AVING so fully considered in my last, the state of our controversy with respect to *imputed righteousness*, I proceed to the doctrine of **FREE WILL**, which I have not discussed in this Check, because you seem satisfied with what we grant you, and we are entirely so with what you grant us concerning it. Let us, however, just cast three looks, one upon *our* concessions, another upon *yours*, and a third upon the difference still remaining between us, with regard to that capital article of our controversy.

I. We never supposed, that the natural will of fallen man is free *to good*, before it is more or less touched and rectified by grace. All we assert is, that, whether a man chuses good or evil, his *will* is *free*, or it does not deserve the name of *will*. It is as far  
from

from us to think, that man, unassisted by divine grace, is sufficient to will spiritual good; as to suppose, that when he wills it by grace, he does not will it *freely*. And therefore, agreeable to our Tenth Article, which you quote against us without the least reason, we steadily assert, that *we have no power to do good works, without the grace of God preventing us*, not that we may have a *free will*, for this we always had in the above-mentioned sense, but that we may have a *good will*: believing, that as confirmed saints and angels have a *free will*, though they have no *evil will*; so abandoned reprobates and devils have a *free will*, though they have no *good will*.

Again: We always maintained, that the liberty of our will is highly consistent with the operations of divine grace, by which it is put in a capacity of chusing life. We are therefore surprized to see you quote in triumph, *Review*, p. 33. the following paragraph out of the Second Check, "Nor is this freedom derogatory to free grace; for as it was free grace, that gave an upright free will to Adam at his creation; so, whenever his fallen children think or act aright, it is because their free will is mercifully prevented, touched, and so far rectified by free grace."

At the sight of these concessions, you cry out, "Amazing! Here is all that the most rigid Calvinist ever contended for, granted in a moment. Your words, Sir, are purely evangelical." Are they indeed! Well then, honored Sir, I have the pleasure to inform you, that, if this "is ALL you ever contended for," you need not contend any more with us; since Mr. Wesley, Mr. Sellon, J. Goodwin, and Arminius himself, never advanced any other doctrine concerning free will. For they all agree to ascribe to the *free grace* of God through the Redeemer, all the freedom of man's will to good. Therefore, you  
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yourself being judge, their sentiments, as well as my "words, are purely evangelical."

II. You cannot be more satisfied with our concessions, than we are with your's: for you grant us as much freedom of will, as constitutes us *free-willers*, or *moral agents*; and in so doing, you expose the ignorance and injustice of those, who think, that when they have called us *free-willers*, they have put upon us one of the most odious badges of heresy.

We are particularly pleased with the following concessions, Review, p. 38. "Grace may not violate the LIBERTY of the will—God forceth not a man's will to do good or ill—He useth no violence—The freedom of the regenerate is such, that they may draw back to perdition if they will."

We are yet better satisfied with what you say, p. 35. "Still it is your own opinion, that, to the end of the world, this plain peremptory assertion of our Lord, I WOULD AND YE WOULD NOT, will throw down and silence all the objections, which can be raised against free will—it proves, that those to whom it was addressed, might have come if they would. Granted." And, p. 43, you add, "I have granted Mr. F—r his own interpretation of that text, I WOULD AND YE WOULD NOT." Now, Sir, if you stand to your concession, you have granted me, That Christ had eternal life for the Jews, who rejected it: That he had a strong desire to bestow it upon them: That he had made them so far willing and able to come to him for it, as to leave them inexcusable if they did not: and that his saving grace, which they resisted, is by no means irresistible. Four propositions that sap the foundation of your system; and add new solidity to ours.

However, you try to make your readers believe, that "Still we are but just where we were. The fault yet remains in the corruption of the will:" giving us

us to understand, that, because the Jews *would not be gathered* by Christ, he had never touched and rectified their will. Thus you suppose, that their chusing death is a demonstration, that they could not have chosen life: that is, you *suppose* just what you should have *proved*.

You imagine, that a *wrong* choice always demonstrates the previous perverseness of the will that makes it; but we show the contrary by *matter of fact*. Satan and his legions, as well as our first parents, were created perfectly upright. Their will was once as free from corruption as the will of God himself. Nevertheless, with a will perfectly capable of making a right choice: with a will, that a few moments before had chosen life: they all chose the ways of death. Hence appears the absurdity of concluding, that a wrong choice always proves, the will was so corrupted previously to that choice, that a better choice was morally impossible. Take us right however. We do not suppose, that the will of the obstinate Jews had not been totally corrupted in Adam. We only maintain, that they made as *free* and fatal a choice, with their free will, which free grace had *rectified*; as Adam, Eve, and all the fallen angels once made with the *upright* free will, with which free grace had created them.

But I return to your concessions. That which pleases us most of all, I find, *Review*, p. 39. “ For  
 “ my own part, [say you,] I have not the least ob-  
 “ jection to the expression *free will*, and find it used in  
 “ a very sound sense by St. Augustin, Luther, and Cal-  
 “ vin, the great patrons for the doctrine of man’s  
 “ natural inability to do that which is good since the  
 “ fall. God does not force any man to will either  
 “ good or evil; but man, through the corruption of  
 “ his understanding, naturally and *freely wills* that  
 “ which is evil; but by being wrought upon and  
 “ enlightened by converting grace, he as *freely wills*

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“ that



“ that which is good, as before he *freely willed* the  
 “ evil.—In this sense the assembly of divines  
 “ speak of *the natural liberty of the will*, and affirm,  
 “ that it is not forced.”

These, honored Sir, are our very sentiments concerning *free will*. How strange is it then, when you have so fully granted us the natural, and necessary freedom of the will, to see you as flushed with an imaginary victory, as if you had just driven us out of the field! How astonishing to hear you cry out, p. 34. “ *Jesus Christ on the side of free will! What! —The gospel on the side of free will! What!*” Yes, honored Sir, *Jesus Christ and the gospel on the side of free will!* And if that is not enough; appeal to the 34th page of your *Review*, to shew, that the *assembly of divines*, and *yourself*, are on the side of free will also.

III. Consider we now the difference still remaining between us. From our mutual concessions it is evident, we agree, (1) That the will is always *free*: (2) That the will of man considered as fallen in Adam, and unassisted by the grace of God, is only *free to evil*—free to live in the element of sin, as a sea-fish is only free to live in salt water. And (3) that when he is *free to good*, free to chuse life, he has this freedom from redeeming grace.

But although we agree in those material points, the difference between us is still very considerable; for, we assert, that, through the Mediator promised to all mankind in Adam, God, by his free grace, restores to ALL mankind a talent of *free will to good*, by which they are put in a capacity of *chusing life or death*, that is, of acquitting themselves well or ill, at their option, in their present state of trial.

This you utterly deny, maintaining, that man is not in a state of probation; and that, as Christ died for none but the elect, none but they can ever have any degree of saving grace, i. e. *any will free to good*.

Hence

Hence you conclude, that *all* the elect are in a state of *finished* salvation; and *necessarily, infallibly, and irresistibly* chuse life: while *all* the reprobates are shut up in a state of *finished* damnation; and *necessarily, infallibly, and irresistibly* chuse death. For, say your divines, God has not decreed the infallible *end*, either of the elect or the reprobates, without decreeing also the infallible *means* conducing to that end. Therefore, in the day of his irresistible power, the fortunate elect are absolutely made willing to believe, and be saved; and the poor reprobates to disbelieve, and be damned.

I shall conclude this article by just observing, that we are obliged to oppose this doctrine, because it appears to us a doctrine of WRATH, rather than a doctrine of GRACE. If we are not mistaken, it is opposite to the general tenor of the scriptures, injurious to all the divine perfections, and subversive of this fundamental truth of natural and revealed religion, *God shall judge the world in righteousness*. It is calculated to strengthen the carnal security of Laodicean professors, raise horrid anxieties in the minds of doubting Christians, and give damned spirits just ground to blaspheme to all eternity. Again: It withdraws from thinking sinners, and judicious saints, the helps which God has given them, by multitudes of conditional promises and threatnings, designed to work upon their *hopes* and *fears*. And, while it unnecessarily stumbles men of sense, and hardens infidels, it affords wicked men rational excuses to continue in their sins; and gives desperate offenders full room to charge not only Adam, but God himself, with all their enormities.

I shall now be shorter in the review of the state of our controversy. Free will to good is founded upon general free grace, and general free grace upon the perfect oblation which Christ made upon the cross for the sins of the whole world. GENERAL  
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REDEMPTION, therefore, I have endeavoured to establish upon a variety of arguments, which you decline answering.

JUSTIFICATION BY [the evidence of] WORKS IN THE LAST DAY, is the doctrine, which you and your brother have most vehemently attacked. You have raised against it a great deal of dust, and some objections, which I hope you will find abundantly answered in the three first letters of this Check, and in the ninth. But suppose I had not answered them at all, you could not have won the day: because, after all your joint opposition against our doctrine, both you and your brother bear your honest testimony to the indubitable truth of it, as our readers may see in the first, fifth, and ninth letters.

I need not remind you, Sir, that upon this capital doctrine, the *Minutes* in general stand as upon a rock. If you doubt it, I refer you to the fifth and sixth letters.

The doctrine of a FOURFOLD JUSTIFICATION appears monstrous to your orthodoxy. Both you and your brother, therefore, have endeavoured to overturn it. But as you had neither scripture nor argument to attack it with, you have done it by some witticisms, which are answered in the tenth letter.

CALVINIAN EVERLASTING LOVE, according to which the elect were never children of wrath, and apostates may go any length in sin without displeasing God, is a doctrine which I have attacked in all the Checks. You cannot defend it, and yet you will not give it up. You just intimate, that when the elect commit adultery and murder, they are in a sense penitent. This frivolous plea, this last shift, is exposed, Let. X.

FINISHED SALVATION, which you call your "*grand fortress*," and which your brother styles "*the foundation of the Calvinists*," you have endeavoured

voured to support by a variety of arguments, answered I trust, Let. VII. in such a manner, that our impartial readers will be convinced, your foundation is sandy, and your grand fortrets by no means impregnable.

THE ONENESS of *speculative Antinomianism, and of barefaced Calvinism*, is the point into which our controversy insensibly terminates. I will not say, that what we have advanced upon this subject is unanswerable; but I shall wonder to see it answered to the satisfaction of unprejudiced readers. In the mean time I confess, that I cannot cast my eyes upon the Calvinian Creed in the VIIth letter, and the Gospel Proclamation in the XIth, without being astonished at myself, for not seeing sooner, that there is no more difference between Calvinism and speculative Antinomianism, than there was between the disciple who betrayed our Lord, and Judas surnamed Iscariot.

Such, honored Sir, is, I think, the present state of our controversy: but what is that of our hearts? Do we love one another the better, and pray for each other the oftener, on account of our theological contest? Alas! if we sell love to *buy the truth*, we shall be no gainers in the end; witness those awful words of St. Paul, *Though I have ALL knowledge, and ALL faith; if I have not charity, I am nothing but a tinkling cymbal*. O Sir, we stand in great danger of being carried away by our own spirits, beyond the sacred lines of *truth and love*, which should bound the field of Christian controversy. Permit me, then, to propose to our common consideration, and future imitation, the most perfect patterns in the world.

Let us consider him first, who in all things has the pre-eminence. With what wisdom and fortitude, with what a happy mixture of rational and scriptural arguments, does Christ carry on his important controversy

troverſy with the phariſees! He ſtands firm as a rock againſt all the frothy billows of their cavils and invectives. With aſtoniſhing impartiality he perſiſts in telling them the moſt galling truths; and condemning them out of their own mouths, conſciences, and ſacred records. In ſo doing, he loſes indeed their love and applauſe; but he maintains a good conſcience, and ſecures the praiſe which comes from God. Nor does he give over bearing his teſtimony againſt them by day, and praying over them by night, till they ſhed his innocent blood: and when they have done it, he revenges himſelf by ſending them the *firſt* news of his pardoning love: Go, ſays he to the heralds of his grace, *preach the forgivenefs of ſins among all nations, beginning at Jeruſalem, the city of my murderers.* O Sir, if the Lord of glory was ſo ready to forgive thoſe, who, for want of better arguments, betook themſelves firſt to pitiful ſophiſms and groundleſs accusations, and then to the nails, the hammer, and the ſpear; how readily ought we to forgive each other the insignificant ſtrokes of our pens!

Let St. Paul be our pattern next to Jeſus Chriſt. Conſider we with what undaunted courage, and unwearied patience, he encounters his brethren the Jews, who engroſſed the election to themſelves, and threw duſt into the air when they heard that there was ſalvation for the Gentiles. In every city he mightily convinces them out of the ſcriptures. They revile him, and he intreats them; they caſt him out of the temple, and he wiſhes himſelf *accuſed from Chriſt for their ſake.* And yet, when they charge him with crimes of which he is perfectly innocent, he ſcruples not to appeal to the Gentiles, from whoſe candor he expected more juſtice than from their bigotry.

Fix we our eyes alſo upon the two greateſt apoſtles, encountering each other in the field of controverſy.

troverfy. Because St. Peter *is to blame*, St. Paul *withstands him to the face*, with all the boldness that belongs to truth. He does not give him place for a moment, although Peter is his superior in many respects: And he sends, to the churches of Galatia, for their edification a public account of his elder brother's mistakes. But does Peter resent it? Does he write disrespectfully of his opponent? Does he not, on the contrary, call him his *beloved brother Paul*, and make honorable mention of *his wisdom*?

When I behold these great patterns of Christian moderation and brotherly love, I rejoice to have another opportunity of recommending to the love and esteem of my readers, the two pious brothers, whom I now encounter, and all those who were more or less concerned in the circular letter; in particular our Christian Deborah the Countess of Huntingdon, and my former opponent the Rev. Mr. Shirley, who are far less *honorable and right honorable* by the noble blood that flows in their veins, than by the love of Christ which glows in their hearts, and the zeal for God's glory which burns in their breasts: being persuaded, that their hasty step was intended to defend the *first* gospel-axiom, which, for want of proper attention to every part of the gospel, they imagined Mr. Wesley had a mind to set aside, when he only wanted to secure the *second* gospel-axiom.

Once more I profess also my sincere love, and unfeigned respect, for all *pious* Calvinists; protesting, I had a thousand times rather be an inconsistent Antinomian with them, than an inconsistent Legalist with many, who *hold the truth in practical unrighteousness*. I abhor, therefore, the very idea of "*dressing them up in devil's cloaths, as the papists did John Hus; and burning them for heretics in the flames of hell.*" Review, p. 92. If I have represented an Antinomian in practice, as standing on the

the left hand with wicked Arminians; it was not to condemn the mistaken persons who lead truly Christian lives, though their heads are full of antinomian opinions: But to convince my readers, that it is much better to be really a *sheep*, than to have barely a *sheep's cloathing*; and that our Lord will not be deceived, either by a *goat*, who imputes to himself the cloathing of a *sheep*; or by a *wolf*, who tries to make his escape, by insolently wrapping himself up in the shepherd's garment.

Should it be objected, that, after all the severe things which I have said against the sentiments of the Calvinists, my professions of love and respect for them cannot possibly be sincere: I answer, that although we cannot in conscience make a difference between a man and his actions, candor and brotherly kindness allow and command us to make a difference between a man and his opinions, especially when his exemplary conduct is a full refutation of his erroneous sentiment.

This, I apprehend, is the case with all *pious Calvinists*. They talk much, I grant, about *finished salvation*; but consider them with attention, and you will find an happy inconsistency between their words and their actions; for they still *work out their own salvation with fear and trembling*. Again, they make much ado about a robe of imputed righteousness: but still they go on washing their own robes, and making them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore their errors, which they *practically* renounce, do not endanger their salvation; and it would be the highest degree of injustice to confound them with abandoned Nicolaitans.

Fantasticus tells you, he is possessed of an immense estate in the territories of Geneva; where, by the by, he has not an inch of ground. But though he talks much about his fine estate abroad, he wisely considers, that he stands in need of food  
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and raiment ; that he cannot live upon a chimera ; and that he must work or starve at home. To work therefore he goes, though much against his will. In a little time, by the divine blessing upon his labour and industry, he gets a good estate, and lives comfortably upon it. And though he frequently entertains you with descriptions of the rich robes which he has at Geneva, he takes care to have always a good, decent coat upon his back. Now, is it not plain, that, though Fantasticus would be a mere beggar, for all his great estate near Geneva ; yet, as matters are at present, you cannot justly consider him as burdensome to his parish, unless you can make it appear, that his trusting to his imaginary property abroad, has lately made him squander away his goods personal, and real estate, in England.

This simile needs very little explanation. A *pious* Calvinist does not so dream about his imaginary imputation of Christ's *personal* obedience and good works, as to forget, that he must personally believe, or be damned ; yea, and *believe too with the heart unto personal righteousness*, and good works. Therefore he cries to God, for the living *faith which works by love*. He receives it ; *Christ dwells in his heart by faith*, and this *faith is imputed to him for righteousness*, because it really makes him righteous. Thus while he talks about the *false* imputation of righteousness, he really *enjoys the true* : He has *inherent* righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. When he speaks against good works, he is so happily inconsistent as to do them. If he ignorantly builds up the antinomian Babel with one hand, he sincerely tries to pull it down with the other : And while he decries the perfection of holiness, he goes on *perfecting holiness in the fear of God*. Thus his doctrinal mistakes are happily refuted by his godly conversation.

Hence it is, that, although we severely expose the mistakes of godly Calvinists, we sincerely love  
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their persons, truly reverence their piety, and cordially rejoice in the success which attends their evangelical labours. And although we cannot admit their logic, while they defend a bad cause with bad arguments; we should do them great injustice, if we did not acknowledge, that there have been, and are still among them, men eminent for good sense, and good learning—men as remarkable for their skill in the art of Logic, as for their deep acquaintance with the oracles of God. How they came to embrace doctrines, which appear to us so unscriptural and irrational, will be the subject of a peculiar dissertation.

In the mean time I observe again, that as many, who have right opinions concerning faith, holiness, and good works, go great lengths in practical Antinomianism; so many Antinomians in principle distinguish themselves by the peculiar strictness, and happy legality of their conduct. Both are to be wondered at: the one for doing the works of darkness in the clearest light: and the other for walking as children of light under the darkest cloud. The former we may compare to green wood, that is always upon the altar, and never takes the hallowed fire. The latter to the bush which Moses saw in the wilderness. The flames of Antinomianism surround them and ascend from them; and yet they are not consumed. Would to God I could say, they are not singed!

Nay, what is a greater miracle still, the love of Christ burns in their breasts, and shines in their lives. They preach him, and they do it with success. *Some indeed preach him even of envy and contention, and some of love and good will. What then? notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and we therein do rejoice; yea, and will rejoice.* Add to this, that some are prudent enough to keep their opinions to themselves. You may

may hear them preach most excellent sermons, without one word about their peculiarities; or, if they touch upon them, it is in so slight a manner, as not to endanger either the foundation or superstructure of undefiled religion. Nay, what is a greater blessing, still, sometimes their hearts are so enlarged, and their views of the gospel so brightened, that they preach *free grace as well as we*; and in the name of God seriously *command ALL men EVERY where to repent*.

Far be it from us, therefore, to "*cut off all intercourse and friendship*" with such favoured servants of the Lord. On the contrary, we thank them for their pious labours: we ask the continuance, or the renewal of their valuable love. Wherein soever we have given them any just cause of offence, we intreat them to forgive us. Upon the reasonable terms of mutual forbearance, we offer them the right hand of fellowship, together with our brotherly assistance. We invite them to our pulpits; and assure them, that if they admit us into theirs, we shall do by them as we would be done by; avoiding to touch there, or among their own people occasionally committed to our charge, upon the points of doctrine debated between us; and reserving to ourselves the liberty of bearing our full testimony in our own pulpits, and from the press, against Antinomianism and Pharisaism in all their shapes.

With these pacific sentiments towards all pious Calvinists, and in particular towards your brother and yourself; and with my best thanks for the condescending manner in which you have closed your Remarks upon the Third Check, I conclude this; assuring you, that [notwithstanding the repeated proofs, which I find in your Review, of your *uncommon* prejudice against the second gospel-axiom, and against Mr. Wesley, who is set for the defence

of it] I remain, with all my former love, and a considerable degree of my former esteem,

Honored and dear Sir,

Your affectionate companion in tribulation,  
and obedient servant in Christ,

MADELEY,

J. FLETCHER.

Nov. 15, 1772.

POST.

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## P O S T S C R I P T.

*Containing an account of the reasons; which engage us to make, at last, a firm stand against our pious Opponents; and of the hope we entertain, that in so doing our labour will not be in vain in the Lord.*

SOME persons think our controverfy will offend the world; and, indeed, we once were afraid of it ourselves. Of this ill-judged fear, and of the voluntary humility, which made us reverence the very errors of the good men from whom we dissent; the crafty, diligent tempter has so availed himself, as to sow his antinomian tares with the greatest success. Mr. John and Charles Wesley, and Mr. Sellon, have indeed made a noble stand against him: but an impetuous torrent of triumphant opposition still rolls and foams through the kingdom, bent upon drowning their works and reputation in floods of contempt and reproach. And some good, mistaken men, warmly carry on still the rash design of publicly turning the *second gospel-axiom* out of our bibles, and out of the Church of England, under the frightful names of "*Arminianism and Popery*." The question with us, then, is not so much, whether Mr. Wesley shall be ranked with heretics; as, whether the undefiled religion particularly described in the epistle of St. James, and in our Lord's sermon on the mount, shall pass for a *dreadful heresy*, while barefaced Antinomianism passes for *pure gospel*.

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Now,

Now, we apprehend, that to debate such a question in a fair and friendly manner, will rather edify than offend, either the *religious* or the *moral* world. Fair arguments, plain scriptures, honest appeals to conscience, and a close pursuit of ridiculous error, hunted down to its last recesses, will never displease enquirers after truth: and among the by-standers, few besides these, will trouble themselves with our publications. If we offend our readers, it is only when we take our leave of scripture and argument, to cry out, without rhyme or reason, "Disingenuity! Slander! Falshood! Calumny! Forgery! Heresy! Popery!"

Bad as we are, the moral world regards yet a good argument, and the religious world shews still some respect for scripture quoted consistently with the context. Fight we then lovingly with such weapons, for what we esteem to be the truth; and be the edge of our controversial swords ever so keen, we shall be sure to wound no-body but the bigots of the opposite party; and such are so great a disgrace to Christianity, that we shall do the cause of religion service by stumbling them out of their profession of it, if they are above learning the lessons of moderation.

Undoubtedly we are severely condemned by some good people, who forget, that Moses was once obliged to oppose, not only Corah, Dathan, and Abiram, who stiled themselves the Lord's people; but his own dear elect brother Aaron himself: and that St. Paul was forced by peculiar circumstances, at all hazards to withstand St. Peter himself. Well-meaning Eli's also, who do not consider consequences, and love to enjoy their own ease, rather than to make a vigorous resistance against error and sin, will be very apt to conclude, that our opposition springs from mere obstinacy and party-spirit. But should such hasty judges read  
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attentively the epistle of St. Jude, that of St. James, the first of St. John, and the second of St. Peter, which are all levelled at *Antinomianism*, they will think more favourably of the stand we make against our pious brethren, who inadvertently countenance the antinomian delusion.

However, it is objected, "This controversy will hurt the men of the world, and set them against all religion." Just the contrary. There are, indeed, Gallio's, men that care for no religion at all, who, upon hearing of our controversy, will triumph, and cry out, "If these men do not agree among themselves, how can they desire that we should agree with them?" As if we had ever desired them to agree with us, any farther than the plain letter of the scripture, and the loud dictates of conscience, invite them so to do. But such prepossessed judges will not be hurt by our controversy, though they should pretend they are; for they have their stumbling-block in their own breast. They would not have wanted pretences to ridicule religion, if our controversy had never been set on foot: Nor would they entertain more favourable thoughts of it, if we dropped it without coming to a proper éclaircissement.

But these, however numerous, are not all the world. There are in our universities, and throughout the kingdom, hundreds, and we would hope thousands, of judicious and candid men, who truly fear God, and sincerely desire to love him. These, we apprehend, are offended at the first gospel-axiom, and driven farther and farther from it by the mixture of "antinomian dotages" which renders it ridiculous. They are tempted to throw away the marrow of the gospel, on account of the luscious, fulsome additions made to it, to make it richer. And to these, we flatter ourselves, that our controversy will prove useful, as well as to our candid brethren.

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We hope it will open to the view of these Gamaliel's and Obadiah's, the confused heap of truth and error, at which they so justly stumble; and help them precisely to separate the precious from the vile; that while they *abhor that which is evil*, they may cleave to that which is good. This is not all: When they will see, that some of those men, whom they accounted wild enthusiasts, candidly take their part, where they are in the right; and fight their battles in a rational and scriptural manner, their prejudices will be softened, the light will imperceptibly steal in upon them, and by divine grace convince them, that they go as far out of the way to the left hand, as our opponents do to the right.

The truth which we maintain lies between all extremes; or rather, it embraces and connects them all. The Calvinists fairly receive only the *first* gospel-axiom, and the Moralists the *second*. If I may compare gospel-truth to the child contended for in the days of Solomon; both parties, while they divide, inadvertently destroy it. We, like the true mother, are for no division. Standing upon the middle, scriptural line, we embrace and hold fast both gospel-axioms. With the Calvinists, we give God in Christ *all* the glory of our salvation; and with the Moralists, we take care not to give him in Adam *any* of the shame of our damnation. We have need of patience with both, for they both highly blame us, because we follow the poet's direction,

Inter utrumque tene, medio tutissimus ibis :

Both think hard of us, because we do not so maintain the particular gospel-axiom which they have justly espoused, as to exclude that which they rashly explode. But if we can use with meekness of wisdom *the armour of righteousness on the right hand* and

or

on the left, and give our opposite adversaries, on every side, a scriptural and rational account of the hope that is in us; moderate Calvinists and evangelical Moralists will at last kindly give us the right hand of fellowship. Discovering that the advantages of both their doctrines join in ours, they will acknowledge, that the *faith working by love*, which we preach, includes all the privileges of *solifidianism* and *morality*; that we do justice to the *gospel*, without making void the law through faith; that we establish *the law*, without superseding free grace; and that we extol our high priest's cross, without pouring contempt upon his throne. In a word, they will perceive, that we perfectly reconcile St. Paul with St. James, and both with reason, conscience, and all the oracles of God.

Thus shall good men of all denominations agree at last among themselves, and bend all their collected forces against *pharisaic unbelief*, which continually attacks the *first gospel-axiom*; and against *antinomian contempt of good works*, which perpetually militates against the *second*. The Father of lights grant, that this may be the happy effect of our controversy! So shall we bless the hour when a variety of singular circumstances obliged us to come to a full eclaircissement; and to lay, by that mean, the foundation of a solid union, not only with each other, but also with all good and judicious men, both in the religious, and in the moral world.

END of the FOURTH CHECK.





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By the same AUTHOR,

A N

A P P E A L

T O

Matter of Fact and common Sense.

O R, A

RATIONAL DEMONSTRATION

O F

Man's corrupt and lost Estate.

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Ye pompous sons of Reason idoliz'd,  
And vilify'd at once; of Reason dead,  
Then deify'd, as monarchs were of old;  
Wrong not the Christian; think not Reason yours:  
'Tis Reason our great Master holds so dear;  
'Tis Reason's injur'd rights his wrath resents;  
'Tis Reason's voice obey'd his glories crown;  
To give lost Reason life he pour'd his own:  
Believe, and shew the Reason of a Man;  
Believe, and taste the pleasure of a God;  
Thro' Reason's wounds alone thy faith can die.

YOUNG'S NIGHT THOUGHTS.

*The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which  
was LOST.* Luke xix. 10.

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