

THE RECONCILIATION:

OR

AN EASY METHOD

TO

UNITE THE PROFESSING PEOPLE OF GOD.

BY PLACING THE DOCTRINES OF GRACE AND JUSTICE IN SUCH A LIGHT AS TO
MAKE THE CANDID ARMINIANS BIBLE CALVINISTS, AND THE CANDID
CALVINISTS BIBLE ARMINIANS.

Vestra solum legitis; vestra amatis; ceteros, incognita causa, condemnatis.—CICERO.
“Follow peace with all men. Look not every man on his own things [and favourite doctrines only;] but every man also on the things [and favourite doctrines] of others.” “The wisdom that is from above is peaceable, and without partiality,” Heb. xii, 14; Phil. ii, 4; James iii, 17.

THE RECONCILIATION, &c.

SECTION I.

The sad consequences of the divisions of those who make a peculiar profession of faith in Christ—It is unscriptural and absurd to object that believers can never be of one mind and heart.

UNSPEAKABLE is the mischief done to the interests of religion by the divisions of Christians: and the greater their profession is, the greater is the offence given by their contests. When the men who seek occasion against the Gospel, see them contending for the truth, and never coming to an agreement, they ask, like Pilate, "What is truth?" and then turn away from Christianity, as that precipitate judge did from Christ.

Of all the controversies which have given offence to the world, none has been kept up with more obstinacy than that which relates to Divine grace and the nature of the Gospel. It was set on foot in the fourth century by Augustine and Pelagius, and has since been warmly carried on by Godeschalchus, Calvin, Arminius, and others. And it has lately been revived by Mr. Whitefield, and Mr. Wesley, and by the author of *Pietas Oxoniensis*, and the orator of the university of Oxford. This unhappy controversy has brought more contempt upon the Gospel for above twelve hundred years, than can well be conceived. Preachers entangled therein, instead of agreeing to build the temple of God, think themselves obliged to pull down the scaffolds on which their brethren work. Shepherds, who should join their forces to oppose the common enemy, militate against their fellow shepherds: and their hungry followers are too frequently fed with controversial chaff, when they should be nourished with the pure milk of the word. After the example of their leaders, the sheep learn to butt, and wounds or lameness are the consequences of the general debate. The weak are offended, and the lame turned out of the way. The godly mourn, and the wicked triumph: bad tempers are fomented; the hellish flame of party zeal is blown up, and the souls of the contenders are pierced through with many sorrows.

This is not all: the Spirit of God is grieved, and the conversion of sinners prevented. How universally would the work of reformation have spread if it had not been hindered by this growing mischief! How many thousands of scoffers daily say, Can these devotees expect we should agree with them, when they cannot agree among themselves? And indeed how can we reasonably hope that they should give us the right hand of fellowship, if we cannot give it one another? "By this," saith our Lord, "shall all men know that you are my disciples, if ye love one another." Continual disputes are destructive of love; and the men of the world, seeing us cherish such disputes, naturally conclude that we are not the disciples of Christ, that there are none in the world, that the Gospel is only a pious fraud or a fine legend, and that faith is nothing but fancy, superstition, or enthusiasm.

Nor will such men be prevailed upon cordially to believe in Christ,

till they see the generality of professors "made perfect in one," by agreeing in doctrine, and "walking in love." We may infer this from our Lord's prayer for his Church: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who shall believe on me through their word: that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that THE WORLD MAY BELIEVE," John xvii, 20, 21. Christ intimates, in these words, the men of the world will never generally embrace the Gospel, till the union he prayed for take place among believers. To keep up divisions, therefore, is one of the most effectual methods to hinder the conversion of sinners, and strengthen the unbelief which hardens their hearts.

The destructive nature of this sin appears from the severity with which St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians and Galatians, who were divided among themselves. The former he could not acknowledge as "spiritual men," but called them "carnal," and affirmed that "to their shame, some of *them* had not the knowledge of God." And the latter he considered as persons almost "fallen from Christ;" intimating, that if they continued to "bite each other," (an expression which is beautifully descriptive of the malignity, with which most controvertists speak and write against their antagonists,) they would "be consumed one of another," Gal. v, 15.

In families and civil societies divisions are truly deplorable; but in the Churches of Christ they are peculiarly pernicious and scandalous: (1.) *Pernicious*: to be persuaded of it, we need only consider these awful words of St. James:—"If ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom is devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work," James iii, 14, &c. (2.) *Scandalous*: if Christ be the Prince of Peace, why should his subjects be sons of contention? If he came to reconcile Jews and Gentiles, "by breaking down the middle wall of partition between them;" if he "made in himself, of twain [of those two opposed bodies of men] one new man," that is, one new body of men, "all of one heart and of one soul;" if he has "slain the enmity, so making peace;" if "it pleased the Father to reconcile all things unto himself by him;" and if "in the dispensation of the fulness of times [the Christian dispensation] he gathers together all things in him:" if this, I say, is the case, what can be more contrary to the Gospel plan than the obstinacy with which some Protestants refuse to be "gathered together" with their fellow Protestants, under the shadow of their Redeemer's wings? And what can be more scandalous than for Christ's followers, yea, for the strictest of them to spend their time in building "middle walls of partition" between themselves and their brethren, or in "daubing over with untempered mortar" the walls which mistaken men have built in former ages?

Many Jews refused to be saved by Christ, because he came to save the Gentiles as well as themselves. And it is to be feared that some Christians, from a similar motive, refuse the Divine favour, or the eminent degrees of it, to which they are called in the Gospel. Christ says to these bigots, "How often would I have gathered you together, as a hen gathers her scattered brood under her wings! but ye would not:" ye were afraid of your Calvinian or Arminian brethren, and preferred

the selfish heat of party spirit, to the diffusive warmth of Divine and brotherly love. I say Divine, as well as brotherly love; for he "that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?"

My regard for unity revives my drooping spirits, and adds new strength to my wasted body.* I stop at the brink of the grave over which I bend: and, as the blood, oozing from my decayed lungs, does not permit me vocally to address my contending brethren, by means of my pen I will ask them if they can properly receive the holy communion while they wilfully remain in disunion with their brethren from whom controversy has needlessly parted them? For my part, if I felt myself unwilling to be reconciled on Scripture terms, either with my Calvinian or Arminian neighbours, I would no more dare go to the Lord's table, than if I had harboured murder in my heart; and this scripture would daily haunt my conscience, "Whosoever shall say to his brother, Thou fool, [thou silly free willer, thou foolish bound willer, thou heretic!] shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore, if thou bring thy gift before the altar, and there rememberest that thy [Calvinian or Arminian] brother hath aught against thee; leave thy gift and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Agree with thine adversary quickly"—thy religious as well as thy civil adversary—him with whom thou differest about the gold of the word; as well as him with whom thou contendest about the gold of this world.

Not to be reconciled when we properly may, is to keep up divisions; and to keep up divisions is as bad as to cause them. And what a dreadful thing it is to cause divisions, appears from St. Paul's charge to the Romans: "I beseech you, brethren, mark them who cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them," Rom. xvi, 17. Avoid them, for those who have the itch of contention, and the plague of party spirit, are not only in a dangerous case themselves; but they carry about a mortal infection, which they frequently communicate to others.

Should party men exclaim against my reconciling attempt, and say that "there always were, and always will be divisions among the children of God, and that to aim at a general reconciliation, is to aim at an absolute impossibility;" I reply,—

(1.) This plea countenances the lusts of the flesh. "Walk in the Spirit," saith St. Paul, "and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh:" and among these lusts he immediately numbers "debate, emulations, wrath, contentions, and such like," observing, at the same time, that "the fruit of the Spirit is love, peace, gentleness, meekness," &c. Now when party men insinuate that we can never live in peace and harmony with our Christian brethren, do they not indirectly teach that "debate, emulations, contentions, and such like, must" still waste our time, disturb our minds, and impair our love? And is not this an underhand plea for a wretched obligation to neglect "the fruit of the Spirit," and for an Antinomian necessity to bring forth the "fruit of the flesh?"

(2.) It militates against St. Paul's conflict for believers: "I would,"

* Mr. Fletcher was judged to be now in the last stage of a consumption.

says he to the Colossians, "that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh, that their hearts might be comforted; being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God," Col. ii, 1, 2. It opposes also the end of the apostle's prayer for the Romans: "The God of patience and consolation grant you to be like minded, &c, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, &c. Wherefore receive you one another, as Christ also received us," Rom. xv, 5, &c. But what is far worse, it directly contradicts Christ's capital prayer, which I have already quoted: "I pray," says he, "that they [believers] may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee: that they also may be one in us: that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one: that the [unbelieving] world may know that thou hast sent me," John xvii, 20, &c. Now if our Lord asked for an absolute impossibility, when he asked for the perfect union of believers in this life, where was his wisdom? And if he cannot make us one in heart and mind (supposing we are willing to abide by his reconciling word) where is his power?

(3.) It strikes at the authority of these evangelical entreaties, exhortations, and commands:—"Be of the same mind," Rom. xii, 16. "I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment," 1 Cor. i, 10. "Finally, brethren, be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind; live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you," 2 Cor. xiii, 11. "Let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ: that I may hear ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind; striving together for the faith of the Gospel. Fulfil ye my joy that ye be like minded—being of one accord, of one mind. I beseech Euodias and Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord," Phil. i, 27; ii, 2; iv, 2. "Finally, be ye all of one mind, &c. Love as brethren, be courteous. For he that will see good days, &c, let him seek peace [with his enemies, much more with his brethren;] and let him pursue it," 1 Pet. iii, 8, &c. "Let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same things," Phil. iii, 16. "With all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love: endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. For there is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all," Eph. iv, 2, &c. The same apostle, writing to the divided Corinthians, tries to reconcile them by comparing again the body of believers to the human body, and drawing a suitable inference: "The body is one," says he, "though it hath many members; that there should be no schism, [no division] in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another; all suffering when one member suffers, and all rejoicing when one member is honoured," 1 Cor. xii, 12-26. Hence it follows that to plead for the continuance of schisms and divisions in Christ's mystical body, is evidently to plead for a breach of "the bond of peace," and for the neglect of all the above-mentioned apostolic injunctions.

(4.) It gives the lie to the following promises of the God of truth. "The hatred to Ephraim shall depart, &c. Ephraim shall not envy Judah, neither shall Judah vex Ephraim," Isa. xi, 13. "I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them and of their children," Jer. xxxii, 39. "I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them," Ezek. xi, 19. "I will turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent, &c. Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold. Them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd," John x, 16.

(5.) It contradicts the following accounts of God's faithfulness in the initial accomplishment of the preceding promises:—"They were all with one accord in one place; continuing daily with one accord in the temple," Acts ii, 1, 46. "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart, and of one soul," Acts iv, 32. "If we walk in the light, &c, we have fellowship one with another. For he that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is in him no occasion of stumbling:" nothing in his heart will either cause or keep up divisions, 1 John i, 7; ii, 10. "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, because your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth," 2 Thess. i, 3. "By one Spirit, all *complete Christians* are baptized into one body, whether *they* be Jews or Gentiles, whether *they* be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into *one Spirit*"—the Spirit of truth and love; and (unless they leave their first love as the Corinthians did) they sweetly continue to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," 1 Cor. xii, 13; Eph. iv, 3. From these accounts of the unity of the primitive Christians before they "left their first love," I infer, that unity is attainable because it was attained. The arm of the Lord is not shortened; "the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him;" and if we be not obstinately bent upon despising the "wisdom from above, which is peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of good fruits and without partiality;" we shall find that "the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace;" and we shall evidence that all the sincere followers of Christ can yet "continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship," instead of perversely continuing in their own mistakes and in the spirit of discord.

Lastly: the objection I answer has a tendency to stop the growth of Christ's mystical body, and opposes God's grand design in sending the Gospel: for "he gave apostles, evangelists, and pastors, for the perfecting of the saints, and the edifying of the body of Christ; till all 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: that we be no more carried about with every wind of doctrine, &c, but speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into him who is the head, even Christ; from whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love," Eph. iv, 11, 17. No believer can, I think, candidly read these words of the apostle, without being

convinced that union and growth are inseparable in the Church of "Christ, from whom all the body, by joints and bands having nourishment [or help] ministered, and being knit together, increaseth with the increase of God," Col. ii, 19.

From these observations, I hope, it appears, that whether we consider the earnest entreaties of the apostles; their conflicts and pious wishes for their converts; the wisdom of our Lord's address to his Father for the union of believers; the repeated commands of the Gospel to be of "one mind and one judgment;" the promises which God has made to help us to keep these commands; the Divine power, by which the primitive believers were actually enabled to keep them, so long as they walked in the Spirit; or whether we consider the end of evangelical preaching, and the unity and growth of Christ's mystical body; nothing can be more unscriptural than to say that believers can never be again of one heart and of one mind.

And as this notion is unscriptural, so it is irrational; inasmuch as it supposes that the children of God can never agree to serve him, as the children of the wicked one do to honour their master; for St. John informs us that "these have one mind to give their power and strength unto the beast," Rev. xvii, 13. And experience daily teaches that when the men of the world are embarked in the same scheme, they can perfectly agree in the pursuit of wealth, pleasure, and fame, or in the performance of duty. If ships that sail under the command of the same admiral do not give each other a broadside, because they have different captains, and are employed in different services; if soldiers, who follow the same general, do not quarrel because they belong to different regiments, because their coats are not turned up alike, or because they do not defend the same fort, fight in the same wing of the army, hear the same drum, and follow the same pair of colours: and if the king's faithful servants can unanimously promote his interests, and cheerfully lend each other a helping hand, though their departments are as different as the fleet is different from the army, is it not absurd to suppose that Christ's faithful soldiers and servants, who are the meekest, the humblest, the most disinterested, and the most loving of all men, can never live in perfect union, and sweetly agree to promote the interests of their Divine Master? I conclude, therefore, that the objection which supposes the contrary, is not less contrary to reason than to the word of God.

SECTION II.

Pious, moderate Calvinists, and pious, moderate Arminians in particular, may be easily reconciled to each other; because the doctrines of grace and justice, about which they divide, are equally Scriptural, and each party contends for a capital part of the Gospel truth; their grand mistake consisting in a groundless supposition that the part of the truth they defend is incompatible with the part which is defended by their brethren.

SOME persons will probably make a more plausible objection than that which is answered in the preceding pages. They will urge, "that truth

should never be sacrificed to love and peace ; that the Calvinists and the Arminians holding doctrines diametrically opposite, one party at least must be totally in the wrong ; and as the other party ought not to be reconciled to error, the agreement I propose is impossible : it will never take place, unless the Calvinists can be prevailed upon to give up unconditional election, and their favourite doctrines of partial grace ; or the Arminians can be persuaded to part with conditional election, and their favourite doctrines of impartial justice ; and as this is too great a sacrifice to be expected from either party, it is in vain to attempt bringing about a reconciliation between them."

This objection is weighty : but far from discouraging me, it affords me an opportunity of laying before my readers the ground of hope I entertain, to reconcile the Calvinists and Arminians. I should indeed utterly despair of effecting it, were I obliged to prove that either party is entirely in the wrong. But I may without folly expect some success, because my grand design is to demonstrate that both parties have an important truth on their side ; both holding opposite doctrines, which are as essential to the fulness of Christ's Gospel, as the two eyes, nostrils, and cheeks, which compose our faces, are essential to the completeness of human beauty.

"The language of Scripture seems to favour the one as well as the other," says Dr. Watts on a similar occasion : "but this is the mischief that ariseth between Christians who differ in their sentiments or expression of things ; they imagine that while one is true, the other must needs be false : and then they brand each other with error and heresy : whereas, if they would but attend to Scripture, that would show them to be both in the right, by its different explication of their own forms of speaking. In this way of reconciliation I cannot but hope for some success, because it falls in with the universal, fond esteem that each man has of his own understanding : it proves that two warm disputers may both have truth on their side. Now, if ten persons differ in their sentiments, it is much easier to persuade all of them that they may be all in the right, than it is to convince one that he is in the wrong."

I shall illustrate this quotation by a remark, which occurs in the beginning of my Scripture Scales ; only taking the liberty of applying to pious Calvinists and pious Arminians what I said there of pious Solidians and pious moralists :—"The cause of their misunderstanding is singular. They are good men upon the whole ; therefore they never can oppose truth as truth : and as they are not destitute of charity, they cannot quarrel merely for quarreling's sake. Whence then spring their continual disputes ? Is it not from inattention and partiality ? They will not look truth full in the face : determined to stand on one side of her, they seldom see above one half of her beauty. The rigid Calvinians gaze upon her side face on the right hand, and the rigid Arminians contemplate it on the left. But her unprejudiced lovers, humbly sitting at her feet, and beholding her in full, admire the exquisite proportion of all her features : a peculiar advantage this, which her partial admirers can never have in their present unfavourable position."

To be more explicit : a rigid Calvinist has no eyes but for God's sovereignty, unconditional election, and the doctrines of partial grace ; while a rigid Arminian considers nothing but God's equity, conditional

election, and the doctrines of impartial justice. And therefore, to unite these contending rivals, you need only prevail on the Arminians to bow to God's sovereignty, to acknowledge an unconditional election, and to receive the doctrines of partial grace; and as soon as they do this, they will be reconciled to Bible Calvinism and to all moderate Calvinists. And, on the other hand, if the Calvinists can be convinced that they should bow to God's equity, acknowledge a conditional election, and receive the doctrines of impartial justice, they will be reconciled to Bible Arminianism, and to all moderate Arminians. Should it be said that it is impossible to convince the Arminians of the truth of an unconditional election, &c, and that the Calvinists will never receive the doctrine of a conditional election, &c, I answer, that bigots of either party will not be convinced, because they all pretend to infallibility, though they do not pretend to wear a triple crown. But the candid, on both sides of the question, lie open to conviction, and will, I hope, yield to the force of plain Scripture and sound reason, the two weapons with which I design to attack their prejudices.

But before I open my friendly attack, I beg leave, candid reader, to show thee the ground on which I will erect my Scriptural and rational batteries. It is made up of the following reasonable propositions:—

(1.) When good men warmly contend about truth, you may in general be assured that, if truth can be compared to a staff, each party has one end of the staff, and that to have the whole you need only consistently hold together what they inconsiderately pull asunder. (2.) The Gospel contains doctrines of partial grace and unconditional election, as well as doctrines of impartial justice and conditional election. Nor can we embrace the whole truth of the Gospel, unless we consistently hold those seemingly contrary doctrines. (3.) Those opposite doctrines, which rigid Calvinists and Arminians suppose to be absolutely incompatible, agree as well together as the following pair of propositions: God has a throne of grace and a throne of justice; nor is the former throne inconsistent with the latter. God, as the Creator and Governor of mankind, sustains the double character of sovereign Benefactor, and righteous Judge: and the first of these characters is perfectly consistent with the second. This is the ground of my reconciling plan: and this ground is so solid, that I hardly think any unprejudiced person will ever enter his protest against it. Were divines to do it, they would render themselves as ridiculous as a pilot, who should suppose that the head and stern of the vessel he is called to conduct, can never be two essential parts of the same ship.

If Christianity were compared to a ship, the doctrines of grace might be likened to the fore part, and the doctrines of justice to the hinder part of it. This observation brings to my remembrance a quotation from Dr. Doddridge, which will help the reader to understand how it is possible that an election of grace, maintained by moderate Calvinists, and an election of justice, defended by moderate Arminians, may both be true: "I have long observed," says the judicious doctor, "that Christians of different parties have eagerly been laying hold on particular parts of the system of Divine truths, and have been contending about them as if each had been all; or as if the separation of the members from each other, and from the head, were the preservation of the

body, instead of its destruction. They have been zealous to espouse the defence, and to maintain the honour and usefulness of each part ; whereas their honour as well as usefulness seems to me to lie much in their connection : and suspicions have often arisen between the respective defenders of each, which have appeared as unreasonable and absurd as if all the preparations for securing one part of a ship in a storm, were to be censured as a contrivance to sink the rest." In the name of God, the God of wisdom, truth, and peace, let then the defenders of the doctrines of grace cease to fall out with the defenders of the doctrines of justice, and let both parties seek the happy connection which Dr. Doddridge speaks of, and rejoice in the part of the truth peculiarly held by their brethren, as well as in that part of the Gospel to which they have hitherto been peculiarly attached.

Many good men, on both sides of the question, have at times pointed out the connection of the opposite doctrines, which are maintained in these sheets. Mr. Henry, a judicious Calvinist, does it in his notes on the parable of the talents, where he contends for the doctrines of partial grace and impartial justice, and exalts God both as a sovereign Benefactor, and a righteous Judge. Commenting upon these words, "Take therefore the talent from him" [the slothful servant] says he, "The talents were first disposed of by the master as an absolute owner, [that is, a sovereign benefactor, who does what he pleases with his own.] But this was now disposed of by him as a judge ; he takes it from the unfaithful servant to punish him, and gives it to him that was eminently faithful to reward him." This is "rightly dividing the word of truth," and wisely distinguishing between the throne of grace and that of justice.

Dr. John Heylin, a judicious Arminian, in his discourse on 1 Tim. iv, 10, is as candid as Mr. Henry in the above-quoted note ; for he stands up for God's sovereignty and the doctrine of partial grace, as much as Mr. Henry does for God's equity and the doctrine of impartial justice. After pointing out in strong terms the error of those who, by setting aside the doctrines of justice, "sap* the foundation of all religion, which is the moral character of the Deity," he adds :—

"Nor, on the other hand, do† they less offend against the natural prerogative, I mean the absolute sovereignty of God, who deny him the free exercise of his bounty, as they seem too much inclined to do who are backward to believe the great disparity among mankind with regard to a future state, which revelation always supposes. His mercy is over all his works, but that mercy abounds to some *much more* than to others, according to the inscrutable 'counsel of his own will.' Nor is there a shadow of injustice in such *unequal* distribution of his favours. The term favours implies freedom in bestowing them ; else they were not favours, but debts. The almighty Maker is master of all his productions. Both matter and form are his : all is gift, all is bounty ; nor may the lizard complain of his size, because there are crocodiles ; nor is the worm injured by the creation of an eagle."

I shall conclude this section by producing the sentiments of two persons, whose authority is infinitely greater than that of Mr. Henry and

* He means the rigid Calvinists.

† He means the rigid Arminians.

Dr. Heylin. Who exceeds St. Paul in orthodoxy? And yet what Calvinist ever maintained the doctrines of grace more strongly than he does? "By the grace of God," says he, "I am what I am," 1 Cor. xv, 10. "By grace you are saved [that is, admitted into the high state of Christian salvation] through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God:" [a special gift, which God has kept back from far the greatest part of the world;] "not of works, lest any man should boast," Eph. ii, 8. "At this time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace," Rom. xi, 5, 6. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us," or made us partakers of the glorious privileges of Christians, which he has denied to millions of the human race," Tit. iii, 5. "He is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe;" for he saves "Christians with" a special salvation, which is called "the great salvation," 1 Tim. iv, 10; Heb. iii, 3. Christ indeed "is not the propitiation for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world," 1 John ii, 2. Nevertheless, he is especially our Mediator, our passover or paschal Lamb, and "the High Priest of our *Christian* profession, in whom God hath chosen us *Christians* before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy" above all people: "having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, to the praise of the glory of his grace:" a high adoption, which is so superior to that to which the Jews had been predestinated in Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses, that St. Paul spends part of his Epistle to the Ephesians in asserting the honour of it, and in extolling the glory of the peculiar grace given unto us in Christ. And if you exclaim against this Divine partiality, the apostle silences you by a just appeal to God's sovereignty: see Rom. ix, 20.

But was St. Paul Calvinistically partial? Did he so contend for the doctrines of grace, as to cast a veil over the doctrines of justice? Stands he not up for the latter, as boldly as he does for the former? What Arminian ever bowed before the throne of Divine justice more deeply than he does in the following scriptures? "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love," Heb. vi, 10. "I have fought the good fight, &c. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day," 2 Tim. iv, 7, 8. These passages strongly support the doctrines of justice, but those which follow may be considered as the very summit of Scripture Arminianism. "Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord," Eph. vi, 8. "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, &c, knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that does wrong shall receive [adequate punishment] for the wrong which he hath done," Col. iii, 23, &c. "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that which he hath done, whether it be good or bad," 2 Cor. v, 10. "In the day of wrath and revelation of his righteous judgment, God will render to every man according to his deeds; eternal life to them who, by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, honour, and immortality; but indignation and wrath to them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey un-

righteousness, &c ; for [before the throne of justice] there is no respect of persons with God," Rom. ii, 5, &c.

Should it be asked how these seemingly contrary doctrines of grace and justice can be reconciled, I reply, They agree as perfectly together as the first and second advent of our Lord. At his first coming he sustained the gracious character of a Saviour ; and at his second coming he will sustain the righteous character of a Judge. Hear him explaining the mystery, which is hid from the rigid Calvinists and the rigid Arminians. Speaking of his first coming, he says :—"I came not to judge the world, but to save the world," by procuring for mankind different talents of initial salvation : a less number for the heathens, more for the Jews, and most for the Christians, who are his most peculiar people : "for God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world ; but that the world through him might be saved," John xii, 47 ; iii, 17. "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost," Luke xix, 10. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain," John xv, 16. Here are doctrines of grace ! But did our Lord so preach these doctrines as to destroy those of justice ? Did he so magnify his coming to save the world, as to make nothing of his coming to judge the world ? No : hear him speaking of his second advent : "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another, [them that have done good from them that have done evil,] and these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal," Matt. xxv, 31, 32, 46. "Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be," Rev. xxii, 12. "For the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall bear his [the Son of man's] voice, and shall come forth : they that have done good unto the resurrection of life : and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation," John v, 28, 29. Here are doctrines of justice ! And the man who says that such doctrines are not as Scriptural as the above-mentioned doctrines of grace, may as well deny the succession of day and night.

Dr. Watts, in his excellent book entitled, *Orthodoxy and Charity United*, gives us a direction which will suitably close the preceding appeal to the Scriptures :—"Avoid," says he, "the high flights and extremes of zealous party men, &c. You will tell me, perhaps, that Scripture itself uses expressions as high upon particular occasions, and as much leaning to extremes as any men of party among us. But remember, then, that the Scripture uses such strong and high expressions not on one side only, but on both sides, and infinite wisdom hath done this more forcibly to impress some present truth or duty : but while it is evident the holy writers have used high expressions, strong figures of speech, and vehement turns on both sides, this sufficiently instructs us that we should be moderate in our censures of either side, and that the calm, doctrinal truth, stripped of all rhetoric and figures, lies nearer to the middle, or at least that some of these appearing extremes are more reconcilable than angry men will generally allow. If the apostle charges the Corinthians, 'So run that ye may obtain,' 1 Cor.

ix, 24 ; and tells the Romans, 'It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God who showeth mercy,' Rom. ix, 16 ; we may plainly infer that our running and his mercy—our diligence and Divine grace are both necessary to salvation."

From all these scriptures it evidently follows : (1.) That as God is both a Benefactor and a Governor, a Saviour and a Judge, he has both a throne of grace, and a throne of justice. (2.) That those believers are highly partial who worship only before one of the Divine thrones, when the sacred oracles so loudly bid us to pay our homage before both. (3.) That the doctrines of grace are the statutes and decrees issuing from the former throne : and that the doctrines of justice are the statutes and decrees issuing from the latter. (4.) That the principal of all the doctrines of grace is, that there is an election of grace : and that the principal of all the doctrines of justice is, that there is an election of justice. (5.) That the former of those elections is unconditional and partial ; as depending merely on the good pleasure of our gracious Benefactor and Saviour : and that the latter of those elections is conditional and impartial ; as depending merely on the justice and equity of our righteous Governor and Judge : for justice admits of no partiality, and equity never permits a ruler to judge any men but such as are free agents, or to sentence any free agent, otherwise than according to his own works. (6.) That the confounding or not properly distinguishing those two elections, and the reprobations which they draw after them, has filled the Church with confusion, and is the grand cause of the disputes which destroy our peace. And (lastly) that to restore peace to the Church, these two elections must be fixed upon their proper Scriptural basis, which is attempted in the following section.

SECTION III.

Eight pair of opposite propositions, on which the opposite doctrines of grace and justice are founded, and which may be considered as the basis of Bible Calvinism and Bible Arminianism, and as a double key to open the mysteries of election and reprobation.

*Scripture ground of CALVINISM,
and the doctrines of GRACE.*

*Scripture ground of ARMINIANISM,
and the doctrines of JUSTICE.*

PROPOSITION I.

GOD is original, eternal, and unbounded life, light, love, and purity ; and therefore, wherever these blessings are found, in any degree, they originally come from him, the overflowing fountain of all that is excellent in the natural, moral, and spiritual world.

PROPOSITION I.

THERE is no death, darkness, free wrath, or sin in God : and therefore these evils, wherever they are found, originally flow from inferior agents, whose free will may become the fountain of all evil : for when free agents choose first the evil of *sin*, God is obliged in justice to choose next the evil of *punishment*. Thus *moral* evil draws *natural* evil after it.

Doctrines of grace.

II. God is an infinitely wise Benefactor, full of goodness and GRACE.

III. It seems highly inconsistent with the wisdom of a Creator and Benefactor, to make all his creatures of the same size and rank, and to deal out his bounties to them in the same measure. To say that he should do it, is as absurd as to affirm that his goodness requires him to make every insect as big as an elephant, and every spire of grass as tall as an oak.

IV. For want of considering the preceding, self-evident propositions, and their necessary consequences, the heated advocates for the doctrines of justice have erred, either by denying, or by not fully granting these two undeniable truths: (1.) All good comes originally from God's free grace and overflowing fulness. (2.) God, as a sovereign benefactor, may do what he pleases with his own. Nor should our "eye be evil because he is good," and displays his superabounding goodness toward some men, more than he does toward others.

V. The grand mistake of the rigid Arminians consists then in not frankly ascribing to God all the original goodness, and gracious sovereignty which belong to him as the sovereign author and first parent of all good.

VI. Would you get clear of the error of rigid Arminians, not only assert God's *grace* and *goodness*, insisting that he is the first cause and eternal parent of ALL good, natural and spiritual, temporal and eternal, but boldly stand up also for his free grace and exuberant

Doctrines of justice.

II. God is an infinitely wise Governor, full of equity and JUSTICE.

III. It seems highly inconsistent with the equity of a Governor and a Judge to decree that millions of rational creatures shall be born in a graceless, sinful, and remediless state, that he may display his righteous sovereignty by passing a sentence of death and eternal torments upon them, for being found in the state of remediless corruption, in which his irresistible decree has placed them.

IV. For want of considering the preceding, self-evident propositions, and their unavoidable consequences, the heated advocates for the doctrines of grace have erred, by directly or indirectly maintaining these two capital untruths: (1.) Some real evil can originally flow from that part of God's predestination which is generally called "absolute reprobation," or "predestination to eternal death." (2.) God, as a sovereign, may absolutely ordain some of his rational creatures to eternal death, before they have personally deserved it: or, which is all one, he may so pass by unborn children as to insure their continuance in sin, and their everlasting damnation.

V. The grand mistake of the rigid Calvinists consists then in directly ascribing to God some original evil, and a reprobating sovereignty, which is irreconcilable with the *goodness* of a Creator, and the *equity* of a Judge.

VI. Would you, on the other hand, get clear of the error of rigid Calvinists, not only maintain in general that God is just, but confidently assert that he utterly disclaims a sovereignty which dispenses *rewards* and *punishments* from a throne of justice, otherwise

*Doctrines of grace.**Doctrines of justice.*

rant goodness ; maintaining that he has the most unbounded right to dispense the peculiar bounties of his grace, without any respect to our works. For the children [Esau and Jacob] not being yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to [the] election [of superior grace] might stand, not of works, but of him that [arbitrarily chooseth and] calleth ; it was said, [not the one is absolutely ordained to eternal death, and the other absolutely ordained to eternal life ; but] “ the elder shall serve the younger : ” the younger shall have a superior blessing. And in this respect “ it is not *at all* of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God, who *most freely and absolutely* showeth mercy, or favour,” Rom. ix, 11, 12, 16. Hence it appears, that to deny a PARTIAL election of distinguishing grace, is equally to fly in the face of St. Paul and of reason.

VII. When we consider the election of *partial* grace, and the harmless reprobation that attends it, we may boldly ask, with St. Paul, “ Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto [superior] honour, and* another unto [comparative]

than according to works : witness his own repeated declarations :—“ I said indeed that thy house, &c, should walk before me for ever : but now be it far from me : for them that honour me, I will honour ; and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed,” 1 Sam. ii, 30. Again : “ If the wicked man will turn from all his sins, he shall surely live, &c. But when the righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, &c, in his sin that he hath sinned shall he die. Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. O house of Israel, are not my ways equal ? Are not your ways unequal ? Therefore I will judge you, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord. Repent, &c, for I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth,” Ezek. xviii, 21, &c. Hence it appears, that with respect to the election and reprobation of justice, God’s decrees, so far as they affect our personal salvation or damnation, are regulated according to our personal righteousness or sin, that is, according to our works.

VII. When we consider the election of *impartial* justice, and the fearful reprobation that answers to it, we may say, with St. Peter, “ If ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man’s work, pass the time of your sojourning here in

* To understand Rom. ix, we must remember that the apostle occasionally speaks of the election and reprobation of justice ; although his first design is to establish the election of grace, and the harmless reprobation which answers to it. When he speaks of Jacob and Esau, he contends for the election of grace : and when he brings in Pharaoh and “ the vessels of wrath,” who, by their obstinate unbelief, have provoked vindictive wrath to harden them, or to give them up to the hardness of their hearts, he speaks of the election of justice. The passage to which this note refers, is the apostle’s transition from the one election to the other, and may be applied to both : I have applied it here to the election of grace. But if you apply it to the election of justice, the meaning is : hath not the Governor and Judge of all the earth authority over all mankind, as being their sovereign and lawgiver ? Can he not fix the terms on which he will reward or punish his subjects ? The terms on which he will give them more grace, or take from them the talent of grace which they have buried, and leave them to the rigour of

Doctrines of grace.

dishonour?" Cannot God ordain, that of two unborn children, the one (as Jacob) shall be appointed to superior blessings, and (in this sense) shall be *more loved*; while the other (as Esau) shall be deprived of those blessings, and in this sense shall be *less loved*, or comparatively *hated*? "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated," Rom. ix, 13. When we speak of the same election, we may say, as the master of the vineyard did to the envious labourer, "Is thine eye evil, because *the Master of the universe* is good?" Matt. xx, 15.

VIII. From the preceding propositions it evidently follows, that when God is considered as electing and reprobating the children of men from his throne of grace, his election and reprobation are *partial* and *unconditional*.

Having thus laid down the rational and Scriptural ground of Bible Calvinism, which centres in the PARTIAL election of grace,—and of Bible Arminianism, which centres in the IMPARTIAL election of justice, I shall show the nature, excellence, and agreement of both systems in the following essays, which, I trust, will convert judicious Arminians to Scripture Calvinism, and judicious Calvinists to Scripture Arminianism.

 SECTION IV.

Bible Calvinism and Bible Arminianism are plainly stated and equally vindicated in two essays, the first on the doctrines of partial grace, and the second on those of impartial justice—Those opposite doctrines are shown to be highly agreeable to reason and Scripture, and perfectly consistent with each other.

ON the eight pair of balanced propositions, which are produced in the preceding section, I rest the two essays which follow. I humbly recommend the *first* to rigid Arminians; because it contains a view of Bible Calvinism, of the doctrines of grace, and of the absolute, unconditional,

his law? Can he not appoint that obedient believers shall be saved, or elected to eternal salvation; and that his mark of judicial reprobation shall be fixed upon all obstinate unbelievers, as Pharaoh and his host certainly were?

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fear," 1 Pet. i, 17. "God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him," Acts x, 34. We may add with Christ, "In the day of judgment, men shall give account of their words. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned," Matt. xii, 36, 37. And we may humbly expostulate with God, as Abraham did: "That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Gen. xviii, 25.

VIII. From the preceding propositions it evidently follows, that when God is considered as electing and reprobating the children of men from his throne of justice, his election and reprobation are *impartial* and *conditional*.

and partial election, to which they perpetually object. And I earnestly recommend the SECOND essay to rigid Calvinists, because it contains a view of Bible Arminianism, of the doctrines of justice, and of the judicial, conditional, and impartial election, against which they are unreasonably prejudiced.

BIBLE CALVINISM.

ESSAY THE FIRST.

Displaying the doctrines of partial grace, the capital error of the Pelagians, and the excellence of Scripture Calvinism.

THE doctrines of partial grace rest on these scriptures:—"I will be [peculiarly] gracious to whom I will be [peculiarly] gracious; and I will show *special* mercy, on whom I will show *special* mercy," Exod. xxxiii, 19. "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?" Matt. xx, 15.

These precious doctrines subdivide themselves into a *partial* election, and a *partial* reprobation; both flowing from a free, wise, and sovereign grace, which is notoriously respective of persons.

The partial election and reprobation of free grace is the gracious and wise choice, which God (as a sovereign and arbitrary benefactor) makes, or refuses to make, of some persons, Churches, cities, and nations, to bestow upon them, for his own mercy's sake, more favours than he does upon others. It is the partiality with which he imparts his talents of nature, providence, and grace, to his creatures or servants; giving five talents to some, two talents to others, and one to others; not only without respect to their works, or acquired worthiness of any sort, but frequently in opposition to all personal demerit. Witness the thieves, between whom our Lord was crucified, who were the only dying men that Providence ever blessed with the invaluable talents or gracious opportunities of the company and audible prayers of their dying Saviour. From this doctrine of election it follows, that when God freely elects a man to the receiving of one talent only, he freely reprobates him with respect to the receiving of two, or five talents.

According to this election, although God never leaves himself without the witness of some favour, by which the basest and vilest of men, who have not yet sinned out their day of salvation, are graciously distinguished from beasts and devils; and although, therefore, he is really gracious to all; yet he is not equally gracious: for he gives to some persons, families, Churches, and nations, more power and opportunity to do and receive good, more means of grace, yea, more excellent means, more time to use those means, and more energy of the Spirit in the use of them, than he gives to other persons, families, Churches, and nations. With respect to the election of grace, therefore, there is

great partiality in God, and so far is this partiality from being in any degree caused by any natural or evangelical worth, that it is itself the first cause of all natural excellences, and evangelical worthiness. Hence it appears, that the doctrine of the Pelagians destroys the doctrines of partial grace: the capital error of those who inconsiderately oppose Calvinism, consisting in denying the gracious, electing, and reprobating partiality of God; and in supposing that the reasons of God's election and reprobation are always taken from ourselves; that God never elected some men in Christ, merely "after the counsel of his own *absolute* will;" and that the doctrine of a gratuitous election and reprobation is both unscriptural and horrible.

Having thus stated the doctrine of grace, and the opposite error of Pelagius, I encounter that famous champion of the rigid free willers, not with a sling and a few stones, but with the Bible and some plain quotations from it, which will establish and illustrate the gratuitous election and reprobation, into which the doctrine of partial grace is subdivided.

I have already observed, in the Scripture Scales, that "the election of [partial] grace" is taught in that part of the parable of the talents, where it is said, that the master chose and "called his own servants, and delivered unto them HIS [not THEIR] goods; *freely* giving to one FIVE talents, to another TWO, and to another ONE," Matt. xxv, 14, 15. In this free distribution of the master's goods to the servants, we see a striking emblem of God's partiality.

Should a Pelagian deny it, and say that God does not deal out his talents of grace with Calvinian freeness, but *according to the several abilities of his servants*, I reply, by asking the following questions: (1.) How came these servants to *be*? (2.) How came they to be *his* servants? And, (3.) How came they to have *every one* HIS *several ability*? Was this several ability acquired merely by dint of unassisted, personal industry? If you reply in the affirmative, you absurdly hold that God casts all his rational creatures in the same mould, that they are all exactly alike both by nature and by grace, and that they alone "make themselves to differ," as often as there is any difference. If you reply in the negative, you give up the ground of Pelagianism, and grant that God of his rich, undeserved goodness, gives to "every one his several *primary abilities*" of nature and grace: and when he does this, what does he do, but display a primary election and reprobation of grace; seeing he distributes these natural and gracious abilities in as distinguishing a manner as five are distinguished from one; arbitrarily reprobating from four talents the persons, families, Churches, and nations which he elects only to one talent.

This scripture, "Learn not to think of men above what is written, that not one of you be puffed up: for who maketh thee to differ," with respect to the first number of thy talents? "Which of *them* is it that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" 1 Cor. iv, 6, 7. This one scripture, I say, like the stone which sunk into Goliath's forehead, is sufficient, one would think, to bring down the gigantic error of Pelagius. But if that stone be not heavy enough to do the wished-for execution, I will choose two or three more out of the brook of truth, which flows from the throne of God. St. James points me to the first: "Every good gift is

from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights," James i, 17. I am indebted for the others to our Lord's forerunner, and to our Lord himself. "John said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all, except it were given thee from above," John iii, 27; xix, 11.

If the Pelagian error stands it out against these weighty declarations, I shall draw "the sword of the Spirit," and aim the following strokes at that fashionable and dangerous doctrine:—

Why was Adam elected to the enjoyment of human powers? Was it not God's free electing love which raised him to the sphere of a rational animal; that exalted sphere, from which all other animals are reprobated? Was it not distinguishing favour which "made him but a little lower than the angels?" Let the Pelagians tell us what uncreated Adam did to merit the election which raised him above the first horse? Or what the first horse had done to deserve his being everlastingly shut out of heaven, and reprobated from all knowledge of his Creator? Why was the lark elected to the blessing of a towering flight, and of sprightly songs, from which the oyster is so abundantly reprobated;—the poor oyster, which is shut up between two shells, without either legs or wings, and so far as we know equally destitute of ears and eyes?

If a disciple of Pelagius think that I demean my pen by proposing these questions, to prove the gratuitous and absolute election and reprobation, which are so conspicuous in the world of nature; I will rise to his sphere, and ask him what he did to deserve the honour of being elected to the superiority of his sex—an honour this, from which his mother was absolutely reprobated; and if he has a rich father, who gave him a liberal education, I should be glad to know what good works he had done, before he was providentially elected to this blessing, from which the bulk of mankind are so eminently reprobated.

Can we not trace the footsteps of an electing or reprobating Providence all the earth over, with respect to persons and places? Why is one man elected to sway a sceptre, when another is only elected to handle an axe, a spade, a file, or a brush? Why were Abraham, Job, and the rich man, mentioned Luke xvi, elected to a plentiful fortune, when poor Lazarus, a notorious reprobate of Providence, lay starving at the door of merciless plenty? Why does a noble sot idle away his life in a palace, while an industrious, sober mechanic, with all his care, can hardly pay for a mean lodging in a garret? Why is one man elected to enjoy the blessings of the five senses, the advantage of a strong constitution, and the prerogative of beauty; while another is born blind or deaf, sickly, or deformed? What have these poor creatures done to deserve this misfortune? And if God can dispense his providential blessings with such apparent partiality, why should it be thought strange that he should be partial in the distribution of his spiritual favours? May not our heavenly Benefactor have daisies and crocuses, as well as tulips and roses, in the garden of his Church? May he not, in the building of his temple, use plain free stone, as well as sapphires, amethysts, and pearls? And why should we think that it is unjust in God to have moral instruments of a different shape and sound in his grand, spiritual concert, when David could (without violation of any right) predestinate some of his musicians to praise God with trumpets, shawms, and loud

cymbals, when others were appointed to do it only upon a harp, a lute, and a pipe?

St. Paul compares believers, who are the members of Christ's mystical body, to the various parts which compose the human frame; and wisely observes, that though our uncomely parts (the feet for example) are reprobated from the honour put upon the head, they are, nevertheless, all useful in their places. His illustration is striking, and would help Pelagian levellers to see their mistakes, if they would consider it without prejudice. "There are diversities of gifts" under all the inferior dispensations of God's grace, as well as under the Gospel of Christ, to which the apostle's simile immediately refers: "The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For the Spirit divides his gifts of partial grace to every man severally as he will. The body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand or the eye, I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body?" Is it absolutely reprobated from the bodily system? On the other hand, "if the whole body were an eye, where were the ear? And if the whole were ear, where were the nose? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him," that is, according to the good pleasure, counsel, and wisdom of his electing or reprobating will.

If the Pelagians will contend for their error on a religious ground, I meet them there, and ask, What good thing did Adam to deserve that God should plant for him "the tree of life in the midst of the garden," and should lay upon him no other burden for his trial, than abstaining from eating of the fruit of one tree? Would not God have been gracious, if he had suspended the judicial reprobation of our first parents on their refusing to abstain from all food every other day, for a thousand years? Who does not see free grace in the appointment of so easy a term, by submitting to which he might have made his gratuitous election sure, and secured the remunerative election of justice? Again: when judicial reprobation had overtaken the guilty pair, what did they do to deserve that the execution of the sentence should not instantly take place in all the fierceness of the threatened curse? And how many good deeds did they muster up, to merit the Gospel of redeeming grace? the precious promise that "the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head?" "Verily," says the apostle, "he [the Redeemer] took not on him the nature of angels: but he took on him the seed of" a man, viz. Abraham, and became "the son of man," though he is "the everlasting Father." Is there no partiality of grace in the mystery of the incarnation? Was it mere equity, which dictated that the Son of God should come "in the likeness of sinful flesh," to save sinful man; and not "in the likeness of sinful" spirit, to save fallen angels?

But supposing (not granting) that this partiality in favour of mankind, sprang merely from the peculiar excusableness of their case; I ask, Why did the sons of Cain deserve to be begotten of a marked murderer, who brought them up as sons of Belial; while the children of Seth were providentially elected into the family of a pious man, who brought them up as sons of God?

But if we will see the election and reprobation of partial grace, together with the glory of distinguishing predestination, shining in their

greatest lustre, we must take a view of the "covenants of promise," which God made at different times with favoured men, families, Churches, and nations; peculiar covenants, which flowed every one from a peculiar election of grace.

Was it not of free, distinguishing grace, that God called Abraham, and raised himself a Church in a branch of his numerous family? Could he not as well have called to this honour Abimelech, king of Gerar, Melchisedec, king of Salem, or Job, the perfect man in the land of Uz? Or could he not have said to the father of the faithful, Not in Isaac, but in Ishmael, or in the sons of Keturah, thy last wife, "shall thy" peculiarly covenanted "seed be called?"

Nay, what did Abraham do to be justified as a sinner? Was he not fully justified in this sense, merely by receiving God's free gift through faith? The point is important, for it respects not only Abraham's gratuitous justification as a sinner, but also the free justification of every other sinner, who does not spurn the heavenly gift. Dwell we then a moment upon St. Paul's question, concerning Abraham's justification as a sinner. "What shall we say then? If Abraham were justified by works [as a sinner] he hath whereof to glory;* but not before God.

* "With fear" of offending any of my brethren, "and with trembling," lest I should injure any doctrine of grace, I will venture to propose here a few questions, the decision of which I leave to the candour of those who are afraid of making one part of the Scripture contradict another. Granting that a sinner, as such, can never have any thing to glory in, unless it be his sin, his shame, and condemnation, I ask, Is there not a sense, in which a believer may rejoice or glory in his works of faith? And may not such a rejoicing or glorying be truly evangelical? What does St. Paul mean, when he says, "Let every [believing] man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing [or] glorying in himself, and not in another?" Gal. vi, 4. Did St. John preach self righteousness, when he wrote, "Hereby [by loving our neighbour in deed and in truth] we shall assure our hearts before him," that is, before God? "For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things, [that make for our condemnation, better than we do.] Beloved, if our heart [or conscience] condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God, [that is, before God.] And whatsoever we ask we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things which are pleasing in his sight," 1 John iii, 9, &c. If all such glorying is Pharisaical, who was, to the last, a greater Pharisee than the great apostle, who said, "Our rejoicing [or glorying] is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in godly sincerity, &c, we have had our conversation in the world?" 2 Cor. i, 12. If St. Paul was guilty for living, how much more for dying full of this glorying? And is it not evident he did, from his own dying speech? "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought—I have finished—I have kept—henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day," 2 Tim. iv, 7, 8. Does not St. John exhort us to attain the height of the confidence in which St. Paul died, when he says, "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward?" 2 John 8. Does not St. Paul represent spiritual men as persons who have "God's Spirit bearing witness together with their spirit, [and 'vice versa,' who have their spirit or conscience, bearing witness together with God's Spirit] that they are the children of God?" Rom. viii, 16. And is it right to abolish the office of conscience, by turning out of the world all comfortable consciousness of having done that which is right in the sight of God, and by discarding all tormenting consciousness of having done the contrary, under the frivolous pretence that our Lord, in his parabolical account of the day of judgment, represents the generality of good and wicked men as not being yet properly acquainted with this Christian truth, that whatever good or wrong we do to

For what says the Scripture? Abraham believed God [when God freely called him to receive grace, or more grace] and it was counted to him for righteousness," Rom. iv, 1, &c.

Now, if "Abraham believed God," it is evident that God offered him-

the least of our fellow creatures, Christ will reward or punish, as if it were done to himself? Alas! if the generality of Christians do not yet properly know this important truth, which is so clearly revealed to them, is it surprising to hear our Lord intimate that the Jewish, Mohammedan, and heathen world will wonder when they shall see themselves rewarded or punished according to that deep saying of St. Paul, "The head of every man is Christ?" Whence it follows, that whatever good or evil is done to any man, (but more especially to any Christian) is done, in some sense, to a member of Christ, and consequently to Christ himself! How deplorable is it to see good men cover an Antinomian mistake by an appeal to a portion of Scripture, which our Lord spoke to leave Antinomianism no shadow of covering!

Should it be said that the evangelical glorying, for which I plead after St. Paul, is subversive of his own doctrine, because he says, "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord:" I answer, That we keep this Gospel precept, when we principally glory in the Lord himself, and when we subordinately glory in nothing but what is agreeable to the Lord's word, and in the manner, and for the ends which the Lord himself has appointed. When the apostle says, "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord," he no more supposes that it is wrong to glory, as he did, "in the testimony of a good conscience," than he supposes that it is wrong in a woman to be married to a man as well as to Christ, because he says, "If she marrieth, let her marry in the Lord." Such a conclusion would be as absurd as the following Antinomian inferences:—"God will have mercy and not sacrifice, and therefore we must offer him neither the sacrifice of our praises, nor that of our persons." "Christ said to Satan, 'The Lord thy God only shalt thou serve;' and therefore it is a species of idolatry in domestics to serve their masters." May God hasten the time when such sophistry shall no more pass for orthodoxy!

Should it be farther objected, that St. Paul says, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Christ!" Gal. vi, 14: I reply, That it is unreasonable not to give evangelical latitude to that expression, because, if it be taken in a literal and narrow sense, it absolutely excludes all glorying in Christ's resurrection, ascension, and intercession; a glorying this, which the apostle himself indulges in, Rom. viii, 34. However, that he could, in a subordinate sense, glory in something beside the cross of Christ, appears from his own glorying in his labours, sufferings, infirmities, revelations, and converts; as well as in his preaching the Gospel in Achaia without being burthensome to the people. But all this subordinate glorying was "in the Lord, through whom" he did and bore all things, and "to whom" he referred all inferior honours. And therefore when he said, that "the righteous Judge" would give him "a crown of righteousness" for having "so run as to obtain it," he, no doubt, designed to cast it at the feet of Him, in whose cross he principally gloried, and whose person was his "all in all."

"But all this glorying was before men, and not before God." So it is said: but I prove the contrary by reason and Scripture: (1.) By "reason." Next to the cross of Christ, what St. Paul chiefly gloried or rejoiced in, was "the testimony of his conscience," 2 Cor. i, 12. Now I ask, Had the apostle this joy and glorying only when he was in company? Did he not enjoy it when he was alone? If you say that he had it only in company, you represent him as a vile hypocrite, who could change the testimony of his conscience, as easily as he did his coat or company. And if you grant that he had this rejoicing when he was alone, you give up the point; for reason tells us, that all the rejoicing and glorying, which an enlightened man has in his own conscience, when he is alone, must be before God; because an enlightened conscience is a court, at which none is present but God, and where God always presides.

2. By "Scripture." Paul himself exhorts the Thessalonians so to "walk" as to "please God," 1 Thess. iv, 1. Now the joyous testimony of our conscience that we walk so as to please God, must, in the nature of things, be a testimony "before" God. St. Peter represents our present salvation as consisting in "the

self first to Abraham, that Abraham might believe in him. Therefore a free election, calling, and gift (for an offer from God is a gift on his part, whether we receive what he offers or not) a *free gift*, I say, preceded Abraham's faith. His very belief of any justifying and saving truth proves that this truth, in which he believed, was *freely* offered and given him, that he might believe in it; yea, before he possibly could believe in it. To deny this is as absurd as to deny that God freely gives us eyes and light before we can see. Abraham, therefore, who was so eminently justified by the works of faith as an obedient believer, was initially accepted or justified as a sinner of the Gentiles by mere grace, and before he could make his calling and acceptance sure by believing and obeying: for the power to believe and obey always flows from the first degree of our acceptance, a *free gift* this, which is "come upon all men to justification," Rom. v, 13, though, alas! most men refuse it through unbelief, or throw it away through an obstinate continuance in sin. Abraham, therefore, by receiving this *free gift* through faith, was *fully justified as a sinner*, and went on from faith to faith, till, by receiving and embracing the special grace, which called him to a covenant of peculiarity, he became the father of all those who embrace the special callings and promises of God, under the patriarchal, Mosaic, and Christian dispensations of Divine grace.

I have said that through faith Abraham was *fully justified as a sinner*, because our *full justification* as sinners implies two things: (1.) God's freely justifying us; and, (2.) Our freely receiving his justifying grace. Just as being *fully knighted* implies two things: (1.) The king's condescending to confer the honour of knighthood upon a gentleman; and, (2.) That gentleman's submitting to accept of this honour.

To conclude this digression: the *free* and *full* justification of a sinner by faith alone, or by a mere receiving of the gratuitous, justifying mercy of God, is a most comfortable, reasonable, and Scriptural doctrine, which St. Paul strongly maintains, where he says, "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness," Rom. iv, 5. When Luther therefore held forth this glorious truth, which the Church of Rome had so greatly obscured, he did the work of a reformer, and of an apostle. Happy would it have been for the Protestant world, if he had always done it as St. Paul and St. James; and if, adding the doctrines of justice to the doctrines of grace, he had as impartially enforced the judicial justification of a believer by the works of faith, as the apostle does in these words, "Not the hearers of the law [of nature, of Moses, or of Christ] are just before God, but the doers shall be justified—in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, according to my Gospel," Rom. ii, 13, 16, yea, and in the day when God shall try the faith of believers, that he may justly praise or

answer of a good conscience toward God," that is, "before God," 1 Pet. iii, 21. And St. John cuts up the very root of the objection, where he declares, that, by the consciousness of our love to our neighbour, "we assure our hearts before God," that "if our hearts condemn us not, then we have confidence toward God:" and that if we abide in Christ by walking as he also walked, "we shall have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming," 1 John ii, 6, 28; iii, 15, &c. How surprising is it, that an objection, which is so contrary to reason, Scripture, and the experience of the apostles, should be as confidently produced by Protestants, as if it contained the marrow of the Gospel!

blame them, reward or punish them. And how can he do this justly, without having respect to their own works, that is, to their tempers, words, and actions, which are the works of their own hearts, lips, and hands? This important doctrine Luther sometimes overlooked, although St. James strongly guards it by these anti-Solifidian words, "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac, &c? Ye see then how that by works a *believing* man is justified, and not by faith only," James ii, 21, 24.

But a sinner, considered as such, can never be justified otherwise than by mere favour. Nor can St. Paul's doctrine be too strongly insisted upon to "the praise of the glory of God's grace," and to the honour of "the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference: for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ," Rom. iii, 21, &c. Here we see that, to the complete justification of a sinner, there go three things: (1.) Mercy or free grace on God's part, which mercy, (together with his justice satisfied by Christ, and his faithfulness in keeping his Gospel promises,) is sometimes called "the righteousness of God." (2.) Redemption on the Mediator's part. And, (3.) Faith on the sinner's part. And if an interest in the "redemption that is in Jesus Christ," namely, in his meritorious incarnation, birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and intercession, is what is commonly called "Christ's imputed righteousness," I do not see why any Christian should be offended at that comprehensive phrase. In this Scriptural sense of it, nothing can be more agreeable to the tenor of the Gospel than to say, "All have sinned," and all sinners who are received to Divine favour, "are justified freely by God's grace" or mercy, through Christ's merits and satisfaction; or (if you please) through his imputed righteousness; or to speak in St. Paul's language, "through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ." For my part, far from finding fault with this comfortable, evangelical doctrine, I solemnly declare, that to all eternity I shall have nothing to plead for my justification as a sinner—absolutely nothing, but, (1.) God's free grace in giving his only begotten Son "to save sinners, of whom I am chief." (2.) Christ's meritorious life, death, and intercession, which abundantly avail for the chief of sinners. And, (3.) The Gospel charter, which graciously offers mercy through Christ to the chief of sinners, and according to which I am graciously endued with a power to forsake sin by repentance, and to receive Christ and his salvation by faith. And therefore to all eternity I must shout, Free grace! and make my boast of imputed righteousness.*

* Some of my readers will possibly ask why I plead here for the good sense of that much controverted phrase, "The imputed righteousness of Christ," when, in my Second Check to Antinomianism, I have represented our Lord as highly disapproving, in the day of judgment, not only the plea of a wicked Arminian, who urges that "God is merciful, and that Christ died for all;" but also the plea of a wicked Solifidian, who begs to be justified merely by the imputed righteousness of Christ, without any good works. I answer: (1.) I no more designed to ridicule the above-stated doctrine of *imputed righteousness*, than to expose the doctrine of *God's mercy*, or that of *general redemption*. And I am truly sorry, if by not sufficiently explaining myself I have given to my readers any just occasion to despise these precious doctrines of grace, or any one of them. (2.) I only wanted

And, indeed,

While Jesus' blood, through earth and skies,
Mercy, free, boundless mercy cries,

What believer can help singing,

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness,
My beauty are, my glorious dress ;
'Midst flaming worlds, in these array'd,
With joy shall I lift up my head."

To return : the same grace which called Abraham, rather than Terah his father, or Lot his nephew ; this same distinguishing grace, I say, chose and called Isaac to the covenant of peculiarity, from which Ishmael, his elder brother, was reprobated : a special calling, which had been fixed upon before the birth of Isaac, and therefore could no ways be procured by his obedience. In full opposition to Isaac's design, the same distinguishing grace called Jacob rather than Esau, to inherit the promises of the peculiar covenant made with Abraham and Isaac. "For the children not being yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, [to merely gratuitous favours,] might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, [of arbitrary and partial grace,] it was said, The elder shall serve the younger." Nor can it be said that this partial preferring of Jacob had its rise in God's foreseeing that Esau would sell his birthright, for the above-quoted passage is flatly contrary to this notion : beside, Jacob himself, by Divine appointment, transferred to Joseph's youngest son the blessing which naturally belonged to the eldest. "Joseph said to his father, Not so, my father : " be not partial to my younger son. " This is the first-born, put thy right hand upon his head : " he hath not sold his birthright like Esau. " But his father refused, and said, I know it, my son. He [Manasses] shall be great ; but truly his [younger] brother [Ephraim] shall be greater than he," Gen. xlviii, 18, 19. A clear proof this, that the reprobation of grace is quite consistent with an election to inferior blessings.

Nor was the calling of Moses less special than that of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Was it not God's free, predestinating grace which

to guard against the abuse of evangelical principles, and to point out the absurd consequences of the spreading opinion, that " God will justify us in the great day merely by Christ's imputed righteousness, without the works of faith, or without any regard to personal righteousness and inherent holiness." This tenet, which is the very soul of speculative Antinomianism, leaves the doctrine of justice neither root nor branch. At this unscriptural notion only I levelled the blow, which has given so much groundless offence to so many persons, whom I honour for their piety, love for the resemblance they bear to the holy Jesus, and commend for their zeal in maintaining the doctrines of grace, so far as they do it without injuring the doctrines of godliness and justice. And I am glad to have this opportunity of explaining myself, and assuring my Calvinist brethren that I would lose a thousand lives, if I had them, rather than asperse the blood and righteousness of my Saviour, or ridicule the Christian covenant, which is ordered in all things and sure, and on the gracious terms of which (as well as on the Divine mercy which fixed them, the infinitely meritorious obedience which procured them, and the atoning blood which seals them) I entirely rest all my hopes of salvation in time, in the day of judgment, and to all eternity. And that this is Mr. Wesley's sentiment, as well as mine, is evident from his reconciling sermon on *imputed righteousness*.

so wonderfully preserved him in his infancy, and so remarkably ordained him at Mount Horeb to be the deliverer of the Israelites, and the visible mediator of the Jewish covenant? Can we help seeing some distinguishing grace in the following declaration: "I will do what thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name: I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee!"

I cannot conceive with what eyes Pelagius could read the Scriptures. For my part, I see a continued vein of distinguishing favour running through the whole. Does the Lord want a man of peculiar endowments to finish the tabernacle? He says to Moses, "See, I have called by name Bezaleel, the son of Uri, of the tribe of Judah, and I have filled him with the Spirit of God," Exod. xxxi, 2, 3. Does he want a captain for his people, and a man to be Moses' successor? Caleb himself is reprobated from that honour, and the Lord says, "Take thee Joshua, the son of Nun." The same distinguishing grace manifests itself in the special calling of Barak, Gideon, Samson, Samuel, Saul, David, Solomon, Elisha, Jehu, Daniel, Cyrus, Nehemiah, Esther, Esdras, Judas Maccabeus, and all the men whom the Lord, by his special grace and power, raised up to instruct, rule, punish, or deliver his people.

I have observed that, in the very nature of things, a gratuitous and personal reprobation follows the gratuitous and personal election which I contend for. Is not this assertion incontestable? While Jacob and the Israelites were peculiarly loved, were not Esau and the Edomites comparatively hated? When God will show a special, distinguishing favour, can he show it to all? Does not reason dictate that if he showed it to all, it would cease to be special and distinguishing? If God had made his covenants of peculiarity with all mankind, would they not have ceased to be peculiar?

Once more: if God could, without impropriety, show more favour to the Jews than to the Gentiles, and to the Christians than to the Jews; I ask, Why cannot he also, without impropriety, show more favour to one Jew, or to one Christian, than he does to another? By what argument can you prove that it is wrong in God to do personally, what it is granted on all sides he does nationally? If you can, without injustice, give a crown to an English beggar, while you give only sixpence to a poor Irishman; why may you not give ten shillings to another English beggar, supposing your generosity prompts you to show him that special favour? And may not God, by the rule of proportion, give you ten talents of grace to improve, while he gives your Christian brother only five; as well as he can bestow five talents upon your fellow Christian, while he gives a poor Mohammedan one talent only?

Can any thing be more glaring than the partiality which our Lord describes in these words: "Wo unto thee, Chorazin; wo unto thee, Bethsaida; for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in thee, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes?" Luke x, 13. Who can read these words with a grain of candid attention, and refuse his assent to the following proposition? (1.) God was notoriously partial to Chorazin and Bethsaida; for he granted them more means of repentance, and more powerful means, and for a longer season, than he did to Tyre and

Sidon. (2.) If God had been as gracious to the two heathenish cities as he was to the two Jewish towns, Tyre and Sidon "would have repented—a great while ago"—in the deepest and most solemn manner, "sitting in sackcloth and ashes." And, (3.) The doctrine of *necessity*, or *irresistible grace*, is unscriptural; and the doctrines of impartial justice are never overthrown by the doctrines of partial grace; for notwithstanding God's distinguishing favour, which wrought wonders to bring Chorazin and Bethsaida to repentance, they repented not; and our Lord says in the next verse, "But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you," who have resisted such distinguishing grace.

For want of understanding the partiality of Divine grace, and the nature of the harmless reprobation, which flows from this harmless partiality, some of God's faithful servants, who have received but one or two talents, are tempted to think themselves absolute reprobates; as often, at least, as they compare their case with that of their fellow servants, who have received more talents than they: while others, who have been indulged with peculiar favours, and have sinned, or idled them away, consider themselves as peculiar favourites of Heaven, upon whom God will never pass a sentence of judicial reprobation. Hence arise the despairing fears of some believers, the presumptuous hopes of others, and the spread of the mistaken doctrines of grace. By the same mistake, rash preachers frequently set up God's peculiar grants to some of his upper servants, as a general standard for all the classes of them, and pass a reprobating sentence upon every one who does not yet come up to this standard; to the great offence of the judicious, to the grief of many sincere souls, whom God would not have thus grieved, and to the countenancing of Calvinian reprobation.

A plain appeal to matter of fact will throw light upon all the preceding remarks. Are not many true Christians evidently reprobated, with respect to some of the special favours which our Lord conferred on the woman of Samaria, Zaccheus, Levi, (afterward St. Matthew,) and St. Paul? How few have been called in so extraordinary, abrupt, and cogent a manner as they were! Nay, how many strumpets, extortioners, busy worldlings, and persecutors in all ages, have been hurried into eternity, without having received the special favours, from which we date the conversion of those four favourites of free grace!

Has not God in all ages shown the partiality of his grace, by giving more of it to one man than to another?—to persecuting Saul, for example, than to thousands of other sincere persecutors, who thought, as well as he, that they did God service in dragging his saints to prison and to death? Did not the Lord show less distinguishing mercy to Zimri and Cosbi than to David and Bathsheba? Less to Onan than to the incestuous Corinthian, and the woman caught in adultery? Less to the forty-two children, who mocked the bald prophet, than to the more guilty sons of Jacob, who went about to kill their pious brother, sold him into Egypt, and covered their cruelty with hypocrisy and lies? Did he not give less time to repent to drunken Belshazzar than he did to proud Nebuchadnezzar? Did he not hurry Ananias and Sapphira into eternity, with a severity which he did not display toward Cain, Solomon, Peter, and Judas? Did he show as much long suffering to

Eli and his sons, or to King Saul and his unfortunate family, as he did to David and his ungodly house? Was he as gracious to the man who gathered sticks on the Sabbath, or to him who conveyed the Babylonish garment into his tent, as he was to Gehazi, and to King Ahab, whom he spared for years after the commission of more atrocious crimes? Did not Christ show less distinguishing love to Zebedee than to his sons? Less to the woman of Canaan than to Mary Magdalene? Less to Jude, Bartholomew, and Lebbeus, than to Peter, James, and John? How soon, how awfully did God destroy Nadab and Abihu, for offering strange fire? Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, for resisting Moses? Uzzah, for touching the ark? And the prophet of Judah, for eating bread in Bethel; when nevertheless he bore for months or years with the wickedness of Pharaoh, the idolatry of Solomon, the witchcrafts of bloody Manasses, and the hypocrisy of envious Caiaphas? Is not this unequal dealing of Divine patience too glaring to be denied by any unprejudiced person?

Does not this partiality extend itself even to places and cities? Why did God reprobate Jericho, and elect Jerusalem? "Jerusalem, the city which the Lord did choose out of all the tribes of Israel to put his name there," 1 Kings xiv, 21. Do we read less than nineteen times this partial sentence, "The place which the Lord shall choose," even in the book of Deuteronomy? Could not God have chosen Babylon, Bethlehem, or Bethel, as well as the city of the Jebusites? Why did he make "Mount Zion his holy hill?" Why did he "love the gates of Zion, more than all the dwellings of Jacob?" Is there neither election nor reprobation in these words of the psalmist? "Moreover he refused [reprobated] the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not [passed by] the tribe of Ephraim: but chose the tribe of Judah, the Mount Zion, which he loved," Psa. lxxviii, 67, 68. Again: why did the angel, who troubled the pool of Bethesda, pass by all the other pools of Jerusalem? Why did our Lord send the lepers to the pool of Siloam, rather than to any other? And why were Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, reprobated with respect to the power of healing Naaman's leprosy, when Jordan was elected to it? Was it not because God would convince the Syrians of his partiality to his peculiar people, and to their country?

But is this partiality confined to Judea and Syria? Or to Egypt and Goshen? May we not see the footsteps of an electing, partial providence in this favoured island? Why is it a temperate country? Could not God have placed it under the heaps of snow which cover Iceland, or in the hot climates, where the vertical sun darts his insufferable beams upon barren sands? Could he not have suffered it to be enslaved by the Turks, as the once famous isle of Crete now is? And to lie in popish darkness, as Sicily does? Or in heathenish* superstitions, as the large islands of Madagascar and Borneo do?

* Mr. Addison gives us this just view of our gratuitous election, in one of the Spectators. I shall transcribe the words of that judicious and pious writer:—"The sublimest truths, which among the heathens only here and there one, of brighter parts, and more leisure than ordinary, could attain to, are now grown familiar to the meanest inhabitants of these nations. Whence came this surprising change: that regions formerly inhabited by ignorant and savage people, should now outshine ancient Greece in the most elevated notions of theology and

Who does not see the partiality of sovereign grace in the sparing of some nations, cities, and Churches? Did not God reprobate the disobedient Amalekites sooner than the disobedient Jews? Why are the former utterly destroyed, when the latter are yet so wonderfully preserved? Did not God bear less with Ai, Nineveh, and Carthage, than he does with London, Paris, and Rome? Less with the ten tribes, which formed the kingdom of Israel, than with the two tribes which formed the kingdom of Judah? Why does the Lord bear longer with the Church of Rome than he did with the Churches of Laodicea and Constantinople? Is it merely because the Church of Rome is less corrupted? Nay, why does he bear so long with this present evil world, when, comparatively speaking, he destroyed the antediluvian world so soon? And why are the Europeans, in general, elected to the blessings of Christianity, from which the rest of the world is generally reprobated; most nations in Asia, Africa, and America, being indulged with no higher religious advantages than those which belong to the religions of Confucius, Mohammed, or uncultivated nature?

If God's partiality in our favour is so glaring, why do not all our Gospel ministers try to affect us with a due sense of it? May I venture to offer a reason of this neglect? As the sins forbidden in the seventh commandment by their odious nature frequently reflect a kind of unjust shame upon a pure marriage bed, which, according to God's own declaration, is truly honourable; so the wanton election and horrid reprobation, that form the modern doctrines of grace, have, I fear, poured an undeserved disgrace upon the pure election, and the wise reprobation, which the Scriptures maintain. Hence it is, that even judicious divines avoid touching upon these capital doctrines in public. lest minds defiled with Antinomianism should substitute their own unholy notions of election, for the holy notions which the Scriptures convey. This evil shame is a remain of Pelagianism, or of false wisdom. The abuse of God's favours ought not to make us renounce the right use of them. Far then from being wise above what is written, let us with the prophets of old make a peculiar use of the doctrine of partial grace, to stir up ourselves and others to suitable gratitude. How powerful is the following argument of Moses! "The Lord thy God hath chosen thee, to be a special people to himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord thy God did not set his love upon thee, nor choose thee, because ye were more in number than any people, (for ye were the fewest of all people,) but because the Lord loved you, &c. He had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day, &c. He is thy praise, and he is thy God, who hath done for thee these great and wonderful things," Deut. vii, 6, &c; x, 15, 21. "For what nation is there so great, who have God so nigh unto them as the Lord our God is in all things which we call upon him for? Ask now of the days that are past: ask from the one side of heaven to the other, whe-

morality? Is it the effect of our own parts and industry? Have our common mechanics more refined understandings than the ancient philosophers? It is owing to the God of truth, who came down from heaven, and condescended to be himself our teacher. It is as we are Christians, that we possess more excellent and Divine truths than the rest of mankind."

ther there hath been any such thing as this great thing is. Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard? Or hath God assayed to take him a nation from the midst of another nation, by signs and wonders, &c? Unto thee it was showed that thou mightest know [with peculiar certainty] that the Lord he is God," Deut. iv, 7, 32, &c.

Does not the psalmist stir up the Lord's chosen nation to gratitude and praise, by the same motive of which the anti-Calvinists are ashamed? "He showeth his word to Jacob, his statutes to Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation. As for his judgments, they [the heathen] have not known them. Praise ye the Lord, O ye seed of Abraham, ye children of Jacob his chosen," Psalm cxlii, 19, 20; cv, 6.

Nay, does not God himself stir up Jerusalem, (the holy city become a harlot,) to repentance and faithfulness, by dwelling upon the greatness of his distinguishing love toward her? How strong is this exhortation! How richly descriptive of God's partiality toward that faithless city! "Thus says the Lord God to Jerusalem, Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan. Thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother a Hittite. Thou wast cast out in the open field to the loathing of thy person in the day that thou wast born; and when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thy blood, I said to thee, Live. I entered into a covenant with thee: I put a beautiful crown upon thy head: thou didst prosper into a kingdom, and thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty, for it was perfect through my comeliness which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord," Ezek. xvi, 3, &c. If this could be said to Jewish Jerusalem, how much more to Protestant London!

Should rigid Arminians still assert that there is absolutely no respect of places and persons with God, I desire the opposers of God's gracious partiality to answer the following questions:—When the apostle says, "The time of *heathenish* ignorance God winked at, but now *explicitly* commandeth [by his evangelists] all men every where to repent," Acts xvii, 30, does he not represent God as being partial to all those men, to whom he sends apostles, or messengers, on purpose to bid them repent? And does not the Lord show us more distinguishing love, than he did to all the nations, which he "suffered to walk in their own ways, without *the Gospel of Christ*, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope, [founded upon a special Gospel message,] and being without God in the world? Acts xiv, 16; Eph. ii, 12.

Again: when St. Paul observes that "God spake in time past to the fathers by the prophets; but hath, in these last days, spoken to us by his Son," Heb. i, 1, 2; is it not evident that he pleads for the partiality of distinguishing grace; intimating that God has favoured us more than he did the fathers? And has not our Lord strongly asserted the same thing, where he says, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear: for verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them?" Matt. xiii, 16, 17.

Once more: what is the Gospel of Christ, from first to last, but a glorious blessing flowing from distinguishing grace; a blessing from

with all Churches as long as he does with the Church of Rome?" I answer:—

Mercy may lengthen out her cords on *particular* occasions to display her boundless extent. But if she did so on *all* occasions, she would countenance sin, and pour oil on the fire of wickedness. If God displayed the same goodness and long suffering toward all sinners, Churches, and nations, then all sinners would be spared till they had committed as many atrocious crimes as Manasses, who filled Jerusalem with blood and witchcraft. All fallen Churches would be tolerated, till they had poisoned the Gospel truth with as many errors as the Church of Rome imposes upon her votaries. And all corrupted nations would not only be preserved till they had actually "sacrificed their sons and daughters to devils;" but also till they had an opportunity to "kill the Prince of life," coming in person to "gather them as a hen gathers her brood under her wings." So universal a mercy as this would be the greatest cruelty to myriads of men, and instead of setting off Divine justice, would for a time lay it under a total eclipse.

Beside, according to this impartial, this levelling scheme, God would have been obliged to make all men kings, as Manasses; all Churches Christian, as the Church of Rome; and all people his peculiar people, as the Jewish nation. But even then distinguishing grace would not have been abolished: unless God had made all men archangels, all Churches like the triumphant Church, and all nations like the glorified nation which inhabits the heavenly Canaan. So monstrous are the absurdities which result from the levelling scheme of the men who laugh at the doctrine of the Gospel dispensations; and of those who will not allow Divine sovereignty and supreme wisdom to dispense unmerited favours as they please; and to deal out their talents with a variety which, upon the whole, answers the most excellent ends; as displaying best the excellency of a government, where sovereignty, mercy, and justice wisely agree to sway their common sceptre!

Should a Pelagian leveller refuse to yield to these arguments, under pretence that "they lead to the Calvinian doctrines of lawless grace, free wrath, and absolute reprobation;" I answer this capital objection five different ways:—

1. The objector is greatly mistaken: for, holding forth the gratuitous reprobation of partial grace, as the Scriptures do, is the only way to open the eyes of candid Calvinists, to keep the simple from drinking into their plausible error, and to rescue the multitude of passages, on which they found their absolute, gratuitous predestination to eternal life and eternal death. I say it again, rigid Calvinism is the child of confusion, and lives merely by sucking its mother's corrupted milk. Would you destroy the brat, only kill its mother: destroy confusion: "divide the word of God aright:" and thus lead the rigid Predestinarians to the truth—the delightful truth, whence their error has been derived "by the mistake or sleight of men, and by the cunning craftiness whereby the spirit of error lies in wait to deceive," and you will destroy the Antinomian election, and the cruel reprobation which pass for Gospel. In order to this, you strike at those serpents with the swords of your mouths, and cry out, "Absurd! unscriptural! horrible! diabolical!" But, by this means, you will never kill one of them: there is but one method to

extirpate them : hold out the partial election and reprobation maintained by the sacred writers. Throw your rod, like Moses, amidst the rods of the magicians. Let it first become a serpent, which you can take up with pleasure and safety : display the true partiality of Divine grace : openly preach the Scripture election of grace ; and boldly assert the gratuitous reprobation of inferior grace. So shall your harmless serpent swallow up the venomous serpent of your adversaries. The true reprobation shall devour the false. Bigoted Calvinists will be confounded, hide themselves for fear of the truth : and candid Calvinists will see the finger of God, and acknowledge that your rod is superior to theirs, and that the harmless reprobation of inferior grace, which we preach, has fairly swallowed up the horrible reprobation of free wrath which they contend for.

Be neither ashamed nor afraid of our serpent—our reprobation. Like Christ, it has not only the “wisdom of the serpent,” but also the “innocency of the dove :” you may handle it without danger : nay, you may put it into your bosom : and, instead of stinging you with despair, and filling you with chilling horrors, it will warm your soul with admiration for the manifold wisdom and variegated goodness of God : it will make you sharp sighted in the truth of the Gospel, and in the errors of overdoing evangelists. In the light of this truth you will, every where, see a glorious rainbow, where before you saw nothing but a dark cloud.

When our serpent has had this blessed effect, you may take it out of your bosom for external use, and it will become a rod fit to chastise the errors of Pelagius and Augustine—of Calvin and Socinus. But use it with such gentleness and candour that all the spectators may see you do not deal in free wrath, and that there is as much difference between the gratuitous reprobation, which Calvin and Zanchius hold forth, and the gratuitous reprobation, which our blessed Lord and St. Paul maintain, as there is between the blasted dry rod of Korah, and the blossoming, fragrant rod of Aaron ; between a fire which gently warms your apartment, and one which rapidly consumes your house ; between the bright morning star, inferior in light to the sun, and a horribly glaring comet, which draws its fiery tail over the earth to smite it with an eternal curse, and to drag, with merciless necessity, a majority of its frightened inhabitants to everlasting burnings.

2. Our gratuitous reprobation is not a reprobation from all saving grace, as that of the Calvinists, but only from the superior blessings of saving grace. It is therefore as contrary to Calvinian reprobation, as initial salvation is contrary to insured damnation. It is perfectly consistent with the “free gift which is to come,” in various degrees, “upon all men to justification.” We steadily assert, with Christ and St. Paul, that “the saving grace of God hath appeared to all men,” and that all the reprobates of superior grace, that is, all who are refused three, four, or five talents of grace receive two, or at least one talent of true and saving grace. There never was a spark of Calvinian free wrath in God against them. They are all redeemed with a temporal redemption. They have all an accepted time, and a day of initial salvation, with sufficient means and helps to “work out their own eternal salvation,” according to their Gospel dispensation. We grant that God does not bestow upon them so many of his gratuitous favours as he does on his

peculiar people. But if he give them less, he requires the less of them; for he is too just to insist upon the improvement of five talents from the servants on whom he has bestowed but one talent.

To understand this perfectly, distinguish between the two Gospel axioms, or, if you please, between the doctrines of *grace*, and the doctrines of *justice*. According to the *former*, God, with a *partial* hand, bestows upon us *primary* and merely *gratuitous* favours. And, according to the *latter*, he, with an *impartial* hand, imparts to us *secondary* and *remunerative* favours. God's primary, and merely gratuitous favours, depend entirely on his partial grace: so far all Christians should agree with Calvin, and hold with him the doctrine of grace. But God's secondary, remunerative favours depending on his rewarding grace, conditional promise, and distributive justice, depend of consequence in some degree on our free agency; for our free will, by making a bad or good use of God's primary favours, secures to us his righteous punishments, or gracious rewards, that is, his secondary favours. And herein all Christians should agree with Arminius. By thus joining the peculiar excellencies of Calvinism and Arminianism, we embrace the whole Gospel, and keep together the doctrines of grace and justice, which the partial ministers of the two modern gospels rashly tear asunder.

3. Many of the persons who have been reprobated from superior favours by partial grace, have been eternally saved by improving their one talent of inferior favour; while some of those who had a large share in the election of distinguishing grace, are condemned for the non-improvement or abuse of the five talents which that grace had richly bestowed upon them. Who, for example, will dare say that Melchisedec, Esau, Jonathan, and Mephibosheth, are damned because they were reprobated with respect to the peculiar favours which God bestowed upon Abraham, Jacob, David, and Solomon? Or that Judas, Ananias, and Sapphira are saved, because they were all three chosen and called to the highest blessings which distinguishing grace ever bestowed upon mortals,—the blessings of the new covenant, which is the best covenant of peculiarity; and because Judas was even chosen and called to the high dignity of the apostleship, in this excellent covenant?

4. We all know how fatal Calvinian reprobation must prove to those who are its miserable subjects. A man may be seized by the plague and live. But if that fatal decree, as drawn by some mistaken theologians, seize on ten thousand souls, not one of them can escape: their hopes of salvation are sacrificed for ever. But the gratuitous election and reprobation, which the Scripture maintains, are attended with as favourable circumstances, as the elections and reprobations mentioned in the following illustrations:—

While the sun is alone elected to gild the day, the moon, though reprobated from that honour, is nevertheless elected to silver the night in conjunction with stars of different brightness. The "holy place" of the temple was reprobated, with respect to the glory of the "holy of holies:" it contained neither the cherubim, nor the mercy seat, nor the ark of the covenant; but yet it was elected to the honour of containing the golden altar, on which the incense was burned. The "court of the priests" was reprobated from the honour of containing the *golden altar*; but yet it was freely elected to the honour of containing the *brazen altar*.

on which the sacrifices were offered. As for the "court of the Gentiles," though it was reprobated from all these honourable peculiarities, yet it was elected to the advantage of leading to the brazen altar: and the Gentiles, who worshipped in this court, not only heard at a distance the music of the priest, and discovered the smoke, which ascended from the burnt offerings; but, when they looked through the open gates, they had a distant view of the brazen altar, of the fire which descended from heaven upon it, and of the lamb, which was daily consumed in that fire. And therefore they were no more absolutely reprobated from all interest in the daily sacrifice, than Caiaphas was absolutely elected to an inamissible interest in the daily oblation, in which his near attendance at the altar gave him the first right. Once more: the tribe of Levi was elected to the honour of doing the service of the sanctuary; an honour from which eleven tribes were reprobated. And, in that chosen tribe, the family of Aaron was elected to the priesthood and high priesthood: peculiar dignities, from which the sons of Moses himself were all reprobated. Now if it would be absurd to deduce Calvinian reprobation, and unavoidable damnation, from these elections; is it reasonable to deduce them, as the Calvinists do, from a gratuitous election to the distinguishing blessings of the Jewish and Christian covenant?

5. The difference between the partial reprobation which the Holy Ghost asserts, and that which Calvin maintains, is so important, that I beg leave to make the reader sensible of it by one more illustration. God's partial reprobation, which flows from his inferior favour, and not from free wrath, may be compared, (1.) To the king's refusing a regiment of foot the advantage of riding on horseback—a free prerogative, which he grants to a regiment of dragoons. And, (2.) To his denying to common soldiers the rank of captains; and to captains, the rank of colonels. But Calvin's partial reprobation, which flows from free wrath, and has nothing to do with any degree of saving grace, may be compared to the king's placing a whole regiment of marines in such dreadful circumstances by sea and land, that all the soldiers, and officers, shall be sooner or later necessitated to desert, and to have their brains blown out for desertion; a distinguishing severity this, which will set off the distinguishing favour which his majesty bears to a company of favourite grenadiers, on whom he has absolutely set his everlasting love, and who cannot be shot for desertion, because they are tied to their colours by necessity,—an adamant chain, which either keeps them from running away, or irresistibly pulls them back to their colours as often as they desert. Thus all the marines wear the badge of absolute free wrath; not one of them can possibly escape being shot; and the grenadiers wear the badge of absolute free grace; not one of them can possibly be shot, let them behave in ever so treacherous a manner for ever so long a time. But, alas! my illustration fails in the main point. When a soldier, who has been necessitated to desert, is shot, his punishment is over in a moment: but when a reprobate, who has been necessitated to continue in sin, is damned, he must go into a fire unquenchable, where "the smoke of his torment shall ascend for ever and ever."

By these various answers candid Arminians will, I hope, be convinced, that, although Calvinian reprobation is unscriptural, irrational,

and cruel, the gratuitous election and reprobation maintained in the preceding pages is truly evangelical, and, of consequence, perfectly consistent with the dictates of sound reason and pure morality.

BIBLE ARMINIANISM.

ESSAY THE SECOND.

Displaying the doctrines of impartial justice, the capital error of the Calvinists, and the excellence of Scripture Arminianism.

THE doctrines of *impartial justice* rest on these scriptures :—“ I say unto you, that to every one who hath [to a good purpose] more shall be given : and from him [the slothful servant] who hath not [to a good purpose] even that he hath shall be taken away from him,” Luke ix, 26. “ Cursed is he that perverteth judgment,” Deut. xxvii, 19.

These awful doctrines subdivide themselves into an *impartial election*, and an *impartial reprobation* ; both flowing from Divine justice, which is always irrespective of persons.

The impartial election and reprobation of justice is the righteous and wise choice, which God, as an equitable and unbribed JUDGE, makes, or refuses to make, of some persons, Churches, cities, and nations, judicially to bestow upon them, for Christ's sake, gracious rewards according to his evangelical promises : or judicially to inflict upon them, for righteousness' sake, condign punishments, according to his reasonable threatenings ; solemn promises and threatenings these, which St. Paul sums up in these words :—“ God, in the revelation of his righteous judgment, will render to every man according to his deeds. To them who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, &c, eternal life : but to them that do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, *he will render indignation and wrath : tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doth evil, of the Jew [and Christian] first,*” as having received more talents than others ; “ and also of the Gentile ; [or heathen :] but glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew [and Christian] first,” as being God's peculiar people, “ and also to the heathens. For,” with regard to the doctrines of justice, “ there is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without the law, [of a peculiar covenant,] shall also perish without the law, [of a peculiar covenant :] and as many as have sinned under the law, [of a peculiar covenant,] shall be judged by the law,” of the peculiar covenant they were under, whether it were “ the law of Moses, or the law of Christ. For not the hearers, but the doers of the law shall be justified in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men according to my Gospel.” And lest some should object that the heathens, having neither the law of Moses nor that of Christ, cannot be judged according to their works, the apostle intimates that they are under the law of the human

nature, which law is written upon every man's conscience, by a beam of "the true light, that enlightens every man that comes into the world. For when the heathens," says he, "which have not the law, do by nature, [assisted by the general light above mentioned,] the things contained in the *written* law [of Moses or of Christ,] these, having not the *written* law, are a law unto themselves; and show the work of the law written in their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another," as a pledge and earnest of the condemnation or justification which awaits them before the throne of justice, Rom. ii, 5, 16.

And let none say that this is St. James' legal doctrine, into which St. Paul had slided unawares, through "the legality which cleaves to our nature;" for the evangelical prophet is as deep in it as the herald of free grace. Hear Isaiah:—"Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with them; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings: wo to the wicked, it shall be ill with him; for the reward of his hands shall be given him," Isa. iii, 10, 11. If Isaiah be accused of having imbibed this anti-Solidian doctrine, like legal Ezekiel, I reply, that our Lord himself was as deep in it as Ezekiel and St. James; witness his last charge:—"Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter into the *heavenly city of God*: for without are dogs, &c, [all manner of evil workers,] and whosoever loveth or maketh a lie," Rev. xiii, 12, 15. The "few names in Sardis which have not defiled their garments, shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy," Rev. iii, 4. "Watch ye, &c, that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man," Luke xxi, 37.

The *election* of justice is then nothing but the impartiality with which God makes *choice* of his good and faithful servants, rather than of his wicked and slothful servants, to bestow upon them the temporal and eternal rewards of goodness and faithfulness, according to their works; when he "cometh and reckoneth with them," about the talents which his free grace hath bestowed upon them, Matt. xxv, 19. Nor is the *reprobation* of justice any thing but the impartiality with which God, as a righteous dispenser of his punishments, *reprobates* from his rewards of grace and glory his wicked and unfaithful servants, who do not use, or who viloly abuse the talents which his free grace hath entrusted them with.

When God "commands the servants, to whom he hath given his pounds, to be called to him, that he may know how much every man has gained by trading," in order to bestow his evangelical rewards with equity; according to the election of justice, he makes choice of the servants who have gained something with their pounds, rather than of the servant who has slothfully "laid up his pound in a napkin." And according to the reprobation of justice, he reprobates from all rewards, and appoints to a deserved punishment the unprofitable and slothful servant, rather than the faithful and diligent servants, who have improved their Lord's gifts. Once more: according to the election of justice, God elects and calls to a *double* reward his servants who have given

double diligence to make their gratuitous election sure. Thus he elects to the honour of "being ruler over TEN cities," the man whose pound "had gained TEN pounds," rather than the man whose pound had only gained *five* pounds, and who, by the rule of equitable proportion, is only placed over *five* cities, Luke xix, 15, &c. And, according to the reprobation of justice, in the day of judgment it shall be more intolerable for unbelieving Chorazin and Bethsaida, than for Sodom and Gomorrah; and for unbelieving London and Edinburgh, than for Chorazin and Bethsaida; because they bury more talents, resist brighter light, and are against richer dispensations of Divine grace, Matt. x, 15.

With regard to the election and reprobation of justice, "there is *absolutely* no respect of persons with God:" and evangelical worthiness, which dares not show its head before the throne of God's partial grace, may lift it up with humble confidence before the throne of Christ's remunerative justice. Hence it is that St. Paul, who so strongly asserts in Rom. ix, that, before the throne of partial grace, "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God who showeth mercy," or favour, when, and in what degree he pleases, does not scruple to say, when he is going to appear before the mediatorial throne of Divine justice, "The time of my departure is at hand: I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: when he shall render eternal life to them who seek for glory, by patient continuance in well doing," 2 Tim. iv, 6, &c; Rom. ii, 7.

The doctrine of *proper merit*, or merit of *condignity*, is unscriptural, irrational, and wild. The bare thought of it might make an *innocent* angel blush before his Creator, and should fill a *reprieved* sinner with the greatest detestation. And yet the doctrine of *improper* or *evangelical* worthiness is of so great importance, that if you take it away, you eclipse God's distributive justice; you destroy the law of Christ, and all the conditional promises and threatenings in the Bible; you demolish all the doctrines of personal rewards and punishments, together with the judgment seat of Christ; and upon their ruins you raise an Antinomian Babel, whose dreadful foundation is finished, or necessary damnation for the millions of Calvin's absolute reprobates; while its airy top is finished, or necessary salvation for all his absolute elect.

Hence it appears that the mistake of heated Calvin is exactly contrary to that of heated Pelagius. Pelagianism throws down the throne of God's partial grace, and rigid Calvinism leaves no foundation for the throne of his impartial justice. The former of these modern gospels shackles God our Benefactor; and the latter pours infamy upon God our Judge. It fixes upon him the astonishing inconsistency of finally judging men according to their works, and yet of finally justifying them without any regard to their works; and by this mean it indirectly gives the lie to our Lord himself, who says, "In the day of judgment by thy words thou shalt be justified or condemned."

Having thus described the impartial election and reprobation of justice, for which the Calvinists substitute a partial election of lawless grace in Christ, and a partial reprobation of free wrath in Adam; I support the doctrines of justice by the following appeals to Scripture and matter of fact:—

Search the Scriptures, for they bear testimony to the equity of God, our rewarder and punisher. If he praises and rewards one man rather than another, this difference flows from the holiness of his nature, which makes "his *judicial* ways equal." He "loves righteousness and hates iniquity;" and therefore he judicially "chooses the man that is godly," while he judicially reprobates the man that is ungodly. If a veil, as thick as that which is upon the Jews, were not upon us when we read the Scriptures, would we not confess that God's judicial reprobation impartially turns upon our not receiving the truth, and not living up to it, that is, upon our voluntary unbelief, and the unnecessitated disobedience which flows from it?

Does not the experience of all ages confirm this assertion? When creating grace had gratuitously elected and called Adam to the enjoyment of a paradisiacal kingdom, did not impartial and remunerative justice put the stamp of Divine approbation upon his faith and obedience, by equitably continuing him in that kingdom till he sinned? And did not impartial justice seal him with the seal of reprobation, when he had sinned? Hear the reprobating decree:—"BECAUSE thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife, &c, cursed is the ground for thy sake. THEREFORE the Lord God sent him forth from the garden," Genesis iii, 17, 23.

When redeeming grace had reprieved him, and his posterity, did Divine approbation and reprobation Calvinistically fasten upon their children? Did not the judicial difference, which God made between Cain and Abel, spring merely from the personal faith of Abel, and the excellence of his sacrifice? Hear Moses and St. Paul:—"The Lord had respect to Abel and his offering: but to Cain and his offering he had not respect. For by FAITH Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." Thus the Lord had respect to Cornelius and his charity. "His prayers and alms came up for a memorial before God:" but to the Pharisees, their prayers and alms "he had not respect:" for, by faith in his light, Cornelius offered more excellent prayers and alms than the Pharisees. "By which he," like Abel, "obtained witness that he was righteous and accepted:" God, by the angel, "testifying" of his gifts. "And, by it, he, being dead, yet speaketh" to all Solifidians, who would banish the election and reprobation of justice out of the world.

Righteous Seth succeeds righteous Abel: his children do the works of God, and are, of consequence, the elect of his justice, as well as of his grace. But as soon as these pious sons of God begin to draw back, and to follow the worldly ways of the daughters of men, they begin to rank among the reprobates of justice, and are involved in their dreadful punishment. Through the apostasy of these sons of God, "the earth was soon corrupt before God:" and yet "Noah was a just man, perfect in his generation, and Noah walked with God." Therefore when a decree of judicial reprobation went forth against "the world of the ungodly," a decree of judicial election was made in his favour: "and the Lord said to Noah, Come thou, and all thy house, into the ark; for thee I have seen righteous before me in this generation," Gen. vii, 1. Ham, the father of Canaan, shared in the election which saved Noah; but, by his flagrant violation of the fifth commandment, he soon brought upon himself a judicial reprobation.

A degree of vindictive reprobation passes against Sodom, but the sacred historian, who informs us of it, sets his pen, like a bar of brass, against the Calvinian doctrine of free wrath : nay, God himself condescends to speak in our language on that awful occasion. "The Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom is great, I will go down now, and, [before I judicially reprobate it,] I will see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, and if not, I will know," Gen. xviii, 20. So far is the Lord from judicially reprobating his creatures otherwise than according to works, that is, according to evangelical worthiness or unworthiness.

Agreeably to the same doctrine of justice, God showed favour to righteous Lot, rather than to the wicked inhabitants of Sodom. For "it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham," and his cogent plea : ("Wilt thou [reprobate and] destroy the righteous with the wicked? That be far from thee, to do after this manner! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?") "And *accordingly* God sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow."

His wife shared in this election of justice, for the angels "laid hold upon her hand," and extended to her the same favour which they did to her husband. But as soon as she looked back, and broke the commandment, "Look not behind thee," she forfeited her election : reprobation laid hold on her, and she became a monument of God's judicial impartiality.

Although God's distinguishing grace shines in his calling Abraham to be a father of his peculiar people ; yet the election of justice soon goes hand in hand with the election of grace. How striking are these anti-Solifidian passages! "I will perform the oath which I sware to Abraham thy father, &c, BECAUSE that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes and my laws," Gen. xxvi, 3, 5. Did not God judicially elect that faithful patriarch to the rewards of grace, when he said, "By myself have I sworn ; BECAUSE thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thine only son, that in blessing I will bless thee, because thou hast obeyed my voice?" Gen. xxii, 16, 18. Do not these scriptures prove that if Abraham had not made his election of peculiar favour sure, by obeying God's voice, he would have forfeited that election as well as Saul and Judas ?

But to return to the election of justice : does not this election extend, in some degree, even to the children of the godly? When God had said to Abraham, according to the reprobation of inferior grace, "Cast out the bond woman and her son" Ishmael, did he not say also, according to the election of justice, "For Ishmael I have heard thee : behold, I have blessed him—because he is thy seed?" Gen. xvii, 20 ; xxi, 13. And is not the decree of this remunerative election openly written by David, where he says, "Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord : his seed shall be mighty upon earth : the generation of the upright shall be blessed?"

A striking instance of the impartial reprobation of justice we have in the Amorites and Israelites, the two nations to which God, according to the election of special favour, successively gave the good land of Canaan. God's justice would not absolutely reprobate the Amorites from it, till they had sinned out their day of national salvation, or squandered away all the time which he had allotted them for national repentance. "I

brought thee out of Ur to give thee this land," said God to Abraham, but thy posterity shall not immediately inherit it, "for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full," Gen. xv, 16. And God was exactly as equitable to the corrupted Israelites, as he had been to the corrupted Canaanites; for he would not drive the Jews out of the land of Canaan, till they were quite ripe for that national reprobation. Hence it is, that our Lord, by nationally sparing them, suffered them also to "fill up the measure of their iniquities," Matt. xxiii, 32.

To return: God says to Abraham, "I will judge the oppressive nation, whom the Israelites shall serve;" and accordingly he judicially reprobates Rahab and the dragon—Egypt and Pharaoh. But is Rahab struck with any plague, is the river turned into blood, before its waters have been mixed with the briny tears, and tinged with the innocent blood of the children of God's people? Is Pharaoh drowned in the Red Sea, or hardened, before he has hardened his own heart, by setting his seal to the most cruel decrees, and by drowning the helpless posterity of Joseph, who had been the deliverer of his kingdom?

Proceed to the book of Numbers, and you see at large the awful account, which St. Jude and St. Paul sum up in these words:—"I will put you in remembrance that the Lord having saved the people out of the land of Egypt," through obedient faith, "afterward destroyed them that believed not," Jude 5. For "our fathers did all drink of the spiritual rock which followed them, and that rock was Christ." But, because they did not all secure the gracious rewards of justice, notwithstanding their election of grace, "with many of them God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness" by the plague, by serpents, by the destroyer. "Now all these things happened to them," the elect of distinguishing grace, "and they are written for our admonition," lest we should not make our election of justice sure by the works of faith: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he *sufficiently* standeth," by the election of partial grace, "take heed lest he fall" into sin, which draws after it the reprobation of impartial justice, 1 Cor. x, 1, &c.

As a proof that, with respect to the election of justice, God is no respecter of persons, I produce Moses and Aaron, the great prophet and the high priest of the Jewish dispensation. They are both elected and called to inherit the land of Canaan; but not making this calling and election sure, they are both reprobated with respect to that inheritance. The adult Israelites share their reprobation. Of several hundred thousand, none but Caleb and Joshua make their election to that favour sure.

Joshua and a new generation of Israelites obey; Jordan is parted; Jericho and her wicked inhabitants are destroyed. But Rahab and her friends, although they were Canaanites, are elected to partake of a peculiar deliverance, because "she had received the messengers" with hospitable kindness, James ii, 25. On the other hand, Achan, one of those who were interested in the covenant of peculiarity, hides the wedge of gold, and the reprobation which Rahab's hospitality had averted lights on him for his covetousness. She is blessed as a daughter of Abraham, and he is destroyed as a cursed Canaanite.

After Joshua's death, God's chosen people corrupted themselves. "And the angel of the Lord came and said, I made you to go up *out* of Egypt, and have brought you into the land, which I swear to your

fathers : and I said, I will never break my covenant with you." Here is the election of grace ! " But ye have not obeyed my voice. Wherefore I also said, I will not drive out the inhabitants of the land before you. They forsook the Lord, and served Baal. And the anger of the Lord was hot against them : whithersoever they went out, the hand of the Lord was against them for evil, as the Lord had sworn unto them," Judges ii, 1, 15. Here is the reprobation of justice !

I have already mentioned how Phinehas' zeal procured his election to the highest dignity in the Church militant, and how Eli's remissness caused his reprobation from that dignity, and entailed degradation and wretchedness upon his family. As for Saul, " when he was little in his own sight, God *gratuitously* made him the head of the tribes of Israel." But when he grew proud and disobedient, " God *judicially* rejected or *reprobated* him from being king." In his days the Kenites were predestinated to be delivered from death, " because they showed kindness to all the children of Israel, when they came up out of Egypt ;" while the Amalekites, their neighbours, were appointed for utter destruction, because " they laid wait for Israel in the way, when he came up from Egypt," 1 Sam. xv, 2, 6.

Although the Lord called David, rather than Jonathan, to the crown of Israel, according to the election of grace ; he nevertheless preferred David to his brother Eliab according to the election of justice ! " Samuel," says the historian, " looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the Lord's anointed is before him : but the Lord said, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature, because I have refused [reprobated] him : for the Lord seeth not as man seeth, for the Lord looketh on the heart ; to this man will I look, who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word," 1 Sam. xvi, 6, 7, and Isa. lxvi, 2. And therefore when Saul was rejected, Samuel said to him, " God hath chosen a man after his own heart ; a neighbour that is better than thou," 1 Sam. xv, 28.

" Solomon loved the Lord, and said to him, Thou hast showed unto my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in uprightness of heart, &c, and now, O Lord, I am but a little child, &c, give therefore thy servant an understanding heart. And the speech pleased the Lord : and God said to him, BECAUSE thou hast asked this thing, and not riches, &c, lo, I have given thee a wise and understanding heart, and I have also given thee [or elected thee to receive] that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honour," 1 Kings iii, 3, &c. Here we see young Solomon, by the power of assisted free will, trading so wisely with his one talent of initial wisdom, as to increase in wisdom above all his contemporaries. And yet when he was old, and had got ten talents of wisdom, he " hid them," not indeed " in a napkin," but in the lap of the strange, idolatrous women whom he had collected. A demonstration this, that man is endued with freedom of will, and that, as free grace did not necessitate Solomon to choose wisdom in his youth, neither did free wrath necessitate him to choose folly in his old age.

To return : Divine mercy gently holds out her sceptre to some men whom the Calvinists generally consider as absolute reprobates, while Divine justice awfully brandishes her sword against other men whom the Calvinists consider as absolute elect. Take a proof or two of the former part of this proposition.

Cain's countenance falls; anger, the parent of murder, is conceived in his envious heart: but God addresses him with the gentleness of a father, and the mildness of a friend. The wretch, notwithstanding, imbrues his hand in his brother's blood: but the goodness and patience of God endure yet daily, and secure the frightened murderer a long day of grace, by threatening a sevenfold punishment to the man that should slay him. Wicked Ahab repents in part, and God in part reverses the decree of his judicial reprobation. "The word of the Lord came to Elijah, saying, Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? I will not bring the evil in his days upon his house." What is such a decree as this, but a judicial reprobation, tempered by a judicial election?

Take one or two proofs of the latter part of the proposition. David numbers the people to indulge his vanity, and God gives him the choice of the decrees of reprobation from his special favour. He sins in the matter of Uriah: a decree of death goes forth against his child, and of slaughter against his family. Hezekiah's heart is lifted up: he looks at his wealth with self complacence, and a decree of poverty and captivity is made against his house.

What were these severe judgments, but the marks and effects of a judicial reprobation from the peculiar favour which God had for these pious kings?

I have observed in the former Essay how partial grace favoured bloody Manasseh, in lengthening out his day of grace: but his election of grace did not hinder the election and reprobation of justice from having their free course. Take first an account of this reprobation: "And the Lord spake, &c, saying, Because Manasseh hath done these abominations, &c, therefore behold I am bringing such evil upon Jerusalem, that whosoever heareth it, both his ears shall tingle," &c. Take next an account of Manasseh's judicial election: "When he was in affliction, he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed to him, and he heard his supplication, [reversed in part the decree of his judicial reprobation,] and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. His prayer also, and how God was entreated of him, &c, behold they are written, &c. Amon did evil as did Manasseh his father, but humbled not himself, as Manasseh had humbled himself," 2 Chron. xxxiii, 12-23.

The New Testament gives us the same views of God's righteous reprobation. Judas, one of those whom "the Father had given to Christ," John xvii, 13,—Judas, whom Christ himself had chosen or elected, John vi, 70,—Judas, for whom he designed one of the twelve brightest thrones in glory, Matt. xix, 28,—Judas "by transgression fell," and was lost, or to speak according to the Hebrew idiom, became a "son of perdition," Acts i, 25; John xvii, 12. "He loved cursing more than blessing," and it judicially "entered like oil" into his bones. The decree of reprobation, which had prophetically gone forth, according to God's foresight of his crime, now goes forth judicially. He is his own executioner, and another fills his vacated throne. Herod does not give glory to God. A decree of reprobation overtakes him, and worms eat him up. Regardless of the starving poor, the rich farmer fills his barns, and the rich glutton his belly, and a decree similar to that which sealed drunken Belshazzar's doom is made against them. "The Jewish builders reject

the corner stone," and Christ says, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." The master of the vineyard comes three years to seek fruit on his fig tree: but, finding none, he judicially reprobates the barren nuisance at last. And patience, which suspends a year the execution of the sentence, offers to seal herself the decree of reprobation, if the tree continues barren to the end of the year of reprieve. The wicked servant beats his fellow servants: the foolish virgins provide no supply of oil: the uncharitable will not give drink to the thirsty; and therefore they all fall a righteous sacrifice to Divine justice. The Gospel feast is provided, and "all things are now ready." Multitudes of men are chosen and called to come to the feast, but their frivolous excuses engage the king to reprobate them. Hear the decree of their judicial reprobation, taken down by three sacred writers:—"I say unto you, that none of those men which were bidden [and refused to come in time] shall taste of my supper," Luke xiv, 24. "The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy," Matt. xxii, 8. "I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in their heart, &c. So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest," Heb. iii, 10. These decrees breathe nothing but just wrath kindled by an obstinate contempt of free grace. From these, and the like Scripture examples, it is evident, that a personal reprobation of justice is an awful and true doctrine; and that a personal, Calvinian reprobation of free wrath is as unscriptural as it is cruel and absurd.

Who can read the Scriptures without prejudice, and not see that the election and reprobation of partial favour yield to the election and reprobation of impartial justice? Although God chose and called Abraham out of distinguishing grace, did he not extend his mercy far beyond the little circle of that narrow calling and election? Did he set his love upon the father of the faithful and his posterity in such a manner that there was nothing but blind mercy for the favoured seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and nothing but free wrath, and Calvinian reprobation, for all who were reprobated with respect to that election? What shall we say of conscientious Abimelech, venerable Melchisedec, patient Job, and his pious friends, for whom "God was entreated?" What of Bethuel, Rebekah's father? What of Asenath, an Egyptian woman, the wife of Joseph? What of prudent Jethro, and his daughter, the wife of Moses? What of the submissive Gibeonites, whose part God so eminently took, against the children of Israel and the house of Saul? What of loving Ruth, a daughter of Moab? What of the inquisitive queen of Sheba, and the Sidonian widow, who had charity enough to share her last morsel with Elijah, a hungry and desolate stranger? What of grateful Naaman, the Syrian, whom the prophet sent away in peace, when he entailed a curse upon Gehazi, the lying Israelite? What of humbled Nebuchadnezzar, who was restored to his former greatness, in as wonderful a manner as patient Job, and penitent Manasseh? What of the wise men, who came from the east; and the treasurer of Queen Candace, who came from the south, to worship in Judea? What of the importunate woman of Canaan, the zealous woman of Samaria, and the charitable Samaritan, who had compassion on the wounded man, the "poor creature," whom the elect priest had

reprobated, and whom the chosen Levite had passed by? Had God absolutely no respect to their repentance, faith, and charity? Was there never a "well done! thou good and faithful servant," for any of them? Shall "a cup of cold water," given in Christ's name, have its reward; and shall not the oil and the wine of the non-elect Samaritan, given in the name of humanity, divinity, mercy, love, truth, and righteousness, (six of Christ's sweetest names,) shall not, I say, that "wine and oil" have their reward? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he shut up his remunerative kindness in displeasure? Is there nothing but vindictive free wrath for all that are not interested in the peculiar "covenants of promise," made with Abraham, Moses, and "the High Priest of our profession?" And nothing but flaming love for Nadab, Abihu, Korah, Dathan, Abiram, Demas, Hymeneus, Philetus, Alexander, and Diotrefes, who so eminently shared in the Jewish and Christian covenants of peculiarity?

If you say, with St. Paul, "All are not *true* Israelites who are of Israel," you grant what we contend for: you allow that all are not the elect of God's impartial justice, who are the elect of his partial favour; and that finally the scale will turn for the retribution of eternal life or eternal death, according to the election or reprobation of impartial justice, and not according to the election of partial grace, and the reprobation of free wrath. Who had ever a larger share in the election of partial grace than David? And yet, who ever maintained the election and reprobation of justice more strongly than he? Does he not still cry to all the world, from the walls of Jerusalem, "Verily, there is a reward for the righteous, [of whatever family, tribe, or religion he be:] doubtless there is a God that judgeth the earth?" Does not every body know, that to judge the earth is to justify, or condemn all its inhabitants, according to their works? And when God finally justifies or condemns, what does he do but declare that the godly are evangelically worthy of walking with him in white, and of following him to fountains of living water; and that the ungodly are every way worthy to depart with the devil, and follow him into the lake of fire?

I have observed that the election of partial grace extends to cities and nations; and so does the reprobation of impartial justice. Take one or two remarkable instances of it. According to the election of distinguishing favour, God "chose Jerusalem to put his name there." But when Jerusalem showed herself absolutely unworthy of his judicial election, he reprobated her in righteousness. Hear the awful decree:—"I will make Jerusalem heaps, and a den of dragons. The houses of Jerusalem shall be defiled as Tophet," Jer. ix, 11; xix, 13. The mild Jesus, after a last effort to "gather her children, as a hen gathers her brood," with a flood of tears, pronounces the final sentence of her judicial reprobation: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets,—there shall not be left in thee one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

The gratuitous election, and the judicial reprobation of Jerusalem, are typical of the gratuitous election of the Israelites, and of their judicial reprobation. An account of their gratuitous election is set before the reader in the Essay on Scripture Calvinism. Here follows an

account of their righteous reprobation:—"And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently to the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe all his commandments, that the Lord will set thee on high: all these blessings shall overtake thee; the Lord shall establish thee a holy people to himself, as he hath sworn to thee. But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken, &c, that all these curses shall overtake thee, &c. The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly, because of all the wickedness of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken me," Deut. xviii, 1-20. Again: "See, I have set before thee life and good, and death and evil, in that I command thee to love the Lord thy God, that thou mayest live. But if thine heart turn away, &c, I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish," Deut. xxx, 15, &c. Here are the decrees of God's judicial election and reprobation. According to these decrees, David says to his elect son, "Solomon, my son, serve the God of thy father with a willing mind. If thou seek him, he will be found of thee: but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever. Take heed now, for the Lord hath chosen thee to build a house," &c, 1 Chron. xxviii, 9. According to these decrees, "Because of all the provocations, &c, the Lord said, I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and I will cast off this city Jerusalem, which I have chosen, and the house, of which I said, My name shall be there," 2 Kings xxiii, 26, 27.

It is only to defend the election and reprobation of justice that St. Paul says, "God hath not cast away his [believing, obedient] people whom he foreknew," that is, foreapproved as believing, and obedient; for, as there were seven thousand believing and obedient Jews, upon whom impartial justice smiled in the days of Jezebel, under the Jewish election of partial grace; "even so at this present time," adds the apostle, "there is a remnant" of such Jews under the Christian election of partial grace. That is, a number of Jews make their Christian election sure, not by the works of the Mosaic law, but by obedient faith in Christ. And even these obedient believers, in conjunction with the converted Gentiles, the apostle keeps in their duty by threatening them with reprobation of impartial justice. "Because of unbelief," says he, "they [the unbelieving Jews] were broken off, [that is, judicially reprobated,] and thou [Christian believer] standest by faith. Be not high minded, but fear. For if God spared not the natural branches; [so inflexible is his justice!] take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God: on them that fell [the Jews elected through distinguishing grace] severity; but toward thee [a Christian, elected by distinguishing favour] goodness, if thou continue in his goodness, by continuing in the faith of Christ; otherwise thou shalt also be cut off," notwithstanding thy Christian election of distinguishing grace. "And they," notwithstanding their present reprobation of justice, which is occasioned by their unbelief, "if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in:" that is, if they make their Christian calling and election of grace sure by the obedience of faith, they shall be numbered among the rewardable elect, the elect that do not perish, the elect of justice as well as of grace, Rom. xi, 1-23.

The apostle frequently speaks the same anti-Calvinian language: take

one or two more instances of it: "The end of those things is death," that is, final reprobation from life. "But, &c, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end [of this fruit is a judicial election to] everlasting life: for the wages of sin is death," that is, a judicial reprobation from life, "but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ:" an invaluable gift, which the Redeemer has procured, and which shall be judicially bestowed upon obedient, persevering believers, as the king's cups and plates, which are the mere gifts of his majesty, are equitably bestowed upon them that so run as to obtain the prize. And, therefore, "so run," says the apostle, "that ye may obtain an incorruptible crown. Be followers of me: I so run, &c, lest I myself should be cast away," according to the reprobation of justice, 1 Cor. ix, 24, &c.

The election and reprobation of partial grace depend entirely upon the wisdom and sovereignty of God. The great "Potter hath power over the clay, to make of the same lump vessels to honour, or to comparative dishonour," just as he pleases. As a supreme Benefactor, he had a right to raise the Jews above all nations, by calling them at the third hour into his enclosed vineyard. He could, without injustice, call the Corinthians at the sixth hour, and the English at the ninth hour. And he call the Hottentots at the eleventh hour, they shall be entitled to the blessings of the richest election of grace, which are represented by the penny of the parable, as much as if they had been called as early as Abraham was; and had borne the burden and heat of the day as long as St. Paul and Cranmer did. I repeat it, with respect to the privileges of the covenants of promise made with the Jews and the Christians, which privileges our Lord sometimes calls his pence, and sometimes his talents; they are ours as soon as we are called, if we do but answer the call by going into the Lord's vineyard or field. This is what Christ condescends to call our hire for going into his Church militant—our hire bestowed according to the election of prevenient grace. But our eternal reward shall be given according to a very different rule, namely, according to the election of impartial justice. To secure this reward, we must not only go into the Lord's field, when we are called; but we must so run as we are directed. "Be not deceived," says the apostle when he stands up for the doctrines of justice; as God does not necessitate man by Calvinian decrees of finished reprobation, and then mock him by Arminian offers of salvation: so he "is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh [naturally and judicially] reap corruption and destruction: [the word has this double meaning in the original.] But he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting," both by natural and judicial consequence. "For the moral earth, which bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God:" ("Come, ye blessed, inherit the kingdom, &c, for I was hungry, and ye gave me meat.") "But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected [reprobated] and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned," according to the fearful sentence, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, for I was hungry and ye gave me no meat," &c, Gal. vi, 7; Heb. vi, 7; Matt. xxv, 34, &c.

Well then might our Lord and St. Paul charge us to escape the reprobation, and secure the election of justice. How awful and anti-Calvinian

are their directions! "Watch and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these terrible things, and to stand *rewardable* before the Son of man," Luke xxi, 36. "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord: knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance," Col. iii, 24.

From these and a multitude of such scriptures it appears, that when the Calvinists overlook the impartial election and reprobation of distributive justice, they betray as much prejudice as the rigid Arminians do, when they deny the partial election and reprobation of distinguishing grace. There is, however, some difference between the extensiveness of their errors. If rigid Arminianism rejects the partial election and reprobation of distinguishing grace, it strenuously maintains the righteous election and reprobation of impartial justice; and, by this means, it preserves one half of the doctrines of the Bible in all their purity, namely, the doctrines of justice. But rigid, downright Calvinism equally spoils the doctrines of grace and the doctrines of justice: for it turns the holy doctrines of special grace into Solifidian doctrines of lawless grace: and, with respect to the doctrines of impartial justice, it totally demolishes them by allowing but of one eternal, absolute, partial, and personal election, which necessarily binds Christ's righteousness, and finished salvation, upon some men; and of one eternal, absolute, partial, and personal reprobation, which necessarily fastens Adam's unrighteousness, with finished damnation, upon all the rest of mankind. Now, according to these doctrines of partial grace and free wrath, it is evident that justice can no more be concerned in justifying or condemning, rewarding or punishing men under such circumstances, than you could be equitably concerned in crowning some men for swimming, and in burning others for sinking; supposing you had first bound the elected swimmers fast to an immense piece of cork, and tied a huge mill stone about the neck of the sinking reprobates. Hence it appears, that although a Bible Christian may hold Pelagius' election and reprobation of justice, he can neither hold Calvin's one election of lawless grace, nor his one reprobation of free wrath.

But, while I bear my plain testimony against rigid Calvinism, I beg the reader to make a difference between that system and the good men who have embraced it. With joy I acknowledge that many Calvinist ministers have done much good in their generation. But whatever good they have done, was not done by their errors, but by the Gospel truths which they inconsistently mixed with their errors, and by God's overruling their mistakes. The doctrines of *distributive justice* belong no more to rigid Calvinism, than to Nero's private system of policy: but as good magistrates, even under Nero's authority, steadily punished vice, and rewarded virtue; so good men, who have the misfortune to be involved in rigid Calvinism, inconsistently deter men from sin by preaching the terrors of a sin-revenging God, and by pointing out the rewards of grace and glory, which await the faithful. Add to this, that by still holding out the law of God to the unawakened, though that kind of preaching is absurd upon their system, yet they do good, because, so far, they preach the doctrines of justice. And by preaching a "rule of life" to believers, they now and then meet with professors ingenious enough to follow that rule. For, as there are even in Billingsgate per-

sons cleanly enough to wash their hands, although their neighbours should constantly assure them that they can never get one speck of dirt off; that the king must do it all away himself in the day of his power; that, in the meantime, his majesty sees no dirt upon their hands, because he looks at them only through the hands of the prince of Wales, which are as white as snow, and the cleanness of which his majesty is pleased to impute to their dirty hands; and beside, that dirt will work for their good; will display the strength of their constitution; will set off, by and by, the cleansing virtue of soap and water; and will make dirty people sing louder at court, when the king's irresistible power, and their own deadly sweats, shall have cleansed their hands: as there are cleanly persons, I say, who would wash their hands notwithstanding such dirty hints as these; so there are some sincere souls among every denomination of Christians, who hate sin, and depart from it, notwithstanding all that some mistaken theologians may say, to make them continue in sin, in order that the graces of humility and of faith in the atoning blood, may be abundantly exercised.

Again: the rigid Arminians are greatly deficient in exalting God's partial grace, and the rich election which flows to Christian believers from this grace. Now when the Calvinists preach to Christians a gratuitous election of distinguishing grace, though they do not preach it aright, yet they say many things which border upon the truth, and by which God sometimes raises the gratitude and comforts of some of his people; overruling Calvin's mistakes to their consolation, as he overruled to our comfort the high priest's dreadful sentence: "Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people." Never did a prophet preach the atonement more clearly than Caiaphas does in these words. Just so do pious Calvinists preach the election of grace, and in the same manner is their preaching overruled to the comfort of some.

But alas! if this confused method of preaching election be indirectly helpful to a few, is it not directly pernicious to multitudes, whom it tempts to rise to the presumption of "Mr. Fulsome," or to sink to the despair of Francis Spira? Beside, would not doubting Christians be sufficiently cheered by the Scriptural doctrine of our election, as it is held forth in the *Essay on Scripture Calvinism*? Are those liquors best, which are made strong and heady by intoxicating and poisonous ingredients? Cannot the doctrine of our gratuitous election in Christ be comfortable, unless it be adulterated with Antinomianism, fatalism, Manicheism, and a reprobation, which necessarily drags most of our friends and neighbours into the bottomless pit? And might we not so preach our judicial election by Christ, and so point out the greatness of the helps, which the Gospel affords us to make our election sure, as to excite the careless to diligence without driving them upon the fatal rocks, with which the Solifidian Babel is surrounded?

From the preceding remarks it follows, that the error of rigid Calvinists centres in the denial of that evangelical liberty, whereby all men, under various dispensations of grace, may, without necessity, choose life in the day of their initial salvation. And the error of rigid Arminians consists in not paying a cheerful homage to redeeming grace, for all the liberty and power which we have to choose life, and to work righteous-

ness since the fall. Did the followers of Calvin see the necessary connection there is between the freedom of our will, and the distributive justice of God our Judge, they would instantly renounce the errors of Calvinian necessity, and rigid bound will. And did the rigid followers of Arminius discover the inseparable union there is, since the fall, between our free agency to good, and the free redeeming grace of God our Saviour, they would readily give up the errors of Pharisaical self sufficiency and rigid free will.

To avoid equally these two extremes, we need only follow the Scripture doctrine of free will restored and assisted by free grace. According to this doctrine, in order to repent, believe, or obey, we stand in need of a talent of power "to will and to do." God, of his good pleasure, gives us this talent for Christ's sake; and our liberty consists in not being necessitated to make a good or bad use of this talent, to the end of our life. But we must remember that, as this precious talent comes entirely from redeeming grace, so the right use of it is first of redeeming grace, and next of our own unnecessitated, though assisted free will; whereas the wrong use of it is of our own choice only; an unnecessitated choice, which constitutes us legally punishable, as our right, unnecessitated choice of offered life (through God's gracious appointment) constitutes us evangelically rewardable.

Hence it follows that our accepted time, or day of salvation begun, has but one cause, namely, the mercy of God in Christ: whereas our continued and eternal salvation has two causes. The first of which is a primary and proper cause, namely, "the mercy of God in Christ;" the second is a secondary or improper cause, or, if you please, a condition, namely, "the works of faith." Nor do some Calvinists scruple, any more than we, to call these works a cause, improperly speaking. Only, like physicians, who write their prescriptions in Latin, to keep their ignorant patients in the dark, they call it *Causa sine qua non*; that is, in plain English, a cause, which, if it be absent, absolutely hinders an effect from taking place. Thus a mother is not the primary cause of her child's conception, but *causa sine qua non*; that is, such a cause as, if it had been wanting, would have absolutely prevented his being conceived.

If the Calvinists will speak the truth in Latin, I will speak it in plain English. And therefore, standing up still as a witness of the marriage between prevenient free grace, and obedient free will; (an evangelical marriage this, which I have proved in the Scripture Scales;) I assert, upon the arguments contained in these two Essays, that our eternal salvation depends, *first*, on God's free grace, and *secondly*, on our practical submission to the doctrines of grace and justice; or, if you please, on our making our election of grace and justice sure by faith and its works.

To be a little more explicit: our day of salvation begun is merely of free grace, and prevents all faith and works; since all saving faith, and all good works, flow from a beginning of free salvation. But this is not the case with our continued and eternal salvation: for this salvation depends upon the concurrence of two causes; the first of which is prevenient and assisting free grace, which I beg leave to call the father cause; and the second is submissive and obedient free will, which I take the liberty to call the mother cause. And I dare say that the Pe-

pelagians will as soon find on earth an adult man who came into the world without a father; and that the Calvinists will as soon find one who was born without a mother, as they will find an adult person in heaven, who came there without the concurrence of free grace and free will, which I beg leave to call the paternal and maternal causes of our eternal salvation. And therefore, while the rigid Arminians and the rigid Calvinists make two partial, solitary, barren gospels, by parting mercy and justice, free grace and free will, let Bible Christians stand up, in theory and practice, for the one entire Gospel of Christ. Let them marry preventing and assisting free grace with prevented and assisted free will; so shall they consistently hold the two Gospel axioms, and evangelically maintain the doctrines of grace and justice, which are all suspended on the partial election and reprobation of distinguishing grace, and on the impartial election and reprobation of remunerative justice.

Till we do this, we shall spoil the Gospel, by confounding the dispensations of Divine grace; we shall grieve those whom God has not grieved, and comfort those whom God would not have comforted; we shall involve the truth in clouds of darkness; and availing ourselves of that darkness, we shall separate what God has joined, and join what he has separated; causing the most unnatural divisions and monstrous mixtures, and doing in the doctrinal world what the fallen Corinthian did in the moral, when he tore his mother from his father's bosom, and made her his own incestuous wife. In a word, we shall tear the impartial election of justice from the partial election of grace; and according to our Pelagian or Augustinian taste, we shall espouse the one, and fight against the other. If we embrace only the election of impartial justice, we shall propagate proud, dull, and uncomfortable Pelagianism. And if we embrace only the election of partial grace, we shall propagate wanton antinomianism, and wanton cruelty, or absolute election to, and absolute reprobation from eternal life. We shall generate the conceits of unfinished salvation and finished damnation, which are the upper and lower parts of the doctrinal syren, whom Dr. Crisp mistook for the Gospel; the head and the tail of the evangelical chimera, which Calvin supposed to have sprung from "the Lion of the tribe of Judah." But, if we equally receive the election of grace and that of justice, we shall have the whole truth, as it is in Jesus—the chaste woman, who stands "in heaven clothed with the sun, and having the moon [Pelagian changes and Calvinian innovations] under her feet." Nor will candid Christians be offended at her having two breasts, to give her children "the sincere milk of the word;" and two arms, to defend herself against Pelagianism and Calvinism, the obstinate errors which attack her on the right hand and on the left. She has put forth her two arms in these two Essays; and, if her adversaries do not resist her, as the Jews did Stephen by stopping their ears, it is to be hoped that some of them will impartially pronounce the errors of heated Pelagius and heated Augustine, and will honour Christ both as their Saviour and their Judge, by equally embracing the doctrines of grace and the doctrines of justice.