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PART II.]

THE

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REV. C. H. SPURGEON

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AND HIS BRETHREN,

DRS. PAYNE & WARDLAW, PRESIDENT EDWARDS,

AND OTHERS,

IN THE CRUCIBLE;

OR,

THE PECULIARITIES OF

CALVINISM TESTED.

BY ROBERT PLUES, HOWDON-ON-TYNE.

LONDON: G. J. STEVENSON, "WESLEYAN TIMES" OFFICE, PATERNOSTER ROW.

MAY BE HAD ALSO OF THE AUTHOR, HOWDON-UPON-TYNE.

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NOTICES OF PART I.

“MR. PLUES has read both sides, his conclusions are definite and determined.”—*Earthen Vessel* (Calvinistic), June, 1862.

“MR. PLUES, with the smartness and energy which belong to the character of a Northern Englishman, has set himself to the task of demolishing the fabric which Calvinistic teachers set up. The Author is a thorough Arminian, and does not spare his antagonists—the Northman hits hard.”—*Wesleyan Times*, May 12, 1862.

“I SHALL (D.V.) review your clever production. But while your brains are evidently mighty and powerful, remember Christ's words:—‘I thank thee O Father Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these [Calvinistic] things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes’” [in brains.]—C. W. BANKS, [Baptist] Cardigan Road, North Bow, London, to the Author, May 30, 1862.

“The work shows signs of considerable research on the part of Mr. PLUES.”—*Newcastle Chronicle*, November 11, 1862.

entreaties, or promises, are in the slightest degree adapted to remove the former, but they are eminently fitted to remove the latter, *cannot*; and may, accordingly, be consistently employed. Every one recognizes and acts upon this distinction in the every day occurrences of life; we require, therefore, that it should be recognized in religious subjects. The generality of Calvinistic divines make this distinction. They maintain that the power to obey God's laws, of which unconverted men are destitute, is not physical capacity [of mind] but disposition. They affirm, that the Scriptures address no command to the human family at large, with which any man, unless he be an idiot or a madman, would be unable to comply, provided he had the disposition to comply. They hold, that all that Adam lost, for himself and his posterity, was the disposition, and not the physical capacity [of mind,] i.e. power, in the proper sense of the word, to do what God commands: and on this affirmed fact, that the human race, after the fall, retain their physical [mental] power to obey God's law, though they may not choose to obey, they found their belief in the great doctrine of human accountability." Alas for "human accountability" in the hands of a Calvinist! Did ever mortal construct so consummate a piece of logical chicanery as this? Throughout this pretended solution it is assumed that fallen man *is by nature competent* to alter his will or disposition from evil to good. Now we put it to the conscience of a Calvinist—Has he any right in honesty and consistency to assume this? Does he not (on other pages) plainly preach the contrary? Does he not (sometimes) plainly teach that man can do nothing in the matter of religion or salvation, without the *supernatural* "power" of the Holy Spirit? This, then, is manifestly only another crineum. There is great moral dishonesty in this subterfuge of the Calvinist. Paul's spirit was "stirred within him" on seeing the idolatry of Athens, and we feel similarly on perceiving this creed-idolatry in Calvinian Athens. The view given above by PAYNE of fallen man's "moral inability," is as false as antichrist, and yet this is the doctrine of Calvinistic defenders. Though PAYNE affected not to know what the Rev. R. WATSON meant, when he used the terms

“neither the will nor the power ;” and though he was discourteous enough to question whether WATSON himself knew his own meaning; we feel sure that WATSON meant, that fallen man, considered abstractly or simply in his natural state, that is, apart from Divine influence, had neither the will or the disposition, nor any principle or power of his own, requisite to change or alter his will or disposition. He knew right well, the principle or power requisite in the case, was “that which *by nature* we cannot have,” viz., the influence of the Holy Spirit. WATSON’S statement amounts simply to this, viz.,—fallen man, *by nature*, has neither the will or disposition to turn to God, nor, *by nature*, has he any principle or power to turn to God : and is not this precisely the doctrine (sometimes) of the Calvinists ? How dare they, then, indulge in such dishonest contradictions of themselves ? Why say at one time that Divine influence is the only power by which men *can* turn to God, and yet at another time say, mind or intellect is “the power in the proper sense of the word ?” Do not such manœuvres prove, Calvinists resist truth, rather than part with their “darling” conceits ? It is wonderful that a Calvinist, with any conscience, could utter what one of their late D.D.’s has, viz.—“The *inability* of a sinner to repent and believe the Gospel, is in fact *nothing more than a want of will*” (!) Again, he remarks—“The unlimited invitations of the Gospel *require nothing* but what men are prevented from rendering in consequence of an evil state of heart ; so that there is no barrier to their reception of mercy, except impenitence and unbelief.” (!) The uninitiated reader will please observe, the Calvinists give the above dishonest statements to defend the responsibility of those persons from whom they suppose God, in sovereignty, withholds his grace, and whom he refuses to convert. But it will easily be perceived, it thoroughly contravenes their own doctrine of the *necessity* of the Divine influence in order to conversion. A Calvinist, in his conscience, must know nothing is more false than the doctrine of the above-quoted statements. He *knows*, what, indeed, the above-quoted author *says* (on another page) in refutation of himself, viz.—“You are persuaded that mere moral suasion, and

all the means of human operation combined, could not have effected such a change" (as conversion). We are sorry to ask, where are the conscience and the intellect of such dealers in contradictions? These men have styled the Rev. Mr. WESLEY, "the champion of Pelagianism," but is he not out-championed by themselves in thus representing God as not at all required in the matter of obeying the Gospel—that the mere possession of mental faculties is enough! A bigger mistake in divinity could not be, than to set forth fallen man's physical power (that is in PAYNE's parlance, intellectual power) as virtuous or holy power. If indeed it were true, man would not need the Divine influence, nor indeed could man be regarded as fallen and sinful. This doctrine of the Dr.'s is as wise and self-consistent as his doctrine of the *sufficiency* of the atonement for all, with a *deficiency* of Divine *purpose* to save—a sufficient feast, but a lack of generosity on the part of the Divine Host; which, in fact, under such sufficient or plenteous circumstances, must be also a lack of sense—for why let a good thing waste? The Arminian puts the folly of the waste down to man, but the Calvinist, impiously enough, puts it down to the Divine Being. Thousands of Methodists, and others, will be ignorant of the *queer* doctrine to which we have just alluded. We shall digress a little to inform them. The Rev. THOMAS SCOTT, in his sermon on Election, says—"Christ's death was a *sufficient* atonement for all. But he foresaw who would eventually partake of this ransom, and for them he specially paid it." (A new revelation, this.) "It is allowed (by me, SCOTT) "that Christ in dying for sinners intended to save none but those who eventually shall be saved." SCOTT in his preface to this sermon says:—"This view of the subject" (his general, and special, view) "makes not the least difference in respect to the freeness of salvation by the sovereign purpose and grace of God, made known in the effectual calling of his chosen remnant: while" (observes this) "it gives the preacher an immense advantage in fulfilling the ministry of reconciliation, and yields the awakened sinner the greatest encouragement in applying to Christ for salvation. On this ground we may say to any human being, 'Believe in the Lord

Jesus, and thou shalt be saved.' " This is, undesignedly, paying great homage to Arminian theology. It seems these Calvinists could hardly preach without an Arminian mask, nor do we wonder. But it will be obvious to all, their "special, and general," redemption, are mutually nullifying. SCOTT'S Christ's dying for *all*, only means a few; and this verbal liberality of view is nothing else than a necessary and convenient mask to hide from rationality the ugly, monstrous visage of naked Calvinism. PAYNE echoes SCOTT'S preposterous, and mutually nullifying doctrines in his lectures, p. 210—"I believe in the unlimited, universal, infinite sufficiency of the atonement of Christ. I believe on the other hand, in the *limited application* of the atonement" (that is in *God's purpose*, as well as in *fact*) "I believe it was the *intention* of God, as a sovereign, to render that remedy effectual, by special and sovereign influence, in the case of *certain individuals only.*" (!) Were ever such cant and dotage uttered? Is it not another plain instance of circumcism? Christ died for all, but he only died for a few! We are bold to tell such men, if Christ died to save some only, to say he died for all, are words without ideas, or else, words evincing a guilty duplicity.* But to return. To represent, as the Dr. does, physical, that is in his nomenclature, *intellectual* power as being moral, or *virtuous* power, as the connexion intimates, is sheer nonsense. The moral power of fallen man to do what is virtuous or good, is, the influence of the Holy Spirit. Man has no such power as Adam had it, by a simply natural state. Adam was so created, but his posterity are not so born. Some Calvinists take quite a different mode of defence on this head, and admit men *have not* the power to turn to God, but, most insanelly, tell us, God has a right, notwithstanding, to tell all to turn! COLES has it:—"Though man has lost his power to obey, God has not lost his right to command." (!) Men in

* Were we to ascend a pulpit with Calvinian Election as our belief, we would not be able to mouth it—that Christ died for all, &c.; the lie would choke us. This position of theirs resembles the absurd one they attribute to the Divine Being, that of having two wills, the one secret, and the other revealed, and the one contrary to the other—one that He wills to save Thomas, and the other that He *does not!*

their wits, however, remember, Adam's posterity never had, by *nature*, the power to lose.

There is a point in reference to man's redemption in which Calvinists egregiously err. It is usual with them, in defending their doctrine of Election, to say—"God might *justly* have passed by the *whole race*, and saved none." Of course meaning both infants and adults. WESLEY justly observes—"This is a bold and precarious assertion, utterly unsupported by Scripture—unproven and unwritten. That God might justly have passed me by I deny. That he might justly have passed me by for my unfaithfulness to his grace, and given me up long ago, I grant." FLETCHER, of Madely, wisely remarks—"If God had not graciously designed to replace all mankind in a state of initial salvation from sin and hell, according to the various dispensations of his redeeming grace, he would have punished Adam's *personal* sin by a personal damnation. Nor would he have suffered him to propagate his fallen race, unless the second Adam had extended the blessings of Redemption so far as to save from eternal misery all who die in infancy, and to put all who live long enough to act as moral agents, in a capacity of avoiding hell by working out their own eternal salvation, in the day of their temporary salvation—a day this which inconsistent Calvinists call, the day of grace." WESLEY gives the true philosophy of this Calvinistic mistake, when he says—"In this supposition, as to what God might have done, you suppose (you Calvinists) that His justice might have been separate from His other attributes—from His mercy, for instance." This erroneous separating of the Divine attributes is also seen in their representing the non-elect as objects of equity *only*; and the elect as objects of mercy *only*; whereas, both these attributes must have affected *all*, if God be a God of justice, *and* mercy. It is the same with regard to angels; one portion they represent as the objects *only* of mercy and the other *only* of justice.

We have endeavoured, since the commencement of this chapter, to present to the reader as clear an idea as possible of the *conduct* the Calvinists ascribe to God by their doctrine of Election. He will now be prepared to compare that conduct with

his ideas of goodness or Christian morals, which he has derived from his perusal of the Bible.

It is the vice of the Calvinists to pervert almost every leading term they use. Their abuse of words is most shameful. They speak, for instance, of mercy and goodness, and *boundless* and infinite mercy and goodness, while all the time they only *mean* a narrow partiality, and a very limited goodness; and often they speak of sinners, when they *mean* only the elect, &c., &c. They have no right in honesty to do this. Did ever man pen a greater offence against common-sense, and the right use of terms than the following sentence of Dr. PAYNE'S:—"Perfect goodness does not require God to do *every thing* to promote the *happiness* of his creatures, which he is able to do; nor to bestow the same measure of aid, and of the means of happiness upon all!" When the love of a creed perverts a man to this extent, his case is almost as hopeless as that of a papist—reason is resigned in the matter. We hold that quite the opposite is the truth. His words to Israel were (and they will apply to the race of sinful men)—"What more could I have done (consistently with moral government)? The Calvinists sometimes pretend to be solicitous about the honour of God, but how frequently do they bungle over it? Here we have one setting man's unhappiness down to God's account, instead of setting it down to man himself. We have proved God does as much for one man as another, or else only holds him responsible for what he does do; and also that man's freedom, combined with the rules of God's gracious dispensations, account for the differences among men. Not only "perfect" goodness, but *imperfect* goodness—the goodness of ordinary Christians, leads them to do all the good they can, and not to a few, but to all within their reach; or, if they come short of this much, they feel "they have left undone the things they ought to have done." For them to act on the principle of "picking and choosing" as to the good that is within their power—the principle of Calvinian Election and Reprobation—they know it would be wrong, for, Christians are to be good, that is, God-like; and they know that to be without heart to do good when they might do it, would be to be ungood—

ungodly. We showed at the beginning of this chapter, that Calvinian Election represents God as having far less goodness than his own ministers; and disprove it who can! We have also shown, irrefragably, that if Calvinian Election be true, God denies, positively, to do good to the unsaved or reprobate; hence He is held forth as acting the part of the well-known Priest, and Levite, of the parable, who, on seeing human misery, "passed by on the other side."

Calvinists rather than yield their pet notions, care not impiously to reflect on their Maker by the following sophism:—God might or could have converted the world before now if he had pleased; but He has not done so, hence—what do you think?—why, awful, mysterious Calvinian sovereignty and Election!—and hence, what more? why, Divine sovereignty, and man's responsibility, had better be regarded as a ravelled hank! Such is the God-dishonouring notion of the modern Calvinist! He here again assumes that the Divine Being acts upon mind as He does upon matter, by a mechanical, necessary force. Of course if this be the general way the Divine Being operates in the moral world, the world will be converted just when God pleases; and the conclusion is irresistible—no one can be to blame but himself that it is not converted! But these crincumites demand that you allow them the quiet possession of the contradiction, viz., that though the conversion of the world is *solely* dependent in (one of) their views on the will and power of God, yet God is not to blame that it is not converted! How much wiser, and how much more honourable to God to think, it is man's own wilfulness and wickedness that have resisted and hindered its conversion. If the Divine Son was prevented doing more of His mighty works by men's unbelief; how easy to think the Divine Father may be frustrated in like manner. We tell these mistaken men that God does not please, as a rule, to treat men as machines. He often does so in punishing them for the sinful, perverse use of their freedom. This is the great Moral Potter's power over His moral clay—dishonouring it when it mars or spoils itself in His hands, and *vice versa*. "Them that honour me I will honour," &c. "If ye will not be reformed

by me by these things, but will walk contrary to me, Then will I also walk contrary unto you and punish you," &c.—*Lev. xxvi., 23-24.* This is the way the great Moral Potter works with His moral vessels; and not as the Calvinist impiously imagines, leaving part of the lump, absolutely, to be irredeemably spoiled and destroyed, while the other only is attended to and honoured. An ordinary potter would not act so senselessly: and yet this is precisely the representation the Calvinists give of the Divine Being!

By the doctrine of Calvinian Election, God is divided against himself; and becomes good to some, and bad to others. It is idle, as we have already proved, for the Calvinist to say—it is equity in God to punish the non-elect, and cannot be called bad or unrighteous. It must be recollected, God is good—"God is love;" and to withhold pity or love from those who need it, is *unloving* and *ungood*; and to give it to some, but not to others, is simply capriciousness and despicable partiality—quite out of harmony with the character of a wise and holy God. Similar conduct in man would be condemned by all enlightened Christians. If a father of a family withheld his pity and love from any of his children who stood in need of sympathy, after this Calvinian fashion, he would be pronounced an unfeeling brute; and very fitful and capricious in his goodness, if he was kind to some but not to all.

To say as Calvinists do, that God *is* good to those He has not the heart to save, by His giving them life, and all other worldly good, is a great mistake, for these are all converted into curses by the act of reprobation. Think you it is kindness in the butcher to fatten and adorn the animal he intends for slaughter? Such must God's favours be to the non-elect or reprobate—no favours at all, but, curses. But God does not, nor cannot act so contrary to His character: He is under an obligation here, to act like Him "whose tender mercies are over all His works." This beautiful Scripture is flatly contradicted by him who says, God withholds his heart from the unsaved. But that Calvinian Election is contrary to goodness and is only an immoral partiality, must be quite obvious, and needs no further arguing.

What Dr. P. offers to the contrary is nothing but a jumble of sophistry and perversion.

Calvinists are in the habit of referring us to the fallen angels as a proof that God *may* withhold mercy *entirely*. But this is very wide of the mark, for, first, it is to be recollected, the angels were not a *posterity* but a *host*, and, consequently, were treated with *individually*, as mankind will be at the judgment. Secondly: it is quite gratuitous and unfounded to say, God withheld mercy *entirely* from them. How do you know he did? Who knows their history? The presumption, from the character of God is, that it was not withheld. If God *be* a God of mercy, then, mercy, in some mode, must have preceded the infliction of justice. Let not Calvinists affect a knowledge above what is written.

Calvinian Election is equally opposed to justice as goodness. To obviate this objection, Dr. P. resorts to the unwarrantable manœuvre of distinguishing God's character into "public and private." But we have sufficiently refuted this sophistry in our chapter on "Divine Sovereignty." The representing God's doing one thing as a governor, and another, inconsistent thing, as a "private" character, is loathsome and wicked twaddle, suited enough though to a loathsome creed. The Calvinist, fairly interpreted, represents God as bringing sinners into the world—the reprobate, who cannot help sinning, and who cannot help refusing a mercy that is tauntingly offered to them, but not really intended for them; and punishing them to all eternity for thus doing, what not only they could not but do, but what he *purposed* they should do. Are such ways equal ways? Can there be here, either justice, goodness, wisdom, or truth?

The disclaimer made on behalf of Calvinists by Dr. P. is, we are sorry to say, neither true nor honest. Says he—"It is too commonly thought by our opponents, that, in advocating the sovereignty of Jehovah, we practically avow our belief that He has a right to appoint, and actually exercises the right of appointing, some of the subjects of His moral government to the endurance of misery—perhaps final eternal misery—without any reason on their part for such an appointment. I take the liberty

of assuring them, in the name of my brethren, that we believe no such thing. We maintain, that conduct, such as they falsely" (save the mark!) "imagine we set ourselves to defend, would be *flagrant injustice, gross and detestable cruelty, not sovereignty.* We consider it utterly impossible, that, under any righteous moral government, the subjects of that government should either be appointed to punishment, or called actually to sustain it, but as the reward of their crimes." Now, Calvinism, as we have seen, teaches by fair, necessary consequence of its acknowledged creed, that some men are chosen to be left in a state of sinfulness of nature in which *they have been involuntarily placed*, and afterwards punished in hell. It teaches that the non-elect or reprobate cannot but sin, as the Holy Spirit, the only source and competency of virtuous disposition, is purposely withheld from them. In fact we have seen, there cannot possibly *be* crime in the reprobate, as—if Calvinism be true—their sins (so called) are what they could not possibly avoid. How, then, can their punishment be the "reward of their crimes?" Any one reading attentively what we have already advanced against Calvinists, cannot but think, that, "the conduct they set themselves to defend" is nothing other than "*flagrant injustice, gross and detestable cruelty, not (Divine) sovereignty.*"

"I have lived," says the Rev. J. FLETCHER, of Madeley, "these fifteen years in a part of England, where a multitude of potters make all manner of earthen vessels. Some of these mechanics are by no means conspicuous for good sense, and others are at times besotted through drinking; but I never yet saw, or heard of one, so excessively foolish as to make, even in a drunken fit, a vessel on purpose to break it, to show that he had power over the work of his own hands. What would you think of the man, if he made five or ten such vessels (as wise animals) for absolute destruction, while he made one for absolute salvation, and then assumed the title of a gracious and merciful potter, and called his potting schemes, "*schemes of grace?*" Such, however, is Spurgeon, and other Calvinists' sinful caricature of the Almighty, by means of the absurd creed in which they glory. Surely some men glory in their shame!

CHRISTIAN PERSEVERANCE.

"Though I believe that David's sin displeased the Lord, must I therefore believe that David's person was under the curse of the law? Surely no. Like Ephraim, he was still a pleasant child; though he went on frowardly" (in adultery and murder) "he did not lose the character of the man after God's own heart."—HILL, to FLETCHER.

"**ERRORS,**" says COLES, ("like truths in that) do hang together; or, as links in a chain, the first mover draws the rest after it." This is strikingly true of Calvinian errors. Calvinian Christian perseverance is a necessary sequence of Calvinian Sovereignty and Election; and we feel sure it is more because of these, than because of any special evidence of its truth, that absolute perseverance is an article of the Calvinist's creed—the three must go together.

In no article of its creed is Calvinism so vague, and so self-contradictory as in this. We gather from its votaries the absurdity that a Christian's perseverance is *both unconditional, and conditional!* It is perplexing to deal with logicians of this sort. Persons are too clever for us who can blow hot and cold. When ELISHA says one thing, and COLES another, it is, we confess, too much for us.

We regard Calvinism, particularly this doctrine, as *essentially* unfavourable to morals or holiness.* If the doctrine means

* As one direct confirmation of this, take the following testimony of Dr. CHALMERS, extracted from his life by Dr. HANNA. "I feel the influence of these systems" (of Calvinian orthodoxy) "to be most unfortunate in the pulpit. Were I to accommodate to the previous state of" (Calvinian) "discipline and education among my hearers, I could not get in a single PRECEPT without spending more than double the time necessary for announcing it, in satisfying them of its due subordination to the leading principles of the system. Now I would ask, is this

any thing, it means that the backslidings of Christians, be they as foul as possible, do not endanger the soul—the backslider need not fear hell, for it will never be his! Thus these men symbolise with the unbeliever in obliterating one of the chief sanctions of the Divine Government, and uprooting one of the chief stones in the foundation of morals and virtue. We do not wonder that Calvinists wickedly scout the doctrine of “Christian Perfection,” and hold by that of *imperfection*—it is what we may expect. Where a Calvinist is concerned about being moral or holy, it is because the instincts of his Christian nature are better than the articles of his creed.

As an illustration of the self-contradictory statements of Calvinists on Perseverance, take the following from one of their ablest writers, Dr. PAYNE:—“The doctrine for which we plead is *perseverance in holiness*.” Again, and *contra*—“Now a man who *loses* the faith and *holiness* of the Gospel—even though it should really be but a temporary loss—is not actually persevering. He is not now kept,” &c. (!)

The sum of what Calvinists teach on the subject is, that God keeps men, and yet he does not keep them; that Christians persevere in the faith, and yet they do not persevere in the faith, but often lose it; that they persevere in holiness, yet often lose holiness; that they may often do the Devil’s work, and the worst kind too, and yet be God’s dear children, and in no danger of hell! Nobody but a Calvinist would think of calling a thing like this, Perseverance. We ask such a man, if faith and holiness constitute a Christian, what can the loss of them (however temporary) make a person? In the name of common

ever done by Paul or any of the Apostles? Do they feel any restraint or hesitation in being *practical*? Is not the scrupulous deference to the factitious orthodoxy of Calvin a principle altogether foreign and subsequent to the native influence of Divine truth on the heart? With what perfect freedom from all this parade and all this scrupulosity do Christ and his Apostles make their transition from doctrine to practice, and expand with the most warm and earnest and affectionate exhortation.”

Surely the system that produces an effect, such as Chalmers describes as above, has little affinity with His who declared of the great rule of morality—the “golden rule”—“THIS IS THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS.”—MATTHEW, vii., 12.

sense, and the nature of things, does it not *unmake* the Christian? Is he not *unchristianised*? If conduct like David's and Peter's does not unchristianise a man, the monstrous conclusion is inevitable, viz. *that man may act* the detestable murderer and adulterer, and liar, and yet be a Christian! Away from the earth with such God-dishonouring, and sin-encouraging stuff! But where is the sense of Calvinists in telling us these things cannot be lost, and yet in the same breath telling us they were lost in the cases of David and Peter? Is it not high time they were altering their statement of the doctrine—if they can. “The holiness of Christians is of an *abiding* nature, and shall *never* be lost, and this is what we call Perseverance,” says COLES. PAYNE has it:—“We don't mean believers will never be permitted to fall into sin, only they will be so kept as ultimately to obtain salvation. David and Peter sinned, but doubtless obtained ultimate salvation, and at the period of their fall had experienced a change of heart.” Aye! *two* changes, Dr. — from darkness to light, and from light to darkness again.

Our opinion is that the faith and holiness of a Christian, *may* be lost, not only for a time, but finally and for ever. We believe that religion, like a man's worldly fortune, is, in a great measure, in his own power; that it greatly depends on himself whether his religion be kept or lost. Here, then, we join issue.

If faith and holiness, as is inconsistently admitted, may be lost for a time, what is that makes it impossible they shall be lost for any time and for ever? There is nothing in the nature of the things themselves; the fact is unquestionable in experience, they are more losable than retainable. If they are not to be finally lost out of the soul, it cannot be owing to their nature, but some promise and undertaking on the part of God to that effect. We do not believe God has anywhere so undertaken:

Calvinists think—“It is irrational to suppose that God would leave a work, towards which so much has been done, unaccomplished.” To establish and illustrate this they observe:—“To effectuate the salvation of such as believe in Christ, God has sent Him to become incarnate, and to die on the cross,” &c. Then ask, “if it is credible that God would do all this with

such an amazing apparatus of labour and splendour, and leave it unfinished—should suffer himself to be frustrated in the end?"

This argument is based on the false assumption, as usual, that faith, &c., are produced in men's minds, just as natural light, or the whole material universe was produced; things, in the production of which, no other will was concerned but God's own will. This consideration alone is sufficient to prove its invalidity. God works the works of faith and holiness in harmony with the natural constitution which he has given to man with respect to will or choice; hence unbelief—the want of faith; and sin—the want of holiness, are men's *faults*, and not their misfortunes. If this be so, then, with respect to this peculiar work—the producing of faith and holiness in the soul, God *may* be frustrated, God *may* have to leave it unfinished: nothing is easier to believe; no supposition can be more rational. The reason is, man's *freedom*. The Scriptures unquestionably teach such a "frustration,"—"Because I have called and ye refused," &c. "How often would I have gathered you—but you would not." "I have purged thee and thou wast (would not) be purged." "What more could I have done to my vineyard? I looked that it should bring forth grapes, but it brought forth wild grapes." But we allow there are many things in the matter of Redemption which God has made absolute, and in which he will not be frustrated. Such are His sending His Son to atone for all; His sending His Spirit into the hearts of all; His purpose to save those who believe in offered mercy, and to punish those who do not, and many things besides; these, without fail have, or will be, accomplished. None can rob Him of His sceptre. Those whom He has determined to punish (unbelievers) will be punished; and none can hinder Him from rewarding those He intends to reward (believers)—"none shall pluck them out of His hands." If God did not *purpose* man should sin (and Calvinists now, in words deny He did) then He was frustrated when Adam fell. There is surely no mystery about the fall this far. Surely we may, definitely, learn from God's making man "upright" and "in His own image," that He *purposed* man should be *holy*; but man sinned for all that; the

reason was—man's freedom. It can never be thought God would endow man with will, and then treat him as a machine. But Calvinists are unwilling we should deduce this much plain truth from the fact of Adam's fall. We are told the fall is a "mystery." By this they mean, that though they must own *in words* that God was not the author of sin, they must still have a reserve idea that he purposed to bring it about, and therefore was *not* frustrated. In fact they demand here to hold another crincum, viz., God is the author of sin, and he is not the author of sin! This is the sum of their writings on the subject. They dare not teach that God is the author of sin, in so many plain, direct words; as in the case of reprobation, they don't like the sound of it, nevertheless while rejecting the *sound*, they retain the *thing*. These men have no right in reason to hold by *both* sides of a contradiction. Let them, as rational beings, make their election of one, and stick to it without fear. On their present plan they do but bewilder men and hide truth. To prove our allegations, we shall only cite from the author they vauntingly think invulnerable—President EDWARDS—"If by the author of sin is meant the permittor or not hinderer of sin; AND AT THE SAME TIME" (mark) "A DISPOSER of the state of events, in such a manner, for wise, holy, and most excellent ends and purposes, that sin, if it be permitted or not hindered, will most certainly and infallibly follow: I say, if this be all that is meant, by being the author of sin, I do not deny that God is the author of sin (though I dislike and reject the phrase, as that which by use and custom is apt to carry another sense) it is no reproach for the Most High to be thus the author of sin." The small capitals are ours. Here it will be observed EDWARDS plainly holds the crincum, that God is *only* a *permittor* of sin; and in the same breath an *ordainer* or disposer of it too! EDWARDS only reflects the doctrine of Calvin, where he says—"It is not probable that man procured his own destruction by the *mere* permission, and without any *appointment* of God." The Rev. R. WATSON well observes—"Calvin had reason for this; for to have allowed this distinction" (of mere permission) "would have been contrary to the main principles of his theological system,

which are, that 'the will of God is the necessity of things,' and that all things are previously fixed by an absolute decree; so that they *must* happen. The consequence is, that he and his followers involve themselves in the tremendous consequence of making God the author of sin; which, after all their disavowals, (and we grant them sincere) will still logically cleave to them; for it is obvious, that by nothing can we fairly avoid this consequence but by allowing the distinction between determinations to do, on the part of God, and determinations to *permit* certain things to be done by others. The principle laid down by Calvin is destructive of all human agency, seeing it converts man into a mere instrument; whilst the other maintains his agency in its proper sense, and, therefore, his proper accountability. On Calvin's principle, man is no more an *agent* than the knife in the hand of the assassin; and he is not more responsible, therefore, in equity, to punishment than the knife by which the assassination is committed, were it capable of being punished. For if man has not a *real agency*, that is, if there is a necessity above him *so* controlling his actions as to render it impossible that they should have been otherwise, *he is in the hands of another*, and not master of himself, and so his actions cease to be his own." We have felt this digression necessary to defend our position, that God *may* be frustrated in moral matters.*

It is argued, Calvinian Perseverance "follows irresistibly from election." But we have shown, in our chapter on the subject,

* To defend themselves against the charge of making God the author of sin, the Calvinists have been driven, absurdly, to distinguish between what they call the *act* of sin, and the *sinfulness* of the act; affirming that God is the author of the former, but not of the latter! But it won't do; for, sin is not a *quality* of an act, but is essentially an act itself; and when habitual in any person, it is the quality or character, not of an *act* but of a moral being. Sin is a bad *act*, and not a bad quality of an act. When regarded as a quality, it is the quality or character of a bad *moral being*. To illustrate this. Who can separate between the *act*, and the *sin* of murder? or who can separate between the act and the sin of theft? Who can separate between the malicious killing of a man, and the sinfulness of the act of a malicious killing of a man? Is not the malicious *act* of killing, the sinfulness itself. Such a Calvinian distinction as the above is not an abstraction, it is an idle, vain conceit, and the thought of it is preposterous. The two things are as inseparable as the twin doctrines of Calvinian Election and Reprobation.

there is no such election, therefore an argument with such a base, is a "baseless fabric."

"We have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." It is argued from this, "every Christian loves the brethren from the moment he becomes a Christian; every Christian, therefore, has passed from death unto life, actually." It is said this cannot be true, "unless every Christian perseveres in holiness unto the end." This, however, is arguing in a circle. Let us analyze it. "Passing from death unto life" is simply a figure to represent conversion; a change from a sinful to a holy state of mind. Death is a figure employed to denote our sinful, unconverted state; life our holy, religious, or gracious state; and the passing from one to the other is the new birth, regeneration or conversion. Now to say that it cannot be true that we have passed from death unto life, unless we persevere unto the end is simply begging the question. We may pass from death unto life—from sin to holiness, and that life or holiness *may* increase, or diminish, and ultimately become extinct. No life is necessarily endless—except the Divine Being's; neither is holiness endless. Besides, where was David and Peter's holiness, when the one lied, and the other murdered? for, the terms only denote states of sin and holiness. Calvinian perseverance cannot be founded on these terms "life" and "everlasting life" by which personal religion is denoted. It must be recollected that both vegetable and animal *life* are liable to destruction at all times; so that if this figure teaches any thing on this point, it teaches the Arminian, rather than the Calvinian view. Calvinists first erroneously fancy life is a thing that never ceases, and next conclude, religion, once begun, never ceases. But of what value is a conclusion built on such a premise? As to the term everlasting;" they mistake the reason why it is applied to religion. Assuming that religion once begun is literally everlasting, they conclude it is applied to religion to denote its nature *in that particular*. But this is only begging the question. Supposing we assume the contrary—that religion is *not* necessarily nor literally everlasting (and this the case of backsliders warrants), may we not discover some

other reason why religion is designated "everlasting life?" Such is the fact with us. It is well known that in the Scriptures the term "everlasting" is often used in a sense not strictly literal. Canaan was given to the Israelites for an everlasting possession, but, do they possess it now? Some hills are called everlasting hills, are they, then, not to be burnt up? All that is meant by the text is that those who believe in Christ, receive that *kind* of life or state of mind which those enjoy who get safely to heaven. The religion of the heart is called "everlasting life," not because it is a thing that necessarily or literally never ceases to be, when once begun, but because it is of the *same nature* with that life or state of mind that exists for ever among the inhabitants of heaven. Passages of this sort do not teach Calvinian Perseverance; they only teach that a heavenly happiness of mind called grace or religion is dependent on faith. They teach nothing of perseverance, neither one side nor the other.

"Shall not come into condemnation," that is so long as they believe. But lose faith, like Peter and David, and see whether there be not condemnation.

"Being confident of this very thing that He that hath begun a good work in you will perform it," &c. Had there been no other Scripture relating to perseverance, the Calvinian notion might have been here inferred; but when the same writer (Paul) tells us there were those Christians who "put away faith and a good conscience and concerning faith made shipwreck;" and when it is well known that he and the other Apostles frequently put the perseverance of Christians in the hypothetical and conditional form of,— "if ye do so and so; it becomes imperative in the critic to understand the text in question as presupposing fidelity on the part of Christians. The passage amounts to no more than an assurance that God would not be wanting to them, so long as they continued the "obedient" characters they now were. A little further on these same persons are exhorted to "*stand fast in the Lord.*" The doctrine of Paul taking him throughout, is evidently, that the continuance of God's performances or work is dependent on the seconding performances of

man. "Bear much fruit, so shall ye be my disciples. "*Continue* in my love." "If ye *keep* my commandments, ye shall *abide*," &c. "Every branch IN ME that beareth not fruit, He taketh away—and they are burned." Such is Christ's teaching; and his servant Paul's cannot be antagonistic. The *conditions* of perseverance, though not expressed in the text in question, *must* be understood. All fair criticism demands this.

"Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." "Every Christian has come to Christ," (says the Calvinist) "should he then be rejected afterwards, he would be as really cast out as if rejected at first, and the promise would not be performed." Coming unto Christ, is just another phrase for, believing in Him. This text simply means that Christ will accept of all who believe in Him. But this makes nothing against the doctrine—"If he draw back my soul shall have no pleasure in him." "If thou forsake Him He will cast thee off for ever." "Because of unbelief they were broken off." *Continue* in his goodness, otherwise thou shalt be cut off." "For the wickedness of their doings, I will drive them out of my house, I will love them no more." There is a *going from* as well as a *coming to* Christ then, and of course it receives a contrary treatment.

"He that believeth shall be saved." Christians have believed, therefore they shall be saved, is the next argument. But this is *jumping* to a conclusion, not walking to it. Intermediate steps are wanting, such as are implied in—"No man having set his hand to the plough and looking back is fit for the kingdom." "No man is crowned except he strive lawfully." "He that endures to the end," &c. "Remember Lot's wife."

"My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish," &c. Sheep is a figure used to denote docility and tractableness. Shepherd or pastor, a figure for teacher or instructor. Such, eminently, was Christ, the great teacher. Never man spake like Him. He said I am the good shepherd. Who, then, are His sheep? He answers himself. Speaking to the prejudiced, stubborn, unbelieving Jews, who came about

Him, while "He walked in the temple in Solomon's porch, He said "I told you and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep *hear* my voice," &c. There can be no mistake here; Christ's sheep are simply His disciples or obedient believers. To these, then, Christ gives eternal life—the life of heaven in the soul now, and "if they continue in the faith rooted, and be not moved away from the gospel, the life of heaven in the other world; and no Arminian doubts it. "And they shall never perish, &c. We firmly believe it. God be thanked, our reward is sure, if we do but make our own election sure!

"Whom He did predestinate," &c. Wesley well remarks—"Better say this passage has no meaning, as say that it means, God is a cruel, capricious tyrant." Sending as Burns has it, with his usual strong sense—

"Ane to heaven and ten to hell
A' for Thy glory,
And no for any guid or ill
They 've done afore Thee."

We take Paul to mean in this text, that Christians—that is God's elect, or those who love God—become such, according to a previous Divine plan; a plan which we have before described. This plan is to send the Gospel to men to call them. Those who *obey* the call, are justified; and those who through faith continue grounded and settled, look not back, hold the beginning of their confidence stedfast to the end, become at length sanctified and glorified. All of this plan was foreknown and foredetermined.

Calvinists tell us "conditional promises" (such as just repeated) can never affect or make void those absolute ones which promise absolutely eternal life to every Christian" (!) Were ever such impiety and folly uttered? Here rather than yield their pet notion, they degrade the Scriptures as being like themselves, self-contradictory and double-tongued. Now, as conditional promises cannot imply absoluteness—for the thing is a contradiction—would it not be more honourable to Scripture to

suppose, that, in those promises where conditions are not expressed, they are nevertheless to be understood? Absolute expressions may sometimes imply conditions, but conditional promises can never imply absoluteness. Honour and justice to the Scriptures require that one of these sorts of promises must yield to the other, and common sense requires that the absolute must be modified by the conditional; for, the conditional—in the nature of the thing—cannot be modified by the absolute. We appeal to all enlightened persons as to the justice and propriety of these criticisms. It is said “such conditional promises do not intend to distinguish between Christians who do, and those who do not persevere.” We answer, if they do not mean this, they can mean nothing, for, it is the only and natural and proper use of such promises to make such distinction. It is further said, that we might as well argue from such texts as—“If we do not repent we shall perish;” “If we do not believe, we shall be damned;” “If we do not love Christ we shall be anathema;” that a discrimination was intended between penitent Christians and believing ones, &c., &c. This is outrageously illogical. All that can fairly be argued from these texts is that each and all the conditions specified are required in a Christian; and that each and all are a matter of choice—matters to be chosen or refused. The thing taught in such texts is not a distinction between penitent Christians and believing ones, &c., but a distinction between penitent persons, and *impenitent* ones—between believing persons, and *unbelieving* persons, &c.; and by parity of reasoning, the conditional texts in question teach, that perseverance is requisite, and that it is also a matter of choice. The thing taught is, demonstratively, a distinction between persevering Christians, and non-persevering Christian persons.

After telling us there is no incongruity between the absolute and conditional, Calvinists next fairly abandon their doctrine of perseverance, by telling us it is owing to persons *believing they are conditional*, that they are led to persevere! Their words are—“Although all Christians actually persevere; yet it is not improbable that without the aid of those conditional promises,

multitudes might have fallen away!" Bright logic this! First, Christians *absolutely cannot* fall away; secondly, if they did not believe the contrary, they might fall away! This is a rich specimen of DWIGHT'S Calvinism. It is by just such logic simple people are bamboozled into its acceptance. "It is, and it is not," would form a fine motto for Calvinism, for such is the warp and the woof of the system. Roughly it has been summed up thus—

" You can, and you can't,
 You shall, and you shan't,
 You will, and you won't,
 You will be d——d if you don't."

DWIGHT tells us "Christians have *no other* satisfactory knowledge of their Christianity, except their *continuance in obedience.*" Here is another crinum, for we are at other times told that it is "sweet" and "comfortable" to know that having once become a Christian, we are sure to be found one at last, although present experience and practice be rather against us—say cursing and swearing like Peter; or, adultery and murder like David. What right in honesty, consistency, and reason has a Calvinist to say—"Christians have *no other* satisfactory knowledge of their personal Christianity except their present perseverance, when they also have this? Are they not taught to regard their *once having* religion as an infallible ground of certainty that electing love, and heaven are theirs? What knowledge can be more "satisfactory" to those who are *now* acting either saint or sinner; a washed and at present a clean sow; or a once-washed, but now-returned-to-the-mire-sow? Here we are reminded of a piece of empty wit uttered by Mr. SPURGEON. In his sermon on "Vessels of Mercy," he says (speaking of backsliders) "The dog has returned to his vomit, because he *was* a dog; and the sow that was washed hath returned to her wallowing in the mire, because she *was* a sow." His object is to insinuate that parties who backslide and apostatize were *never* converted. But his wit is pointless for such a purpose, for, the dog that had returned to its vomit, *had* vomited; that is, the parties thus

figuratively spoken of *had* become Christians—were converted. Again, the sow that had returned to its wallowing *had* been washed; that is, the parties thus figuratively denoted, *had* become Christians—real Christians. The latter phrase is actually applied, in the Scriptures, to real Christians. Speaking to the Corinthian Christians, Paul says, ye are WASHED. A plainer instance of wresting Scripture we never witnessed than this of SPURGEON'S. The vomiting and the washing are used most plainly to denote the conversion of the parties to whom the Apostle Peter applies them; and the "turning to the vomit," &c., just as plainly denote their loss of religion. The reader should refer to the whole passage, 2nd Peter, ii., 20-22. The Apostle did not think (if Mr. S. does) that a metamorphosis of the animals would have represented conversion better. Let no one think of mending Revelation to fit his creed. The Apostle, no doubt, knew what he was about.

Mr. WESLEY wisely remarks, "our comfort ought not to rest on either opinion (of perseverance) but on *present* knowledge of Christ, on present fellowship with the Father — on our *now* feeling the love of God—our present testimony of a good conscience. No comfort should be short of this:—'I am crucified to the world, and the world unto me.'" Mr. S., in one of his sermons, expresses himself as at a loss to know where Arminians get *their* comfort from, and thinks he should go "distracted" if he were an Arminian—a plain proof he knows little about them. We are quite sure we have all the *real* ground of comfort that he himself has: as for the imaginary—absolute Election and Perseverance—he is welcome to them. We are comforted with the Scripture doctrine that we need never be without "grace to help in time of need." We are comforted in knowing, "God is faithful," and will never forsake those who put their trust in him. This is all the ground of comfort the case requires, Calvinists themselves (often) being witnesses. Dr. PAYNE says—"Our doctrine, correctly explained, is not adapted to comfort those *who are not actually persevering*. In the case supposed (of a person) not *now* persevering, it is sheer and naked presumption to draw consolation from the doctrine of persever-

ance," &c. Here the Calvinian comforts are thrown to the winds, and the Arminian ones only retained! In reality, then, Mr. S., are we not on a par? COLES' direction to his reader is in harmony with PAYNE—You that having made diligent search, do find in yourselves those marks of God's elect (Christian characteristics) sit down and take the comfort of it." On the matter of comfort, this is precisely the gospel according to Arminians!

Dr. PAYNE, in seeking to refute the argument of the Arminian drawn from conditional promises, admonitions, and warnings, says:—"God keeps men (persevering) by the influence of motives" (like these). We answer, if so, then, Calvinists cannot "keep" their system, for if perseverance be conditional, then, it cannot be absolute. If God "keeps" his people in this way of motive, then he does not keep them a contrary way. Let not Calvinists seek to abide by *both* sides of a contradiction. Let them remember its not wise to contend for the truth of *both* sides of a contradiction.

There is a passage brought forward by all Calvinists to excuse their inconsistency in holden both sides of a contradiction, which we must notice. They don't see they dishonour both themselves and the Scriptures in bringing it forward for such a purpose. But their creed must be maintained at all cost. It is that relating to Paul's shipwreck. Paul, however, was not inconsistent in this case; it is only the Calvinist who so misrepresents him. DWIGHT says "the angel of the Lord assured Paul that not one of his companions in the ship should perish. Yet Paul afterwards declared to the Centurion, and to the soldiers, that "except the seamen abode in the ship they could not be saved." Ergo, *both* absolute and conditional perseverance! How perverse, to think both sides of a contradiction are proved here! Is it not more rational to suppose that the Apostle, at first, did not utter *all* that he had got from the angel—not then being necessary? And is it not quite natural, that, when the occasion for it came—the seamen purposing to leave the ship—that then he would tell the remainder? How could the Apostle add the remainder, unless he had got *it* also from the

angel? Put the two things, then, which he got from the angel, together, and what is the result? Why, a conditional assurance, viz., *not a soul on board shall perish, if the seamen stick to the ship.* This was the decree in its entirety; and it will be observed, instead of its belonging to *both* sides of a contradiction, as the Calvinists absurdly imagine, it belongs only to one, and that is the conditional.

“For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come. If they shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame. For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God; but that which beareth thorns and briars is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.”

It is rather instructive to witness the shifts Calvinistic commentators are put to with this text. DODDRIDGE allows the persons spoken of “seemed” to have had “something” of “Christianity” (personal religion). This word “seeming,” is a convenient cant-term of the Calvinists. Is not the following from COLES amusingly silly?—“*Seeming* faith may *really* be lost.” “*Real* faith may *seemingly* be lost.” “*Seeming* faith is lost *really* because it was but *seeming*.” (!) *Real* faith cannot be lost because it is *real*.” (!) What an important argument a *petitio principii* is in Calvinism! Was ever such a bundle of nonsense committed to paper? But to our text. DWIGHT’s first shift (if we are to be guided by the edition of him before us—a large octavo, by Blackie & Son, Glasgow, 1837) is, to omit, in his quotation of the passage, the important word “again.” “To renew them to repentance” is the form he gives: while the text is, “renew them *again*,” &c. But though the omission is suspicious, we will charitably hope it is only a printer’s error. The argument from this omitted word is so obvious we scarcely need state it. It would be palpably improper to speak of any one being *renewed again* to repentance,

unless he had once been renewed, and had once repented; but the persons in the text are so spoken of; they had therefore once before been renewed, and had repented.

But, allowing the parties referred to in the text were Christians, DWIGHT contends, the text still does not state that they *actually* ever fell away, because "the case is stated only in the form of a supposition." To this we reply; it were a senseless thing in the writer to suppose an evil, and warn his readers against it so solemnly, if the thing were not possible, but only imaginary. Besides, the Dr. must have known quite well that the "if" is not in the original. A conscientious Calvinist—Dr. MACKNIGHT—owns the text ought to have had no "if" in our version; but should have been, "AND HAVE FALLEN AWAY." It would have then corresponded with the tense of the other participles standing in the same sentence, which are all in the *past*; as "once enlightened," "have tasted," "were made partakers," &c., and "*have fallen away.*"

But DWIGHT thinks the Apostle himself decides they were not Christians whom he spoke of as falling away and crucifying the Son of God afresh, &c. He fancies the Apostle to be describing them "in the 8th verse, under the image of the 'earth which beareth thorns and briers.'" They were persons, he thinks, "who still continuing to be sinners, have enjoyed peculiar Christian advantages." (!) He fancies the Apostle is employed, in the passage, "studiously contrasting" these parties with Christians, who are described "in the 7th verse, under the image of the earth, 'which bringeth forth herbs, meet for them by whom it is dressed.'" Is not this interpretation, dear reader, a *studious contrast*, with the obvious design and meaning of the Apostle? Can a Calvinist really persuade himself the object of the passage is only to show us the difference between sinners, and saints, or non-elect, and elect? How great the sin of men who so "studiously" wrest the Scriptures? Is not the palpable object of the passage, as well as the whole epistle, to warn readers from imitating the example of those whose character, like the character of those to whom he was now writing (Hebrew *Christians*) was once the antitype of the "earth that

bringeth forth herbs meet," &c. ; but who *now* from "sinning wilfully *after they had once* received the knowledge of the truth"—chap. x., 26—had become the antitype of the "earth which beareth thorns and briers." ? If men's character *could not* change for the worse this way, and if men could not, consequently, be in danger, of what use is either the passage, or the Epistle ? or, what sense can there be in either ? These wresters of the Scriptures must, we think, know that the Apostle in this passage is speaking not of two distinct batches of men, but of *one* batch, who exhibit, at different times, two distinct pieces of conduct ; and that the figures are employed to dissuade from one, and to persuade to the other piece.

We deem it almost too bad to have to prove that the phrases employed in the passage are such as are only proper to describe those who were once Christians—the thing is so obvious. The first is,—“once enlightened.” This is neither “indefinite” nor “ambiguous,” as the Dr. states. To be “enlightened,” throughout the Scriptures, is represented as a characteristic of the Christian. Says Christ,—“Let your light shine.” Christ is a light to “lighten the Gentiles.” Christians are “the children of light.” Have “passed from darkness to light.” “The eyes of their understanding being enlightened.” Second—“Tasted the heavenly gift.” This is affirmed of Christians ;—“Much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness.” Rom. v. 17. The import is the same as, “tasting of Christ ;” for this gift, in the passage, is distinguished from the “Holy Ghost,” and the “good Word ;” and must therefore be interpreted of Christ. “If so be ye have tasted the Lord is gracious.” This tasting of the Lord is expressive of experiencing His mercy. In Rom. v. ; the “gift,” “the free gift,” and “the gift by grace” are used both for the *means* of justification, and for justification itself. Third—“Partakers of the Holy Ghost.” Christians are “partakers of the Divine nature,” and “temples of the Holy Ghost :—“If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his.” Fourth—“Tasted the good word of God.” Godly, Christian persons, regard the Word as “sweet to their taste, yea, sweeter

than honey, or the honeycomb." Fifth—"Tasted—the powers of the world to come." This may refer to the "power" of the Gospel, as, in Jewish phraseology, "the world to come," meant the Gospel dispensation. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation in all Christians. In primitive Christians it would include miraculous powers. "Since, then, the Apostle expresses the prior experience of these apostates, by the same terms and phrases as those by which he designates the work of God in the hearts of those whose Christianity is, by all, acknowledged to be genuine, where is the authority on which these commentators make him describe, not a saving work in the hearts of these apostates, during the time they held fast their profession, but a simulated one? They have clearly no authority for this at all; and their comments arise, not out of the argument of St. Paul, nor out of his terms or phrases, nor from the connexion of these passages with the rest of the discourse; but out of their own theological system alone; in other words, out of a mere human opinion which supplies a meaning to the Apostle of which he gives not the most distant intimation." Calvinists ought seriously to be afraid of certain threatened plagues, seeing they so plainly "add to the words of the prophecy of this book." It is out of the power of words to affirm a *real* Christian work on the mind more plainly than the phrases of the text do. There is no "seem to have tasted," "partaken," &c.; but, "*were* enlightened," and "*have* tasted," &c.

"Holding faith and a good conscience; which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck."

Calvinists are all *shy* of this text. DWIGHT gives us less than half-a-dozen lines upon it. COLES, less than this. Their "wresting" of it, to us, looks very wicked. DODDRIDGE thinks the "faith" mentioned, only means, "assent to the truth of Christianity;" and leaves us to understand it was only "*assent* to the truth" that was "shipwrecked." Of course his notion that their "assent to truth" did not affect their hearts is purely *imaginary*; but this passes for logic with those of Geneva. Besides, it is to be observed, that "assent to truth" is a quality, or characteristic of all *true* Christians. It is one of the

genuine things that hypocrites only *pretend* to or profess. But we suspect DODDRIDGE *wished* to say—but did not—“pretended” or “seeming” assent. As long as it was not, therefore “seeming,” we must regard it still as a *genuine* article that was “shipwrecked.” COLES only gives us a *single line* on this text. He informs us—for we did not know—that they were persons “of glorious outsides” who made shipwreck of faith. So, faith is an outside matter! Putting DODDRIDGE and him together, “assent to truth” lies gloriously on the outside! We always, in our simplicity, understood faith and assent to be *inside* things;—it won’t do, gentlemen. The whole that DWIGHT gives us is:—“The meaning of this passage may be easily learned from a correct translation:—‘Holding fast faith’ (faithfulness or fidelity) ‘and a good conscience; which some’ (that is, some teachers) having cast away, concerning the faith (την πιστιν that is, the doctrine of the Gospel), have made shipwreck.” It still won’t do. It is still a *genuine* Christian article that is “shipwrecked,” and not a counterfeited, pretended, or “seeming” one. Indeed, the alteration of the common version, which the Dr. thinks a “more correct translation,” only strengthens the view of his opponents: for *general* “fidelity” of character, including this *particular* fidelity in the holding fast of Christian doctrine, is a *true* characteristic of the Christian, whether *public* teacher or not. “The fruit of the Spirit”—“is faith,” that is, (πιστις) fidelity. But the Dr.’s peculiar correction of the common translation is anything but an improvement of the sense of the passage. The Dr. completely spoils it, by turning it into a piece of tautology. “Holding fast,” *is* fidelity or faithfulness. Therefore it is equal to saying,—holding fast holdingfastness! The Apostle, it is evident to a child, does not mean that. He evidently means, what most all commentators but the Dr. believe he means,—“HOLDING FAST THE DOCTRINES of the Christian faith or persuasion. This is good sense, but *his* version amounts to nonsense. To *hold* the “faith,” that is, the doctrines of the Christian system, is what all *true* Christians do; and neither Pastor nor People could, with any propriety of speech be exhorted to “*hold*” them, or to hold them

“fast,” if there were no danger of letting them slip, or making “shipwreck” of the persuasion or belief of them.* Many Calvinistic commentators tug hard to make it out that the “faith” in the text was only *mere* assent, or notional, or *pretended* faith; but this is all imaginary, there is nothing of the kind said in the text. It is plain that whatever it was, it was what Timothy *had*; and what is more; it was what he *might* make shipwreck of, hence the exhortation and warning which the text contains. But supposing nothing conclusive could be argued from the term “faith” against the Calvinian view, yet there is the phrase “good conscience” coupled with it, which is as conclusive as can be against it. This is decidedly expressive of a Christian characteristic, nay indeed, of the whole Christian character; for the Christian is one who in *all things* endeavours to keep “a conscience void of offence towards God and man.” No words could affirm more plainly, therefore, than this text, the possibility of casting away, beyond recovery, the whole Christian belief and character. How wicked, then, and how wonderful it is that the Dr. should, in the face of this plain text, and in the face of that other plain one concerning the dog and his vomit, &c., declare, “that the doctrine against which I contend” (contend, truly) “is not supported in a single unequivocal declaration of the Scriptures.” (!)

The last text handled by the Dr. is one quite hackneyed by the Calvinists:—“They went out from us, but they were not of us: for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us.” No one, however, but a Calvinist would take John’s explanation to be Calvinian. The Calvinist fancies John says, “they were NEVER of us;” but, he does not say that; therefore, how is it “decisively explained” in favour of the Calvinist? All he states is, that the Antichrists to whom he refers were not “of them,” *at the time* they went out from them; and John regarded their going out from them as a proof they were *then* not of them. This passage, so impertinent, and so irrelevant to their object, is quoted by them with a ridiculous

* Mr. Wesley well remarks:—“Indeed none can make shipwreck of faith who never had it.”

frequency. Quite *ad nauseam*. We cannot persuade ourselves that one of them ever took time to look leisurely at it, for it is so pointless for their object. It contains not a word to the effect that those Antichrists had *never* been "of them." It only exists in the imagination of the Calvinist, and is a piece of his common habit of assuming. The Apostle is only describing a very natural piece of business, similar to what is practised every day; that is, men leaving communities as soon as they find their sentiments and feelings change respecting those with whom they have been accustomed to associate. It is a downright mistake in Calvinists to fancy that men cannot really change their feelings and sentiments, and to regard backsliding and apostacy as proof of previous dissembling. Every man's experience belies their notion. All men feel they can be "of" a company, most sincerely, for a time, and afterwards most decidedly change their mind, and leave that company. We have often been amused at the simplicity of men in so frequently quoting this text, for such a purpose as that of the Calvinists.

The Dr. might have noticed—but he has not—Ezek. xviii. 24; and xxxiii. 18.—"When a righteous man turneth from his righteousness," &c. It would have been instructive too had he noticed Rom. xi. 17-22.—"And if some of the branches be broken off," &c.

MAN'S MORAL FREEDOM.

"But among the beings to be produced," (at the creation) "were not only beings bound by their instincts, and by circumstances which they could not control, to act in some given manner; but also beings endowed with such freedom that they might act in different and opposite ways, as their own will might determine."—REV. RICHARD WATSON.

"Ubi voluntas, ibi libertas."

Where there is a will, there is liberty.

THE following dialogue between the Rev. Dr. T. CHALMERS, and the Rev. Mr. GEMMEL of Fairlie, shows the position of the Calvinists with reference to the doctrine of "necessity;" they all affect to believe it, but as quickly as possible shelve or ignore it.

Mr. GEMMEL.—"But, said I, a common objection of the sinner, when awakened to a sense of his state, is, 'Perhaps I am not elected; and therefore I need not try.'"

Dr. CHALMERS.—"That is cutting before the point. I am a predestinarian: my theology is that of JONATHAN EDWARDS."

"Mr. G.—"You are a Necessitarian."

Dr. C.—"Yes, a Necessitarian; *but* I would always wish to be borne in mind a saying of Bishop BUTLER—viz., 'That we have not so much to inquire what God does, or should do to us, as what are the duties we owe to Him.'" That is, dear reader, necessity is a doctrine without "uses," as the old divines have it. It is as much as to say,—I believe in necessity; at the same time, it is my duty and interest to forget it! This, to us, makes the doctrine more than suspicious.

It must we think, be evident to all candid persons, that, the necessitarian doctrines of Calvinian Sovereignty, Election, and Perseverance, and man's moral liberty, "do not sort together."

Some Calvinists, a little wiser than the rest, have despaired of ever reconciling them; giving up the attempt as "vain and presumptuous," although, piously, as they fancy, gulping *both* as truths, in the mistaken belief that both are taught by Divine authority. Others, however, make desperate attempts at reconciliation. Among these stands pre-eminent, President JONATHAN EDWARDS, whom CHALMERS mentions. His work on the "Will," from title-page to appendix, inclusive, is as clever a piece of sophistication or "vain deceit," as can be well imagined.

Dr. HALLEY, an Independent Minister, a few years ago, referring to the doctrine of causation and necessity in relation to the will, as held by EDWARDS, said,—“I know not that he has ever been refuted.” *We*, however, know that he was refuted—if we may use a paradox—long before he wrote, by no less a person than the immortal LOCKE. Any one else may, likewise, “know” this by carefully perusing, and weighing well what he has written in the 21st chap., vol. 1, of his great work “Concerning Human Understanding.” *We* know also, that, soon after the President wrote, he was well refuted, in as many lines as his work contains pages, by those pious and learned divines,—WESLEY and FLETCHER; and some of their worthy coadjutors.

Both philosophers, and divines, have greatly confused and perplexed the subject of man's moral freedom, by the use of *improper phraseology*. EDWARDS' title-page is an exemplification of this. There, we read:—“A careful and strict enquiry into the modern prevailing notions of that *freedom of will*,” &c. Arminians have given their opponents an undue advantage, by chiming in with this phraseology. It would have stopped EDWARDS a few hundred pages short in his “Enquiry” had he acted on the philosophy of LOCKE, where he says,—“If any should ask” (‘enquire’) “whether freedom were free, he would be suspected not to understand well what he said; and he would be thought to deserve Midas's ears, who knowing that rich was a denomination from the possession of riches, should demand whether riches themselves were rich.” Again,—“I think the question is *not proper*, whether the will be free, but whether a *man be free*.”

The error of the President's title-page vitiates his whole performance; for, the chimera, and solecism of "free-will," or "freedom of the will," is the subject of the whole book. Had he set himself to "enquire into that freedom of *Man*" that all men are conscious of, something satisfactory might have been accomplished; but as it is, we have nothing but an increased perplexity of the subject—a great desideratum with persons who are half-conscious of being on the wrong side, and reluctant to be caught and impaled; forcibly reminding one of the manœuvres of the person, who, being threatened with the horns of some animal, throws to it his garments to divert its attention, and thus avoids an unwelcome thrust. But we are not to be deceived in this way. Our antagonist will not thus get off. We shall distinguish a man from his coat. We shall not spend our force upon that which is not the question.

Not only is the President at fault in his title-page, but also in his definition of his chief and fundamental term, the "Will." His definition of this term is remarkably defective; and, considering how suited the defect is to his sophistical purpose, one can hardly avoid the conclusion that it has been studiously so designed. He says,—“The Will is that by which the mind chooses anything.” Again,—“The faculty of the Will, is that power or principle of mind, by which it is capable of choosing: an act of the Will is the same as an act of choosing or choice.” To us, he appears to betray a consciousness that he was not doing full justice to his subject; for, he immediately remarks,—“If any think it is a *more perfect* definition of the Will, to say, that it is that by which the soul *either* chooses or refuses; I am content with it: though I think it *enough* to say, it is that by which the soul chooses.” Now, *we* think, it must, in the opinion of all candid minds, be anything but “enough,” thus to define the Will. To define the Will fully, it must be done as LOCKE does it. Says he,—“We find in ourselves a power to begin *or forbear*, continue *or end* several actions of our minds and motions of our bodies, barely by a thought or preference of the mind ordering, or, as it were, commanding the doing *or not doing* such or such particular

action. This power which the *mind* has, thus to order the consideration of any idea, or *the forbearing* to consider it; or to prefer the motion of any part of the body to its rest, and *vice versa*, in any particular instance is that which we call the Will. The actual exercise of that power, by directing any particular action, or its *forbearance*, is that which we call volition or willing." Again,—

"Volition, 'tis plain, is an act of the mind, knowingly exerting that dominion which it takes itself to have over *any part* of the man, by employing it in, or *withholding it from* any particular action. And what is the Will, but the faculty to do this? And is that faculty anything more in effect than a power, the power of the *mind* to determine its thought, to the producing, continuing, or *stopping* any action as far as it depends on us. For can it be denied, that whatever agent has a power to think on its own actions, and to prefer their doing, or *omission* either to other, has that faculty called Will? Will then is nothing but such a power: and when the Will, under the name of a faculty, is considered, as it is, *barely an ability* to do something, the absurdity, in saying it is free or not free, will easily discover itself. And so far as any one can, by preferring any action, to its not being; or rest, to any action, produce the action or rest; so far can he do what he will. The Will is nothing but a power *in the mind* to direct the operative faculties of a man to motion or rest."

In these several definitions of the Will by LOCKE, it will be perceived, we have always the *negative*, as well as the *positive* aspect of that power held up to view. In EDWARDS, we have *only the positive*. To note the difference, is highly important to the cause of truth, as we shall make evident. So far, then, a definition of the Will. What, next, of liberty or freedom?—What is moral liberty or freedom? We answer, it is nothing less nor more, than, to have Will,—to possess Will. In other words, it is the mental *exercise* of choice in any matter. The plain fact of the matter is, Will, and moral freedom, are identical. The want of observing this, has been the fruitful source of cavil and confusion. Here, phraseology is all-important. We have seen no writer sufficiently careful in this. Even LOCKE, excellent as he generally is in this particular, frequently causes confusion by inexactness of expression. LOCKE, however, says much, clearly enough, confirmatory of the doctrine we have just announced, viz., that Will and moral liberty are identical. Says he,—“All the actions, that we have any idea of, reducing them,

selves, as has been said to these two, viz., Thinking and Motion, so far as a man has power to think, or *not to think*; to move or *not to move*, according to the preference or direction of his own mind, so far is a man free. Wherever any performance, or forbearance, are not equally in a man's power; wherever doing, or *not doing*, will not equally follow upon the preference of his mind directing it, *there he is not free.*" "The idea" (he remarks again) "of liberty, is the idea of a power in any agent to do, or *forbear* any particular action, according to the determination or thought of the mind, whereby *either* of them is preferred to the other; where *either* of them is not in the power of the *agent* to be produced by him according to his volition, there he is not at *liberty*, that agent is under *necessity.*" It will be here perceived that LOCKE defines Liberty precisely as he defines Will. This is of high importance to observe. Again, this truly great man remarks,—“If freedom can with any propriety of speech be applied to power, it may be attributed to the power that is in a man to produce, or *forbear* producing motion in parts of his body by choice or preference; which is that which denominates him free, AND IS FREEDOM ITSELF.” Here the great philosopher plainly identifies Will, and Liberty or Freedom. It is the having a Will, then, that makes a man free; and not the having a Will that makes the Will free, as the false and stupid philosophy adopted by EDWARDS, teaches. It will occasion us much labour to disentangle the subject, which EDWARDS has so consummately perplexed with so fundamental an error; but we do not despair.

We produce yet another quotation from LOCKE, in which he shows the absurdity of the phraseology we deprecate. “If this be so (as I imagine it is) I leave it to be considered, whether it may not help to put an end to that long agitated, and, I think, unreasonable, because unintelligible question, viz., *Whether Man's Will* be free or no? For if I mistake not it follows from what I have said, that the question itself is altogether improper; and it is as insignificant to ask whether man's Will be free, as to ask, whether his sleep be swift, or his virtue square: *Liberty* being as little applicable to the *Will*, as swiftness of

motion is to sleep, or squareness to virtue: and when any one well considers it, I think he will as plainly perceive, that *Liberty*, which is but a power, belongs only to agents, and cannot be an attribute or modification of the Will." Is it not strange, that, with this philosophy of LOCKE before him, EDWARDS should have persisted in an "Enquiry into that freedom of Will," &c. Is not such conduct more the work of a partisan theologian, than the lover of truth?

In one place, through a carelessness or inadvertence of phraseology, LOCKE is confused and self-inconsistent on the point before us. The words to which we refer are:—"Whatever agent has a power to think on its own actions, and to prefer their doing, or omission either to other, *has that faculty called Will.*" Will then is nothing but such a power. Liberty, on the other side, is the power a man has to do or forbear doing any particular action, according as its doing, or forbearance has the actual preference in the mind, which is the same thing as to say, according as *he himself wills it.* 'Tis plain, then, that the Will is nothing but *one* power or ability, and freedom *another* power or ability: so that to ask whether the Will has freedom, is to ask whether one power has another power, one ability another ability," &c. Here LOCKE speaks of Will and Liberty as *two* powers, while in the act of showing they are identic in nature. It is therefore a distinction without a difference; and, therefore, a mistake in logic and philosophy. After telling us the power of willing is "freedom itself," it is inconsistent to speak of the Will as one power, and freedom *another*. The fact is, Will, and Liberty or freedom, are but *one* power, a power in the agent—Man; and as LOCKE himself teaches, freedom is not an attribute of another attribute, but an attribute of an agent or substance, and that is Man. Man has, in general, a Will in matters which come before him, *therefore a man is free.* A free agent is an agent who exercises Will or choice. EDWARDS himself, in one place, subscribes to this view. Says he,—“That power and opportunity for one to do and conduct as he will, or according to his choice, is all that is meant by liberty.”

Our doctrine then is,—*There is no difference between moral*

Liberty, and the exercise of the Will. In whatever the Will is exercised, in that, man is at liberty. As to what is called the "faculty" of the Will, it is nothing distinct from the *exercise* of will or choice. The "faculty" of Will, or the "power" of Will, signifies no more than the mental *exercise* of choice. LOCKE'S remarks on this way of speaking of the actions of the mind, may here be profitably repeated:—

"Yet I suspect, that this way of speaking of *faculties*, has misled many into a confused notion of so many distinct agents in us, which had their several provinces and authorities, and did command, obey, and perform several actions, as so many distinct beings; which has been no small occasion of wrangling, obscurity, and uncertainty in questions relating to them. For if it be reasonable to suppose and talk of *faculties*, as distinct beings, that can act (as we do when we say the Will orders, and the Will is free) 'tis fit that we should make a speaking *faculty*, and a walking *faculty*, and a dancing *faculty*, by which those actions are produced, which are but several modes of motion, as well as we make the Will and Understanding to be *Faculties*, by which the actions of choosing and perceiving are produced, which are but several modes of Thinking: and we may as properly say, that 'tis the singing *faculty* sings, and the dancing *faculty* dances; as that the Will chooses, or that the Understanding conceives: or, as is usual, that the Will directs the Understanding, or the Understanding obeys or obeys not the Will: it being altogether as proper and intelligible to say, that the power of speaking directs the power of singing, or the power of singing obeys or disobeys the power of speaking. This way of talking, nevertheless, has prevailed, and as I guess, produced great confusion. For these being all different powers in the mind, or in the man, to do several actions, he exerts them as he thinks fit: but the power to do one action is not operated on by the power of doing another action. For the power of thinking operates not on the power of choosing, nor the power of choosing on the power of thinking; no more than the power of dancing operates on the power of singing, or the power of singing on the power of dancing, as any one, who reflects upon it, will easily perceive: And yet this is it, which we say, when we thus speak, that the Will operates on the Understanding, or the Understanding on the Will."

Is it not wonderful, with this philosophy before him, that EDWARDS should fill his book with "this way of talking?" Throughout his book, he most perversely speaks of the exercise of Will, as though it were the agent,—Man. Hence the whole book is a Babel of confusion. By the paragraph just quoted from LOCKE, EDWARDS' whole performance is refuted.

It is observable that will or choice is in constant exercise by the mind, with reference to something or other; yet it is not

every thing that becomes an object of Will. Some are only the objects of *desire*—a word often used synonymously with Will, and thereby occasioning much perplexity. Others are objects of neither Will nor desire; others, again, are objects of both. If a bridge break with us while we are crossing water, it is not an object of our *Will* whether we fall into the water, though it is an object of *desire*,—for we *desire* not to fall into the water. LOCKE, giving a case of this sort, through inadvertence, calls this man's *desire, volition*; although, at the same time, he tells us such a man “is not free, but under necessity!” If so, then, it certainly is not volition, but *desire* that is exercised in reference to falling into the water. It is strange that so great and acute a mind could be so inadvertent as not to perceive the self-inconsistence above referred to; for, it is quite a misnomer to call desire, *volition*, and greatly confounds the subject. It is, however, a common impropriety, to carelessly use the term *will*, when *desire* only is meant. It is strange, however, that LOCKE should have been so careless, while almost at the same moment cautioning his readers as follows:

“Though I have endeavoured to express the act of *volition*, by *choosing, preferring*, and the like terms, that *signify desire* as well as volition, for want of other words to mark that act of the mind, whose *proper* name is *willing* or *volition*; yet it being a very simple act, whosoever desires to understand what it is, will better find it, by reflecting on his own mind, and observing what it does when it *wills*, than by any variety of articulate sounds whatsoever. This caution of not being misled by expressions, that do not enough keep up the difference between the *will*, and several acts of the mind, that are quite distinct from it, I think the more necessary; because I find the will often confounded with *several of the affections*, especially *DESIRE*; and one put for the other, and that by men, who would not willingly be thought not to have had very distinct notions of things, and not to have writ very clearly about them. This, I imagine, has been no small occasion of obscurity and mistake in this matter; and therefore is, as much as may be, to be avoided.” Notwithstanding this excellent counsel, the great man himself confounds will, and desire, most confoundedly, in another of his illustrations. Says he,—“Though a man would *prefer* flying to walking, yet who can say he ever *wills* it?”

His object was to show there was *some* difference between *preferring* and *willing*; but we agree here with EDWARDS in thinking there is *none*, but that the words are quite synonymous.

"Flying" cannot be an object of man's will or preference, but it may of *desire*. This truly great and candid man, LOCKE, while teaching us the important truth that Will and desire are perfectly distinct, uses another infelicitous illustration. Says he,—“A man whom I cannot deny may oblige me to use persuasions to another, which at the same time I am speaking I may wish may not prevail on him. In this case 'tis plain the *will* and *desire* run counter. I will the action that tends one way, whilst my desire tends another, and that the direct contrary.” We agree with EDWARDS here, that this instance does not prove that will and desire run *counter*, or are contrary; although they are, certainly, *distinct*. There is a confounding of the *objects* of the two. The object of the man's will, in the instance above, is, the *speaking* to the “other” man; that is one thing. The man both desired and willed the speaking to the other. The object of *another desire*, though not of *will*, was, that his words might not have their effect; that is another thing. The *effect* of his words, though properly an object of *desire*, *could not*, in the nature of things, be an object of will. Perhaps a still truer philosophy of the case would be to consider the man had little will, strictly speaking, in the matter. It will be observed, he is made to say,—“whom I *cannot* deny.” He was under what is called a “*moral* necessity;” which means a great amount of moral constraint, or force. Just as the man on the breaking bridge was under a *physical* necessity. He was, in truth and fact, morally constrained or necessitated, by, or through, friendship, to speak to the man, but *desired* his speaking might not prevail; like as the man at the bridge was physically necessitated or constrained to fall into the water, though he *desired* he might not. This distinction between will and desire is very important to the cause of truth, and the reader is requested to remember it.

The question, then, between the Calvinist, and the Arminian, with reference to the Will, is not “the irrational and unintelligible” one—is man's will free? but, has *man*, *really*, an option or will in the matters of a holy, and, a wicked conduct? Or, is man's character *his own* making; or is it *made for him* by

the Divine Being? Is it true, *on the Calvinian scheme of doctrine*, that man *really* does as *he* pleases or wills? This is not asking the absurd question, is the will free? but, is a *man* free? and, still plainer and fuller, it is asking, is man free in the matter of religion, and irreligion? Or, in other and still plainer words, has man a *will* in the matters of salvation and damnation? This is *the* question between the Calvinist, and Arminian. The question—Is man's *will* free? no doubt is a very serviceable one to the Calvinist, as it enables him to evade the *real* one, and to divert people's attention from it.

EDWARDS SAYS—"That power and opportunity for one to do and conduct as he will, or according to his choice, is all that is meant by liberty, without taking into the meaning of the word, anything of the cause of that choice, or at all considering how the person came to have such a volition. Let the person come by his choice any how, yet, if he is able, and there is nothing in the way to hinder his pursuing and executing his will, the man is perfectly free." This, in the mouth of any but a Calvinist is intelligible and true: but, in dealing with a Calvinist, we want to know, whether what he *calls* will, be will? whether, what *he* *calls* choice, be choice? We want to know, whether holiness, and sin, be, *in any sense*, a man's own production; or the production, *entirely*, of some other agent superior to him, and under whom he is perfectly passive? We are of the opinion, that, if the human mind had a tongue, it would say of the Calvinists, what Mary said of those she supposed had emptied the Saviour's sepulchre,—“They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him.” That tomb was not cleaner swept of the Saviour's person, than the human mind is of the faculty or exercise of Will, by the Calvinists, in their doctrines of Divine Sovereignty, Election, and Perseverance. According to the system which is composed of these doctrines, man has no Will, if Will is to be understood as defined by the prince of mental philosophers, LOCKE,—“a power to do, or *forbear* doing.” If the doctrines, just named, be true, *man* does not do as *he* *wills* or pleases; he only does as *God* *wills* or pleases. What is *called* man's Will, *is not* Will, it is *natural*

necessity; as much so as the instinct of animals, and the properties of inanimate matter. If Calvinism be true, man only does as God wills or pleases, both in the matters of sin, and holiness. Man only acts as God acts upon him, and has, in *reality*, no more a will, than the sun, moon, or stars; and is no more deserving of either praise or blame, and, of course, is no more accountable than they. Take, for illustration, men's final destinies. According to Calvinian Sovereignty, Election, &c., man has not these as *he* pleases or wills; they are apportioned only as God pleases or wills. So with respect to *character*—either holy, or sinful. The doctrines just named are to the effect, as we have seen in our discussion of them, that holiness, and sin, are *effects of God's will*, not ours. Both character, and final destiny, are made *for man*, and not *by him*, in any sense: these are just as God not only fore-knew, but *fore-purposed* from eternity, and what He has “irresistibly” and “unfrustrably” brought about. It is plain, then, that Calvinistic doctrines represent man as having, in *reality*, no will in these highest and most important of all matters. We feel rather indignant at the perverseness of the men who persist in calling that the choice and will of man which brings men to heaven and hell, and yet tell us it is *God's* “irresistible will,” and “unfrustrable purpose,” which bring them there! Let these men, like rational, sane beings, abide by *one side* of the contradiction, and not assert *both*. No contradiction could be more perfect than the one just named. We wonder how Calvinists *dare* so deceive themselves, and those they teach, as to say, *man* does as *he* wills in the matters of character and destiny, when God, according to their *other* teachings, is the *only* Agent—the *only* Being who acts as He pleases in the matter. It is plain, *that part* of their teaching is, that man is *entirely passive*, and God only *active* in forming human character and destiny. Man, according to *one part* of Calvinism, is only acted upon, as a stone,—that is, necessarily. Men do not as *they* please or will, but only as *God* pleases or not to move them. Plainly, this system—so called, in *one part* of it, makes man a *machine*, and not a creature with will or freedom. According to *one part* of

it, men do not find their way to holiness, and sin, heaven, and hell, as *they choose*, but as *God necessitates* them. All this allegation against Calvinism is *proved* by Dr. HILL, its staunch advocate, in the following brief summary he gives of it:—"The Divine decree, is the determination of the Divine Will to produce the universe, that is, the *whole series* of beings and EVENTS then future:" and *our* view is well confirmed by the able RICHARD WATSON in his remarks on this summary, viz.,—"If so, it follows that it was the Divine Will to produce the fall of man, as well as his creation; the offences which made redemption necessary, as well as the redemption itself; to produce the destruction of human beings, and their vices, which are the means of that destruction: the salvation of another part of the race, and their faith and obedience, as the means of salvation..... This, however, is so destructive of the nature of virtue and vice; it so entirely subverts the moral government of God by merging it into His natural government; and so manifestly contradicts the *Word of God*, which from the beginning to the end, *supposes a power bestowed on man to avoid sin*, and on this establishes his accountableness; that, with all these fatal consequences hanging upon it, we may leave this notion to its own fate."

Calvinists (occasionally) hate the idea of any part of God's plan, in reference to this world, being left, as they express it, to the "accidents of time, or the capricious uncertainties of the human *will*;" yet, these said gentlemen are offended, and tell you you misrepresent them, if you say they ignore or destroy man's will! Such is Calvinian consistency!

"A word to the wise is enough:" and here our discussion of Calvinism might have ended, had all possessed this quality. But we wish also to write for the sake of those with whom a word is not enough. We therefore proceed.

We have already, in this chapter, refuted "Section 1, Part 1," of EDWARDS' book. We now proceed to Section 2, concerning (as he expresses it) "The determination of the Will."

This is another solecism, serving greatly to perplex the subject. It ought to have been,—"*The determination of the mind*; or, the determination of the *man*;" for, determination,

as here used, means only, willing or choosing. The *meaning* of his phraseology, therefore, is,—The determination of determination! It is rather degrading to spend time in answering such nonsense. *If we do not*, however, we suppose it will still be chaunted,—“We know not that he has ever been refuted.”

The determination of the *mind*, then, signifies, simply, its making a particular will, choice, or preference. The question is,—“How comes man, or the mind—for there is a deep philosophic truth in the phrase, ‘the mind makes the man’—to decide, or to make any particular choice?” EDWARDS says properly enough,—“It is the effect of some cause.” But when he affirms that *motive* is the cause, in the same sense as the sun is the cause of heat, we think him far wrong, and in fact, merely begging the question. We think, with DUGALD STEWART, “the *man* is the cause of his own volitions;” or with LOCKE, “the *mind* is the cause.” “For that,” says LOCKE, which determines the general power of directing to this or that particular direction, is nothing but the *agent itself exercising* the power it has that particular way.” EDWARDS, by arguing from the improper *phraseology* of his opponents, instead of their well-known *meaning*, has rendered a great part of his book a quibble and logomachy, and, indeed, nonsense. We could have easily retorted this sort of thing, but we consider it beneath a lover of truth. We shall reply to the sense and import of our author, and not the import of mistaken and improper *phraseology*, in which he abounds as much or more than any Arminian.

We hold with the philosophers already named, that the “man” or the “mind” produces the volitions of a man, as EDWARDS himself has it (occasionally), “that which has the power of volition is the man, or the soul.” Calvinists hold (often) that the “motive” produces the volition, just as a weight turns the beam of scales. Here issue is joined.

Dr. PAYNE thinks, “the man” or “the mind” no more produces the volition or choice, than the man or the mind produces love, hatred, &c.; though, strangely enough acknowledging, at the same time, “the *man* or the *mind* loves, hates, wills,” &c.! The Dr. totally forgets the *essential* difference between the will,

and the affections or passions of man. It ought to be borne in mind, the affections of love, hate, fear, &c., are called passions or affections in *consequence* of that essential difference;—man is passive or acted upon, independently of his will, in their *origin* in his mind. To assume the choice or will is produced after the same mode, is simply begging the question. Philosophers—those worthy of the name—never class the will as an affection, because they know its nature is essentially different. Dr. P. is the first we have seen make a *passion* of the will—of course his system requires it; only, *truth does not*.

A man is not (as Calvinists constantly assume) *necessarily* influenced or acted upon by motives. It is admirable to observe Calvinists continually *assuming* that motives *so* act; whereas it is the very thing they ought (if they could) to *prove*. A man is necessarily rational, and *must* act from some motive, but he is not necessarily wise, nor foolish; holy, nor vicious. Whatever particular motive, reason, or consideration he yields himself to, he was not bound to do it, he was free to have refused, or to have selected some other. In this way, motives, reasons, or considerations, themselves, are matters of choice. A man has chosen to kill another. The murderer was poor and covetous, and he knew his victim had money. The murderer's motive, that is, reason, was, plainly, to supply himself with his victim's money. According to PAYNE, and EDWARDS, and all Calvinists, the *motive* produced the Will to murder! It is thought by them to be "incompetent and unmeaning" to say the "mind," or the "man" produced the Will to murder. According to Arminians, however, it is thought to be *significant*, and enough, to say the *man*—the *murderer*, produced the will and the act of murder. Which, dear reader, is the more rational and truthful view? To what strange deliverances will a man's love of creed sometimes lead him! Only witness the following from PAYNE:—
 "There is an ambiguity in the assertion we often hear made, which it is possible, is not apparent to many who use it:—
 'When we determine in one way, we have, and must have, the power of determining in the other.' This is doubtless true in one sense. The physical" (mental) "power of determining

renders us physically" (mentally) "capable of determining in any way—as the physical" (mental) "power of loving renders us physically" (mentally) "capable of loving anything which is adapted, at least, to elicit love. But if the words be intended to intimate that motives have no such certain influence upon the mind as that the determination of any mind, in exactly the same circumstances—having the same motives presented to it, and taking precisely the same view of them—might be different from what it is, the opinion is contradicted, if we mistake not, by reason, and consciousness, and experience." (!) This strange paragraph *means* very little. It only teaches the axiom or truism, that a thing cannot be what it is and yet different from what it is at the same time! That the figure four cannot be figure four, and yet be figure five! Or that sugar cannot be sugar, and yet be salt at the same time! Apply this wonderful discovery to the case of the murderer. Here it means that murder cannot but be murder—the precise thing cannot but be the precise thing! Of course not. But this is not proving that the conduct of the murderer could not have been different from what it was; that, instead of four, there might have been five; instead of sugar, salt; instead of murder, humanity. The fact is the murderer might have selected *another* motive, that is, another object—another reason. He could have *changed* his view and needed not to have murdered—he could or might have acted humanely. The amount of PAYNE'S logic, in the above paragraph, is, that a thing is the same while it is not different, or is not altered! A wonderful truism! If this is not his meaning, then, he can only mean, that, when a man murdered he could not help it—he was forced to do it. The motive caused him; consequently, the motive being the agent, the motive ought to be hanged, and not the man! If this teaching is not the opposite of moral freedom and responsibility, nothing ever was; and yet such is Calvinism!

"There is the need of something," says PAYNE, "in the apparatus of moral government to produce the volition; and, consequently, to deny that the motive stands in the relation of cause to the volition, is, in effect, to affirm that the volition

arises without a cause, and that man is altogether incapable of moral government." This would have been true if the "apparatus" of moral government had been like the apparatus of a machine, but it happens to be *essentially* different: and its just because motive is *not* the cause of volition, but *man*, that man is capable of *moral* government at all; as we have seen in the case of the murderer. Motives may have a "tendency," without having a *necessary, irresistible* tendency. When we say, a certain motive *caused* us to do, we do not mean it was irresistible and absolutely necessary. Presenting motives to a mind, or to a man, that are extremely *likely* to prevail with him, is not being *certain* they will do so. Again, when we say motives have not a *necessary, irresistible* influence with a man, it is not saying they have *no* influence or power over him. The fact is, man is sovereign in relation to his motives. He is guided only by such as he wills to be. It is the essence of his humanity and rationality to yield to *some* motive or reason; it is the essence of his will or freedom to be guided by such as he may please or think fit. A man may choose for his motive, either mammon, human applause, or Divine applause, or anything else as the motive of his *general* conduct: he is equally sovereign in any *particular* conduct. He can choose his particular motives or reasons, as well as his thoughts, and words. If a man were bound to any one in particular, he of course could not be free, nor responsible; and, consequently, there could be no criminal thoughts, words, *motives*, nor actions.

To return to PAYNE; he remarks:—"To say the mind, or the man produces the determination, choice, or will, is an unmeaning and incompetent solution of the difficulty." We have partly replied to this already, when we stated that a man was the cause or originator of his determinations or *choices*, though not the originator of his passions of love, &c.; that there was an *essential* difference between the will and the affections; and to regard them as alike was simply begging the question. Now we wish to add, that, though a man does not always *originate* his loves, hates, fears, &c.; yet, he can control and modify them when they *are* originated: and again, he can, in some

cases, even originate his particular loves by his choosing to examine an object to see whether there be anything amiable in it. If his diligence finds what is amiable, then he loves it, and controls his love. If this were not so, God would never have said to man—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," &c. We make these remarks because PAYNE argues:—"It is *unmeaning*," (the answer, that *man* causes his volitions) "since no idea can be attached to the phrase save one which would prove that the man is the cause of all the *emotions* of which he is the subject." Our remarks show that a man may properly enough be the *cause* of his *volitions*, though he may not be always the *cause* of his *affections*, owing to the essential difference between their natures—a thing quite ignored by PAYNE. But in flat contradiction to PAYNE's assertion, we have to state, that "other ideas" *may be* attached to the phrase, besides the one he mentions: and in flat contradiction to another assertion of his, viz., "Man is too complex a being to be represented intelligently as the cause of a volition," we state, he *may be* so represented, and, without being "indefinite or unmeaning." Is it asked, then, what do we mean by saying "the man or the mind" is the cause of volition? We reply, that we mean, it is not *simply* the motive that causes volition, but all those elements of a man that are concerned in his making a choice or volition. We mean it is the having a principle of thought and sensation; the having perception, memory, judgment, and the conception of motives or reasons; we mean, in short, *all the powers* denoted by the term, Man, have been more or less concerned in producing a particular volition, and not the motive simply. All these powers considered as a unity, viz., man, is the cause of volition, and not one element or power only: nor is it implied that this complex being could not have produced a different volition; for, the fact is, in every case where it has choice or will, it might, as, indeed, we have before shown. From these considerations, we deem it both intelligent, and competent, to say with LOCKE, STEWART, and (occasionally) all Calvinists, that the *mind*, or the *man*, is the cause of a particular volition or will, and not the motive.

In thus answering PAYNE we have also answered EDWARDS' second section; for the doctrine of that section is the same, though in another style. The doctrine in E.'s words is:—"It is that motive, which as it stands in the view of the mind, is the strongest, that determines the will." In opposition to this we have proved, it is the man or the mind that makes or produces a determination, or choice or volition. EDWARDS says—"if it be now most agreeable to him, all things considered, to walk, then he wills to walk. If it be now, upon the whole of what at present appears to him, most agreeable to speak, then he chooses to speak: if it suits him best to keep silence, then he chooses to keep silence." And he might have added, by parity of reason; if it suited him best now to *murder*, then he *murders!* The reader will perceive it is the identical doctrine of the paragraph from PAYNE, which we have already refuted.

The whole amount of EDWARDS' second section, part 1, is nothing more than this:—"What a man wills, he wills!" We defy any reader to find that anything more is given us in answer to the absurd question:—"What determines the determination!" Or, to use his own words, "what determines the will?" Surely LOCKE, and STEWART's answer is more "meaning," "competent," and "intelligent," than this of EDWARDS'. If man is the author of his own volitions, and actions, surely it is *not* "unmeaning," nor "incompetent," to say so. At all events, we are quite sure, *motives* are not the authors of volitions and actions, else they, and not *man*, are the responsible parties.

This attempt to entangle the truth by a mere confusion of the subject, and a perverse use of terms, is very shameful; and is enough to excite the indignation of every sincere lover of it.

As to the *strength* of motives of which EDWARDS writes to so little purpose—if, instead of teaching us by his explanations, and modifications of his doctrine, the mere truism, that a man wills what he wills or is his pleasure, he had taught that a man willed *always* according to the strongest motive in *reason*; or the strongest motive in his *animal* nature; or the strongest motive in *religion*; why, then, we should have had a doctrine, although, clearly, a *false* one; for, men only *sometimes* follow

the strongest in any of these departments, hence the varieties of character in different individuals, and in the same individuals at different times. www.libtool.com.cn

In sec. 3, our author (EDWARDS) explains his terms. It would have been better to have done so in sec. 1, and included a few more terms, viz., will, liberty, determination, volition, &c. We have little to object to this section. The terms, "necessity," "impossibility," "inability," "irresistible," "contingence," &c., are here explained. We allow the distinction between the vulgar and philosophical sense of these terms; yet we think the author should not have ignored the fact, that, the vulgar are, *sometimes*, philosophic, and often use the terms in question, in both senses, without feeling it needful to *mark* the distinction. To do this, however, we know, is a "necessity" with the Calvinistic advocate. He expects to serve his client by it. With respect to the word, contingent, we object to the following deliverance:—"But the word *contingent* is used in a very different sense (by the Arminians) not for that whose connexion with the series of things we cannot discern, so as to foresee the event, but for something which has *absolutely* no previous ground or reason, with which its existence has any fixed and certain connexion." This is a *misrepresentation* of the doctrine of the Arminian. Volitions are the "something" alluded to. What our volitions in future days and years shall be is undiscerned by *us*; and therefore to *us* are contingencies or uncertainties. They are not, however, undiscerned, by the Divine Being; for, His omniscience, *in a way we cannot comprehend*, discerns what they will be; and that without *purposing* to bring them about. *His* foreknowledge can no more influence our volitions, than *ours* can influence the volitions of Her Majesty Victoria when we foreknow her opening of Parliament. Though our future volitions, therefore, have not the Divine forepurpose nor the *necessary* influence of any particular motive or reason as their "previous ground and reason;" yet they are not therefore *absolutely* without ground or reason or cause. When they shall have occurred, MAN will be found, in the exercise of freedom, choice, or will, to have been the *cause* of them.

We profess not to know *how* God *foreknows* anything, but, we imagine it cannot be essentially different in its nature from *our* mode of *present* knowledge. *His* foreknowledge, we conceive, no more causes our volitions and actions, than the person who now sees and knows us to be writing, causes our thoughts and penmanship. But more of this shortly.*

Section 4, treats "of the distinction of natural and moral necessity, and inability." Here we must lay emphasis on a fact which our author's system required him to pass most hurriedly, viz., that "moral necessity" is not a "proper" nor "perfect" phrase; nor the distinction of natural and moral necessity, a "proper and perfect distinction." The impropriety, and imperfection, must not be forgotten, or we, like our author, will form some wrong conclusions. What is moral is free, so, the phrase strictly interpreted means, free necessity! which is a plain absurdity. Moral, is that which is willed, or belonging to the will; and will or choice is freedom. Hence we say, the absurdity of the phrase, literally interpreted. "Moral neces-

* The Rev. R. WATSON'S remarks on this subject are unanswerable:—"Certainty and necessity are not at all connected in the nature of things, and are in fact, two perfectly distinct predicaments. Certainty has no relation at all to an event as evitable, or inevitable, free or compelled, contingent or necessary. It relates only to the issue itself, the act of any agent, not the quality of the act or event with reference to the circumstances under which it is produced. A free action is as much an event as a necessitated one, and therefore, is as truly an object of foresight; which foresight cannot change the nature of the action, or of the process through which it issues, because the simple knowledge of an action, whether present, past, or to come, has no influence upon it of any kind. Certainty is, in fact, no quality of an action at all; it exists, properly speaking, in the mind foreseeing, and not in the action foreseen; but freedom or constraint, contingency, or necessity, qualify the action itself, and determine its nature, and the rewardableness, or punitive demerit of the agent. When, therefore, it is said that what God foresees will certainly happen, nothing more can be reasonably meant, than that He is certain that it will happen; so that we must not transfer the certainty from God to the action itself, in the false sense of necessity, or indeed in any sense; for the certainty is in the Divine mind, and stands there opposed, not to the contingency of the action, but to doubtfulness as to the result. The most certain knowledge has nothing in it which, from its nature, can control an action in any way, unless it should lead the being endowed with it to adopt measures to influence the action, and then it becomes a question, not of foreknowledge, but of power and influence, which wholly changes the case."

sity," really and truly, signifies *only a great difficulty*, and never an *impossibility*, as does a natural or physical necessity. Thus it is difficult for a drunkard to be at any time sober, but not impossible; difficult, but not impossible, for an angry man ever to be meek and patient; a thief, to be honest, &c. But our author is a wonderful philosopher. He transmutes, most cleverly, "moral necessity" into natural necessity, or necessity, proper. Hear him now:—"I suppose none will deny, but that, in some cases, a previous bias and inclination, or the motive presented, may be *so strong*, that the act of the will" (?) "may be *certainly and indissolubly connected* therewith. When motives or previous bias are very strong, all will allow that there is some *difficulty* in going against them. And if they were yet stronger, the difficulty would be still greater. And therefore, if more were still added to their strength, to a certain degree, it would make the difficulty so great, that it would be *impossible* to surmount it; for this plain reason, because whatever power men may be supposed to have to surmount difficulties, yet that power is not infinite; and so goes not beyond certain limits. If a man can surmount ten degrees of difficulty of this kind with twenty degrees of strength, because the degrees of strength are beyond the degrees of difficulty; yet, if the difficulty be increased to thirty, or a hundred, or a thousand degrees, and his strength not also increased, his strength will be wholly insufficient to surmount the difficulty. As, *therefore*, it must be allowed, that there may be such a thing as a *sure and perfect* connexion between moral causes and effects; so this is only what I call by the name of *moral necessity*." There now! Is not that clever? Will any wonder that our author can defend Calvinism? But can any man see any "philosophical" or "certain necessity" between the above premises and the conclusion? Was ever man more self-stultified? EDWARDS ought to have known that when a difficulty becomes so great as to become an "impossibility," it is no longer a "moral" necessity, but plainly a natural one. When a moral necessity, so called, becomes so great as to be called a proper impossibility, there is no longer a *will* in the case—it is no longer moral, but physical.

If motives and inclination were ever to be *so strong* as above described, there would be no will, but *mere* necessity. The author has no right in reason and honesty to call such a necessity, "moral" necessity. We cannot trust the inductions of a man who so mistakes the nature of things.

Next comes the distinction of natural and moral with reference to "inability"—natural and moral inability. Calvinists make, as we shall see, a very artful, sophistical, unfair use of this distinction. Whenever man is under necessity in any matter, he is under a corresponding inability to do the opposite. A person under a necessity of falling into the water, when a bridge breaks, or a boat upsets, is also under an inability to keep out of the water. This shows the nature of natural and *proper* necessity, and inability. Hence our author makes an important mistake in saying—"We are said to be *naturally* unable to do a thing, when we cannot do it if we *will*." It ought to have been—we are naturally unable to do a thing when we cannot do it if we *wish*; there is no *will* in such a case. It serves his cause however thus to use one word for another, and that for him is enough. Where there is a natural inability, there is no *choice*, but the opposite, viz., necessity. It is important to observe there can be no will, where there is necessity, the two are essentially antagonistic. Natural necessity, or necessity, proper, is not the inability of doing what is willed, but the want of choice or will itself. We never *will* to fly, however much we can wish or desire it, simply because it is not an object of will; nor is any other matter of necessity, a matter of choice or will, but only of wish or desire. Necessity "prevents all acts of the will about the affair."

EDWARDS indulges his usual habit of crincumism in the matters of moral necessity and inability. He takes leave to hold two contradictory doctrines on the subject. "Moral necessity," says he, "may be *as absolute* as natural necessity: that is, the effect may be as perfectly connected with its moral cause as a natural necessary effect is with its natural cause." (!) Where, then, we demand, is *the difference* between natural and moral necessity? The distinction is destroyed by the above state-

ment of our author. There *can* be no distinction, without the one is *absolute*, and the other *not*. This in fact is the essence of their distinction: the one is, that is to say, the natural, is absolute, the moral, is limited. This, our author, in opposition to himself proves:—"The word" (inability) "signifies only a natural inability, in the *proper* use of it; and is applied to such cases only wherein a present will or inclination to the thing, with respect to which a person is said to be unable, is supposable. It cannot be truly said, according to the ordinary use of language, that a malicious man, let him be *ever so* malicious, cannot hold his hand from striking, or that he is not able to show his neighbour kindness; or that a drunkard, let his appetite be ever so strong, cannot keep the cup from his mouth. In the strictest propriety of speech, a man has a thing in his power, if he has it in his choice, or at his election; and a man cannot be truly said to be unable to do a thing when he can do it if he will. It is improperly said, that a person cannot perform those external actions which are dependent on the act of the will, and which would be easily performed if the act of the will were present. And if it be improperly said, that he cannot perform those external voluntary actions which depend on the will, it is in some respect more improperly said, that he is unable to exert the acts of the will themselves; because it is more evidently false, with respect to these, that he cannot if he will: for to say so, is a downright contradiction: it is to say, he *cannot* will, if he *does* will; and in this case not only is it true that it is easy for a man to do the thing if he will, but the very willing is the doing; when once he has willed, the thing is performed, and nothing else remains to be done, therefore, in these things, to ascribe a non-performance to the want of power or ability, is not just; because the thing wanting is not a being *able*, but a being *willing*. There are faculties of the mind, and capacity of nature, and every thing else sufficient, but a disposition: nothing is wanting but a will." Now if this be so; if a moral inability does not signify an absolute, unlimited inability, then, of course, the corresponding moral *necessity*, is not absolute or unlimited either. If malicious and drunken persons are

not, in truth, under an absolute, unlimited necessity to be malicious and drunken, but are able to be other, then, what becomes of our author's "absolute" moral necessity? What of the strongest motive *necessarily* determining the will? What of the doctrine that, "the will must always have an inability to act otherwise than it does?" Are not we here treated with another Calvinian erincum? After all, it seems the mind's volitions and actions are not so certain and necessary but they might always be different! But how many times does our author eat his own admissions, and deny his own doctrine?

What, then, is the sum of our author's teaching in this section? First, necessity is either vulgar, or philosophic: the former implying the insufficient opposition of *will*? the latter not implying this, and simply meaning *certainty*. Second, there is a distinction between natural, and moral philosophic necessity, or certainty. Third, that moral necessity or certainty is not a *proper* phrase, and consequently there is no moral necessity, properly speaking; that what is meant is, great difficulty, or great probability arising out of inclination, passion, or habit. Fourth, this distinction or admission is (inconsistently enough) destroyed; and we are taught, the two necessities are identical, the one being as absolute as the other. Fifth, that moral necessity is not absolute; for, let disposition or inclination "*be ever so strong*," a man *may*, and *can* act contrary to it! Such is the wandering maze of Calvinism!!

Section 5—the last of "part 1," is—"Concerning the notion of Liberty, and of moral agency."

First, Liberty or freedom is defined as the "power, opportunity, or advantage, that any one has to do as he pleases." This, *in words*, is little different from our own, viz., "it is the having a will in any matter." The opposite, that is necessity, is the being without will in any case. Will is a quality and a power of *man*, not of *will*. Our author gives us a fine treat on this point:—"To talk of liberty, or the contrary, as belonging to the *very will itself*, is not to speak good sense, if we judge of sense and nonsense by the original and proper signification of words. For the *will itself*, is not an agent that *has a will*; the

power of choosing itself has not a power of choosing. That which has the power of volition or choice, IS THE MAN OR THE SOUL, and not the power of volition itself." What, dear reader, is the inference here? Why, that the whole book of his is nonsense; for, the "talk" of the whole book is about "freedom of will." Why did not he drop the talk, if he knew it to be nonsense? Why, because it served to hide Calvinism in a mist, and served to divert its pursuers from its readier overthrow.

Our author bungles in saying:—"Constraint, is a person's doing a thing contrary to his *will*." Where constraint is, there is no *will*, there is only *desire*. Wherein we are constrained to do, therein we do not *will* to do—we have no choice. Again—"Restraint is, not having power to do according to his will."* This, again should be—according to *desire*. Wherein we cannot do as we desire, therein we do not *will*—we have not choice. Constraint and restraint make up necessity, and, in their own nature, are incompatible with will or liberty. It is serviceable, however, to the Calvinist, to say, there is will where there is constraint, and necessity—another crincum, but it wont do. It is because it is not true that irresistible constraint, and restraint, are compatible with liberty or will, that CALVINISM IS FALSE, and opposed to moral freedom and responsibility. It is just by its doctrine of supernatural, *irresistible* constraint that it destroys choice or will, and consequent responsibility.

Our author informs us, "If a man does as he wills, he is free, no matter how he came by his will." This is true; for, there is only one way to will, and that is to will. But we guess he meant to say, it was no matter *examining* what it is *he calls* will; but we think it matters every thing; for we cannot allow him to call necessity, compulsion, invincibility, constraint, and irresistible grace—Will; for these are necessity, and not will.

Our author next tells us, Arminians make Liberty to consist in—First, "a self-determining power of the will." We answer, some may, but not all. We know one who says, "Liberty and Will are identical; and that self-determining power, and will,

* We may *previously* have desired and willed some restraint or constraint which we experience, but that affects not our argument.

are identical;" so if any Arminians say the above, they use an improper phrase. They *mean*, no doubt, that liberty consists in will, or self-determination; and that the will is not "sovereign over itself," but the Will is *man's* sovereignty over *himself*; and that it does not determine *its own* volitions but that *man*, by his will, determines *himself*; that volitions are dependent on *man* for their *cause*, who, if not "prior" to his will, is at least contemporary with it. Second, in "indifference, or equilibrio of will." By this they *mean*, where there is *will*, you are not bound any *one* way. There is nothing *absurd* in this—as our author would have it—but only, it is tautology; and Arminians can do without it, and we hope they will. Third, "Contin-
gence, as opposed to all necessity." Here, again, is nothing absurd, but only tautological. Arminians can do without it, for when they have said, liberty consists in having a *will* in any matter, they have said enough.

TWO DEFECTS IN THE CALVINIAN CREED.

DEFECT NO. 1.

The Doctrine of the Direct Witness of the Spirit, wanting.

THE doctrine of the *Direct Witness* of the Holy Spirit, in the matter of a believing penitent's acceptance with God, is quite wanting, generally, to the creed of Calvinists. It is supposed to have too much of the supernatural and fanatical about it. Nevertheless, judging from their devotional exercises, the same party never think there would be anything supernatural, nor fanatical, for a worshipper to expect, in a *direct* manner, that God will remove darkness, sorrow, care, unbelief, hardness, &c., &c., from his mind, then and there, while praying, or singing psalms.

That the doctrine in question is a scriptural one, is evident from many Scriptures. We shall cite one or two:—"God hath sent forth the Spirit into your hearts crying Abba, Father."—"Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father."—"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God." "The Greek word employed, says Dr. WM. COOKE, "expresses the *conjoint* testimony of two distinct agents. It is not *μαρτυρει*, which means simply, *He* bears witness, and which is used where the testimony is single; but it is the *compound* *συμμαρτυρει*, which literally expresses a *conjoint* testimony, and implies *plurality* of witnesses agreeing and supporting each other by their deposition."

A brief quotation from Dr. GUTHRIE will show what, in general, is the doctrine of the Calvinists in reference to this particular :—www.libtool.com.cn

“By His Holy Spirit God creates them ‘anew in Christ Jesus unto good works;’ and by these — by the fruits of a holy life, by the joys of the Holy Ghost, by the advancing stages, and ascending steps of a holy progress—His Spirit witnesses with their spirits that they are the sons of God.” Thus it is perceived to be circuitous or indirect.

The erroneousness and disadvantage of this defective view, is very forcibly set forth by the Rev. W. ARTHUR, A.M. :—

“The poor penitent, then (according to a certain theory), is not to be first relieved of his load, and given to feel that God loves him; but previous to obtaining such Divine comfort, he is to become satisfied that his love, joy, peace and other graces, are such as to mark him one of the children of God! That is, while yet feeling that the Lord is angry with him, he is to love the Lord; while yet feeling that his soul is unsaved, he is to feel joy in the Holy Ghost. If it be said that the feeling of the Lord's wrath and his own danger is removed before the filial affections appear, then a direct action of the Comforter, antecedent to his satisfaction with his own graces, is admitted; and if that be denied, there is no alternative but to conclude, that at the same time, and in the same heart, one can both feel that he is under God's anger, and love God as a forgiving Father; can feel that he is in danger of hell, and enjoy spiritual peace. If the sense of wrath and danger is removed before the fruits of the Spirit appear there is a direct witness of the Spirit himself; if not till after, the totally incompatible states of mind just mentioned must co-exist.”

DEFECT NO. 2.

The Doctrine of Christian Perfection, wanting.

“—— the Calvinists, who think, that *the strokes of death must absolutely* be joined with Christ's blood and Spirit, and with our faith, to cleanse the thoughts of our hearts, and to kill the inbred *man of sin.*”—J. FLETCHER, Madeley.

CALVINISTS are accustomed to sneer at this scriptural, and most highly important doctrine. They prefer to preach “*im*-perfection, But their heart is often better than their head in

this matter; for, in their devotions, when their creed is forgotten, we often find them praying for it. It is no less than sinful to treat a doctrine like this with levity and scorn. To accomplish its embodiment in human character, is the great end of every thing God has done in redemption so far as concerns man. When that perfect rule of duty was inculcated by our Lord on the mount, O how far from the spirit of levity and ridicule was it announced!—"Therefore, all things, whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, FOR THIS IS THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS." The very *need* that there is for the doctrine, is presumptive evidence of its truth. God knows there is no necessity to preach *imperfection*, that is too well preached by our fallen nature. When *imperfection* (Calvinian) has been preached in our hearing, it has always grated on our ears. There could be no bigger practical mistake than to preach *imperfection*. It tends at once to encourage it. An imperfect Christian, who professes a belief in Perfection, is uneasy in his conscience about it, and is prompted to seek to improve; but the man who holds *imperfection* in his creed, can hardly be expected to care so much about it. When the doctrine of Christian Perfection is announced to a Calvinist, he startles, and asks—What, live without any sin? No sin to confess, when we are taught to pray, "forgive us our trespasses?" He has not patience till you tell him in what sense you use the term, although he knows quite well that words are often not bound to one stereotyped sense. He would not startle, if we told him Queen Victoria is *sovereign*; although the term is used to denote one of the greatest attributes of the Deity. Why is this? Because his prejudice is not called into play, so as to hide from him the fact, that the word is used with various shades and degrees of meaning, and consequently has various applications.

The Perfection in question, is not the Perfection of the Deity; nor of a heavenly angel; nor, the perfection of Adam, innocent. No. It is the perfection of a converted sinner: the perfection of a *Christian man*. This Perfection "does not exclude sins, arising from ignorance, and error, and other infirmities. Now, from wrong judgments, wrong words and actions will often

necessarily flow: and, in some cases, wrong affections also may spring from the same source — hence the best of men may say from the heart—

‘Every moment, Lord, I need
The merit of Thy death’

for innumerable violations of the Adamic as well as the angelic law. It is well, therefore, for us, that we are not now under these, but under the law of love. ‘Love’ is now ‘the fulfilling of the law’ which is given to fallen man. What, then, is the Perfection of which a man is capable while he dwells in a corruptible body? It is the complying with that kind command, ‘My son give me thy heart.’ It is the ‘loving the Lord his God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind.’ This is the sum of Christian perfection: it is all comprised in that one word, Love. The first branch of it is the love of God; and as he that loves God loves his brother also, it is inseparably connected with the second—‘though shalt love thy neighbour as thyself’—‘On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets:’ these contain the whole of CHRISTIAN perfection.”

This Perfection both in name and reality is taught in the Scriptures. As to the *name*. There are—“Let us go on unto perfection.” “Be ye therefore perfect.” “Walk before me and be thou perfect.” “That ye may be perfect, and entire, wanting nothing.” “If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man.” “The perfecting of the saints.” “Perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord.” “Present every man perfect.” “Put on Charity, which is the bond of perfection.” “Stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.” “That the man of God may be perfect.” But we need not multiply such passages. Then as to the *thing itself*. It is defined in 1st Cor., 13th chap. It is exemplified in the life and labour of love of Paul the Apostle. This good man could say, “Giving no offence in any thing, but in all things approving ourselves as ministers of God, in much patience, by pureness, by kindness, by love unfeigned: being filled with comfort, and

exceeding joyful in all our tribulation. I will gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved. Ye are witnesses and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblamably we behaved ourselves among you." This, as a sample only. The thing is prayed for in the most beautiful words of the Church of England—"Cleanse thou the thoughts of our hearts, by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may *perfectly love* Thee, and magnify Thy holy name:" and is also prayed for in the Lord's prayer—"Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven." It is prayed for by the Apostle—"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless." It is prayed for and taught with their customary crincumism, by the Calvinists themselves. For example—

"Whilst with a melting, broken heart
My murdered Lord I view,
I'll raise revenge against *my sins*
And *slay* the murderers too." (!)

"When Immanuel," says BUNYAN, in his 'Holy War,' had driven Diabolus and all his forces out of the city of Mansoul, Diabolus preferred a petition to Immanuel, that he might have only a *small* part of the city. When this was rejected, he begged to have only a little room within the walls. But Immanuel answered, he should have no place in it at all; no, *not to rest the sole of his foot.*" This is perfection taught most perfectly by a Calvinistic imperfectionist.

But we design not to enter minutely into this question. We shall, therefore, at this time, content ourselves by placing before our readers, a most consummately self-contradictory quotation from Dr. G. PAYNE on this subject—a perfect specimen of crincumism:—

"The notion of those who imagine that it is possible to attain, in the present life, to *sinless* perfection," (*Christian* perfection he means) "and actually to continue for an indefinite period of time without a single improper thought or irregular desire, is contradicted by the experience of the great body of the Lord's people, and by the Scripture doctrine of indwelling *sin*, from which *nothing but death* can set us free. At the same time it is necessary to guard against mistakes here. For the impossibility which has been affirmed is only a moral infirmity.

We must take care not to represent the Divine law as raised so utterly above our reach as to set us free from obligation to *perfect* obedience." (!) "I am not sure that Calvinists keep clear of this error; and certain I am that we have need to guard against a tendency to relax in our efforts to avoid sin—a tendency which is apt to be produced by the reflection that we cannot hope to be perfectly delivered here from its contamination. The Apostle prayed that the Thessolonians might be sanctified wholly. We are commanded to be perfect; and with nothing short of absolute perfection ought we to be satisfied." (!!)" "We must never fix our desires upon a point below this. (!) Our attainments, in conformity to the Divine image, must necessarily be inconsiderable and paltry if we do. It is true here, as well as in relation to all other things, that the way to accomplish great things is to aim at great things—to attempt great things. Those are nominal Christians who endeavour to extenuate their failings and imperfections by alleging that perfect obedience is impossible. And we need to be cautioned against resting satisfied with the present attainments under the notion that perfection is out of the question. How different the spirit and language of Paul—'Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss,' &c.—PHILIPPIANS, iii., 7-15.

The Scripturalness, necessity, and importance of the invaluable doctrine of perfection, could not have been more perfectly taught by J. WESLEY himself, than they are by this *im*perfectionist.

POSTSCRIPT.

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SINCE the issue of part 1, a Calvinistic critic has intimated that "we have not *much* approached the standard of God's Word." By this, no doubt, is meant, we have not dealt much with *particular texts*. But our critic forgets that *particular principles* of God's Word are as much the standard as are *particular texts*; and those, all candid readers will allow, we have dealt with. We have been sorry to notice that when Calvinists can no longer argue, they persist to cavil. We wish them more fidelity to conviction.

This critic also intimates, "all Arminians deny their creed in their petitions at a throne of grace;" and states, "few will there deny the fact that—

'Their seeking His face
Was the fruit of His grace,
Or still they had been in the fall.'

We can sing these lines as consistently as a Calvinist. It is well known that we differ, not about the *fact* of salvation by grace, but, the *modus operandi* of the fact. Calvinists ought to be more sincere than thus to cavil.

That we may not be wanting to our critic, we may give him another specimen of what might be done with *texts*. The endlessness of the thing only, prevents us from selecting more than one. We will show him there is no more Calvinism in this text, than there is in our head, adoptingly.

Rom., ix., 13, "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Calvinists persist in telling us they have a warrant here for believing God from eternity has determined, irresistibly and unfrustably to save some souls and to damn others! But what an alien the *doctrine* is to the *text*! Paul quotes the text to explain what he quotes in the verse preceding:—"The elder shall serve the younger. *As it is written*

Jacob have I loved," &c. The text in Paul's time (as it is in ours) was written in *Malachi*, 1, 2, 3; and with its context is as follows:—"Yet I loved Jacob and I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his ~~herbage waste,~~ for the dragons of the wilderness." Here it is quite manifest that both Paul and Malachi understood the loving and hating to refer to *temporal* favours and disfavours only, and to have no reference to the *eternal* states of men. But the words to Rebekah put this meaning beyond all cavil:—"Two *nations* are in thy womb, and two *manner of people* shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people, and the elder shall serve the younger." Thus it is seen that all that this celebrated text means is, that God in his Providence would put a difference between the temporal condition of two nations! How simple a matter compared with the horrid notion of the Calvinist! Paul refers to this fact, and others like it, to show that God's taking the favour or privilege of a preached gospel away from the perverse, stubborn, and unbelieving Jewish nation, and giving it to the Gentiles, evinced no new principle in his dealings with mankind, nor any breach of promise to the Jews whom he had long temporarily favoured—he had ever given, or withheld privilege, on principles and on terms, that seemed best to His own alwise and righteous mind; and would do so still. This, indeed, the Almighty is doing every day, and no Arminian objects to it. It is owing to this the present writer was born in a cottage, rather than a palace; is a plebian, rather than a noble; a Briton, rather than an African. But we rejoice to know that what God thus does absolutely himself, He will hold no one responsible for but himself. The Arminian believes God has quite a right thus to dispense His temporal favours as it pleaseth Him; but he does not believe that God breaks up His moral government in the world, nor ignores man's moral nature, by dealing out the characters and final destinies of men after the same fashion; that be far from Thee, God most wise, and God most holy!

FINIS.

ERRATA.

Page 19—(Note at the bottom)—*read*, history does, *for* “history do.”

“ 39—*Read* madam, *for* “madman.”

“ 49—Line 12 from the bottom, *read* teach, *for* “preach.”

“ 51—Line 5 from the bottom, *read* observe *for* “observes.”

“ 61—Line 13 from the bottom, *read* what is it that, *for* what is that.

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