

Volume 8

William Huntington (1745-1813)

The Way and the Fare, of a Wayfaring Man.

IN TWO LETTERS TO A FRIEND

*"..THE WAYFARING MEN THOUGH FOOLS, SHALL NOT
ERR THEREIN."*

ISAIAH XXXV. 8.

LETTER I.

TO MR. K. RED-HILL, KINGSBURY.

Dear Brother and Sister in Christ Jesus,

AFTER several storms, contrary winds, boisterous waves, turbulent seas, dangerous shoals, encounters with formidable enemies of the ghostly kind, and many entanglements among the Caribbee islands, I am once more come to an anchor at the Cape of Good Hope, the wind at south-west. The dog-star is now out of sight, and I am looking to him that maketh the

seven stars an Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning.

It has been a day of adversity with me, in which I have had many things to consider; and now the day of prosperity is arrived, in which I hope to be joyful. I have of late had various temptations and trials to cope with, and acted in my voyage as Paul did in his: I cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for day; I tried to anchor in the Spirit's former work; in former promises applied, in former evidences, and in former visits; but, alas, alas, the vessel drove; I was obliged to cast anchor out of the fore-ship (our refuge is a hope set before us); but still she drove; until a little of that threefold cord that is not soon broken was let out; then she came to her anchor, and rode sweetly.

I am now ashore; and, having gained the summit of an adjacent rock, I have been, with the help of my glass, making what discoveries I could, while the eddy was visible: I left the group of Candour Islands about a league from the larboard-side; I fell on the quick sands on the coast of Universal Charity; but the wind veered and brought her off; nevertheless, some of the crew were infected from the shore, and we performed quarantine.

The old shattered weather-beaten vessel has sprung several leaks; her timbers are impaired, her planking is much decayed, and ere long she will undoubtedly go to pieces; but nothing will be lost but the mortal infection of the timbers and the lading; for she will be weighed up again, refitted, and numbered among the first rates, as soon as the Master Builder appears: for he has sworn that no vessel of mercy shall suffer eternal wreck, or be deluged in wrath.

The storm is now forgot, this part of the voyage is to be performed no more; the Captain is with me, the sun shines warm, and the good old wine is going about. O how sweet are

the visits of Christ, after faith and patience have been tried! He stands behind the wall in times of trouble; shews himself through the lattice when the proud heart is humbled; sits as a refiner by the side of the furnace, regulates the heat, and brings us out when self is denied; affords supporting grace, stirs up and discovers the base metal at the bottom, purges away the dross and tin, and makes the trial of faith more precious than gold, and the believer like the golden wedge of Ophir. Thus we go through fire and water, but he brings us out into a wealthy place: "the ransom of a man's life are his riches." Christ is our ransom, wealthy place, hiding place, resting place, and dwelling place.

Having enjoyed my Lord, soon after I made the land I went to survey the little hills, and attempted to water the ridges thereof, in hopes of the blessing of increase. We had some little appearance of the days of the Son of Man: the perfection of beauty shone forth; the fire was scattered from the altar; reviving sparks and living coals went forth at his feet; while his inflaming purifying influences warmed the heart, and brightened the countenance of those that are of the true circumcision.

With delight I looked upon Zion, the city of our solemnities; but with more delight to see the Master of Assemblies there. O! to stand in Christ's strength, begirt with his truth, enrobed with his righteousness, cheered with his inward testimony, illuminated with the light of his countenance, free in his liberty, and wise in his wisdom! then the eye of faith pursues his mysterious steps, which he makes glorious, while he display's his power and majesty as our King and our God in the sanctuary.

Upon the thirsty soul he comes down as rain upon the mown grass, and as showers that water the earth; which makes love, joy, peace, praise, and gratitude, to spring forth, while

himself delights in his own fruits. He unstops the ears of the deaf, opens them to pleasing discipline; causes a joyful sound to be heard behind, while the still voice informs the wondering listener, 'This is the way, walk ye in it.' With the hammer of his word he smites the inflexible heart of another; opens the everlasting doors, and makes the careless, senseless, stupid mortal attend to the voice, and reply, Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth. He takes the bane of guilt from the envenomed conscience of another, and sets the rescued sinner to banter the king of terrors, and the house appointed for all living: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" He couches the eyes of the blind, draws the veil from the understanding, lets a healing beam into the heart; and makes him that sat in darkness and in the shadow of death shew himself: the soul peeps out of obscurity and out of darkness, views his past life as a dream, supposes himself in a new world, and shines forth in the Sun that shall never go down. He takes another struggling in the horrible pit and miry clay, pulls him out of the deep waters, shews him the way of life and path of peace; fixes his wavering heart, puts a new song in his mouth, and ever after orders his goings. Takes another, that has been long struggling against sin in his own strength, by which he has only burdened his soul with additional fetters, and proclaims his enlargement; sets his soul at liberty, and tells him to run the race set before him, looking to his Great Deliverer; pours a little of the oil of myrrh on the handle of the unbeliever's lock, and makes the bolt of infidelity fly back, while lovingkindness and tender mercy take possession, and display their banner there; thus turning the den of dragons into a silver palace, while every power of the soul proclaims their Sovereign come, kiss the Heir-apparent, acknowledge his hereditary right to government, and crown him King at large. He lets the enthralled sinner, that has been long cooped up in the strong hold of flesh and blood, out of his cell; unfolds the door of hope in the valley of Achor; when slavish fear with her train of terrors and the discovered

tormentor skulks off, while the happy soul feels its plumage, spreads its wings, and escapes like a bird from the hand of the fowler, where it hopes to hear no more of the stormy, wind and tempest. He whispers peace to another: bids the waiting soul be patient, and quietly hope: they shall not be ashamed that wait for him: discovers and lays open the heart of the secure sinner, and spreads all his crimson crimes and carnal hopes before his face; saying, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine: restores the wanderer, binds up the broken-hearted, informs the misled, fixes the wavering, relieves the distressed, succours the tempted, suckles the weakling, confirms the unstable, smites the froward, disappoints the self-willed, feeds the hungry, satiates the thirsty, replenishes the sorrowful, and settles the marriage treaty with the suspicious soul that burns in the raging flames of cruel jealousy; and suffers himself to be held in the galleries.

Thus goes the King in the sanctuary, and spreads the savour of his name, and the bounties of his hand, until every broken heart be warm, every evidence bright, and the smiles of the face proclaim him the health of their countenance, and their God. Surely these are some of his ways, but how little of him is understood! John saw him walking among the golden candlesticks; and no wonder, when it is the office of our High Priest to trim the lamps, supply the vessels, and keep the lights burning; and who so fit as our Sanctifier, our Unction, and our True Light? What a wonderful mystery is the soul-ravishing, soul-dignifying religion of Jesus Christ, when really felt and enjoyed in the divine power thereof!

These thoughts were hovering about my heart and head at the time you was in the north; but my cruse began to fail, the tide ebbed, and my pen dragged heavily; therefore, like the man that began to build, I left off, not being able to finish. If any part appears too rapturous, let it be remembered they are some of the first springs that arose, after my recovery from a

fit of the ague and fever, in which I left some dregs of the old cask behind; and, as Job says, "My root was spread out by the waters, and the dew lay all night upon my branch, and my glory was fresh in me."

At present the Lord has left communing with me in that comfortable familiar way; and, like Abraham, I am returned to my place, where I hang in an even balance, poising betwixt self and Christ. I know he is gone up, but instead of going up after him, I am looking within, though I am certain I must look out before I can fetch him in: the spouse acted a wiser part, she went out to seek him, and she found him, and held him fast, nor would she let him go until she brought him to her mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived her. However, bless his name! he is a constant visitor; he visits our sins with the rod, and our souls with salvation: the former is to make us appear less than nothing, and the latter, that himself may be all in all.

The old man must be put off, mortified, yea, crucified; but there is no putting the old man off but by putting the new man on; no mortifying of him but through the Spirit, no crucifying him but by fellowship with Christ in his sufferings, and a conformity to his death. The new man may be known by his penetrating eye, seeing things that are invisible to bodily eyesight; by his nice ear, which tries the word as the mouth tastes the meat; by his delicate palate, "thy words were found, and I did eat them;" by his activity, "my spirit made diligent search;" by his affections, "I delight in the law of God, after the inward man;" by the image that he bears, "created in righteousness and true holiness;" by his delight in worship, "for a day in thy courts is better than a thousand;" by his heavenly mindedness, "they shall dwell on high, and see the King in his beauty;" by the things that he enjoys, life and peace; by his tenderness and warm adherence to the cause of God, "and of the rest durst no man join himself to them;" by

the company that he keeps, my delights are with the excellent of the earth, Psalm xvi. 3; by his divine origin, born of God; by the matter of his conception, the incorruptible seed that lives and abides for ever; by the relation that he claims to God, crying Abba, Father; by his attachment to sovereign grace, "of his own will begat he us, by the word of truth;" by his superlative love to his Father "being born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God;" by his glorifying his Creator; "this people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise;" by the fortitude he is equipped with, "strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;" by his spiritual fruits, "created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

The old Adam, or old man, may be known by his evil motions, "in my flesh dwelleth no good thing;" by his attachment to the old cause, "Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men;" by his cursed loyalty to the old usurper, adhering to the law in the members; by his infernal rebellion, the flesh lusting against the Spirit; by his unjustifiable war, "abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul;" by his false candour and Antinomian principles, he would have us cleave to the letter of the law, but wars against the law in the mind to bring us into captivity to the law of sin; by his assiduity in mischief, "when I would do good evil is present with me;" by the assistance that he gets from the devil to oppose the Spirit, "the things that I would not that do I;" by his doing despite to every thing that is good, "and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would;" by his delight in wickedness, "with my flesh I love the law of sin; by his vile affection for the reprobate, "I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh;" by his desperate hatred to God, "the carnal mind is enmity against God, it is not subject to his law, neither

indeed can be;" by his incredulity, "what sign shewest thou?" by his endeavouring to put us to shame in the Lord's work, "and I was with you in weakness and in fear, and in much trembling;" by his struggling to get from the cross, and his hatred to the mystery of it, by which he lost his life and power, as leader and ruler, "knowing that our old man is crucified with him;" by his incapability of enjoying any covenant blessing, "flesh and blood cannot enter the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption;" by the image that he bears, a fallen countenance and a hatred to the light; "Adam, where art thou?" By his loving to make a covering of every web, as Adam did of leaves; by his hypocrisy, the old man is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; by his indefatigable labours in opposing the new man, "if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me."

These things make the Shulamite appear as it were the company of two armies; black, but comely; as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon; as earthen vessels with spiritual treasure; as broken pitchers with burning lamps; as a flock of sheep spotted and spangled; as poor, yet having great riches; as foolish, and yet made wise; as the offscouring of the earth, and yet the excellent of it; as base, and yet honourable; as well known, and yet unknown; as illiterate, yet taught of God; as dying, and behold we live; as persecuted, but not forsaken; as having nothing., yet possessing all things; as troublers of the people, yet the chariot and horsemen of the nations; as turners of the world upside down, yet the pillars of it; as pests to society, yet the salt of the earth. As troublesome inmates, and yet more excellent than their neighbours; as lilies among thorns; as lambs in the midst of wolves; as a chaste spouse in a posse of concubines; as shining lights in a crooked anal perverse generation; as pilgrims in a strange country; as vessels of mercy in seas of affliction; blessed with grace, and burdened with corruption; endowed with faith, and

plagued with unbelief; with joyful hope, and slavish fear; with love to God, and a lust to envy; with patience and peevishness; with submission and opposition; resignation and strong rebellion; meekness and hardness; fortitude and cowardice; a willing mind, and reluctant flesh; real obedience and strong resistance. Persons who answer this complex character must expect their path to be as great a paradox as their persons. The way lies through crooked places made straight; rough places made plain; through darkness and through light; through fire and through water; through tribulation and ways of pleasantness; in deaths often, and alive always; by evil report and by good report; by the shadow of death, and by the path of life; through days of prosperity and days of adversity; with much sweetness and a deal of bitterness; heavy crosses and strong consolations; flourishing like a branch, withering like an herb; often refreshing and often parched; boasting of fatness, complaining of leanness; leaping for joy and sinking in grief; triumphing of victory, complaining of captivity; days of laughing and weeks of mourning; by the valley of vision, and the valley of Baca; by the mount of transfiguration, and by the mount of corruption; with the wings of a dove, and the body of death.

Since I put my hand a second time to this work my pen has acted the part of a restive horse, which runs away with his rider; for I had no thoughts of making such an in-and-out round-about journey as this of it. But if it describes any part of the road you have come, or if it affords you any encouragement respecting the future part of your journey, or any direction concerning it, it is wholly owing to kind Providence that I met with you.

You have read, I find, the few scraps of poetry that are addressed to me; the one part of which is a refutation of the other; it verifies the saying of the wise man, the fool while he holdeth his peace is counted wise, but if he open his mouth he

shall have destruction: because the lips of a fool swallow up himself, Eccl. x. 12.

I here present you with my skeleton of this learned and nerveless performance, and shall expect, according to the phrase of canters, your candid judgment on my dissection:

I just receiv'd twopenny worth in rhyme,
And smil'd to see the counsel and the chime;
Self contradiction through the whole abounds
A ring of changes, not a peal of rounds.

The judgment seat my petty judge assumes,
And to arraign the justify'd presumes;
He gives me laws, and tells me how to act,
What to advance, and what I must reject;

He smites my pride, my wisdom, and my wit:
Shews what will miss, and what is sure to hit
Arraigns my mystic thoughts and ready tongue,
And feigns to set me right by counsel wrong.

He owns the Saviour rais'd me up on high;
My call to preach the word he'll not deny;
Yet hints my climbing, not my coming in,
To make me out a minister of sin.

Of priestly pride he bids me to beware,
And shews a danger that engenders fear;
Yet deigns to nurse the senior clergy's pride,
Or stir them up that they may help deride.

My heart he searches, and each thought arraigns;
To find my motives, he will try my reins:
He bids me love, but tells me not to rail,
And shews what God will own, and what must fail:

He bids me preach, but never mention men,
Lest truth disturb the cockatrice's den:
At Antinomian errors I may bawl,
But at free-will must let no sentence fall.

My learned tutor having set my task,
And penetrated through my sable masks
His sire advis'd him to conceal his name,
Lest Truth should put this crafty son to shame.

At old Socinus I may storm at large,
At Arius the shaft of God discharge;
For these he owns would pull the Saviour down,
And, if they could, would rob him of his crown.

On lies like these my tutor drops a curse,
But spares Arminius, though by far the worse;
If they would fain see Jesus' kingdom fall,
These steal the crown, the sceptre, sword and all.

The stubborn will of man resists the Lord;
Self-will and Truth did never yet accord;
Remove the cause, its ill effects must fall
When man is nothing revelation's all.

Behold how bless'd are preachers of the word,
Idiots and knaves their kind advice afford!
Lest from destruction's path our feet should stray,
Both moles and bats will point us out the way!

He that judgeth us is the Lord; "it is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth?" There are those that condemn the just and justify the wicked, this is their presumption; "but the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man," 1 Cor.

ii. 14.15. This superiority of judgment in things spiritual is a privilege that results from sovereign grace. Judgment, according to truth or righteous judgment, is to be attended to; what is commonly called a judgment of charity, or candid judgment, is too often seen to be nothing but hypocrisy, or false judgment, favouring the children of falsehood, and the cause of Satan. I must, dear Friends, conclude, wishing you and your's the comfortable possession of the upper and nether springs, while I remain, in the cause of our sovereign Lord, your ready and dutiful servitor to command,

W.
WINCHESTER ROW.

H.

I have forgot the day of the month, but the date of the year is 88.

LETTER II.

TO MRS. K. RED-HILL, KINGSBURY.

DEAR MADAM,

I RECEIVED your kind invitation; and, if God permit, and the weather be fine, will dine with you under the tree in the little field next Thursday. I am to come, as Sheba did to Solomon, I find, bringing a very great train; but not to prove you with hard questions, knowing you are, through grace, an admirer of the wisdom of God in the mystery of the cross. O the manifold wisdom of God, wrapt up in his secret purpose from all eternity! one fold opened at the creation of the world; another at the revelation of grace in a promise to Adam; another when Israel forsook Egypt; another when salvation was finished on

the cross; another when it was proclaimed to the Gentiles; another at the conversion of the Jews; another at the close of the world; and another in the fruition of God. When Zion shall appear on his most holy hill, then shall be known in heavenly places, by the church, the manifold wisdom of God: and it is most certain that we shall be among them; we have the oath of God, the promise of God, the covenant, the bond of the covenant, the blood of the covenant, the immutability of the Most High, the witness and seal of the Spirit, and the testimony of a whole cloud of witnesses, to dash our unbelief out of countenance, and assure our faith of our safe arrival there. These bases, Madam, are laid to afford a strong consolation to them that have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before them. We are got the greatest part of our way; it is but a few steps more that remains; God has borne us from the belly, and has promised to be the same to old age, and even to hoary hairs he will carry us. Meanwhile, let us daily entreat him to teach us the heavenly art of living by the faith of his dear Son, who loved us, and gave himself for us. Then we shall live a life of communion with him by his Spirit, converse with him in the word of his grace, view his supporting and protecting hand, pursue the footsteps of his Providence, view ourselves as in his immediate presence, depend on his friendly aid and direction, fetch in our comforts from the higher world, know his good will towards us, and rejoice in the thoughts of his heart, which stand fast to a thousand generations.

To understand, submit to, believe in, make choice of, and love, his decrees and counsels, purposes and promises, as revealed in Christ Jesus to us, is real obedience to the Gospel. To believe in Jesus for pardon, peace, reconciliation, justification, sanctification, and redemption; to trust in him for the accomplishment of his promises; and to hope in him to make them all good with respect to our preservation and glorification; is dwelling in Christ Jesus. To enjoy a heavenly

mind that dwells and meditates on heavenly things, attended with a comfortable persuasion of Christ's love to us, which kindles a love to him, brings life and peace; and such have the mind of Christ.

Our unbelief shall not make the promise of God without effect; "if we believe not yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself." The weakest believer is as dear to Christ as the strongest; neither of them have any thing but what they have received, even as it hath pleased God to deal the measure of faith. It is true, strong faith brings most glory to God; and it is as true, that strong faith brings most trials to men. The great Shepherd is dotingly fond of and tender to the weaklings of the flock; he carries them in his bosom, bids such weak ones say, I am strong, and pronounces a wo to the world if they offend the least of them.

I hope thou wilt not incumber thyself with much serving, nor in this thing copy after Martha, but Sarah, who made three measures of meal into cakes, and baked them, at Abraham's command, on the hearth, while he prepared the calf, the butter, and the milk. As we are to dine under the tree, let it be one of Abraham's entertainments, who entertained him that has so often entertained us.

THE HISTORY AND MYSTERY OF ABRAHAM'S ENTERTAINMENT.

THE HISTORY.

IN days of old there liv'd a rev'rend sage,
Whose life of faith is call'd a pilgrimage;
Ordain'd to rove, of fix'd abode debar'd,
To teach his faith to seek the great reward.

This prince and princess, bless'd where'er they went,
Enjoy'd in mutual faith their homely tent
No bolts nor bars the palace to secure,
No shield but God to make their dwelling sure.

From plain to plain the roving household past,
He led their way through kingdoms wide and vast;
Reproved kings, and gave their courts alarm
'Touch not my prince, nor do my prophet harm.'

Thus travers'd they throughout the promis'd land,
Committing all to great Jehovah's hand.
The land their own, yet no possession call;
A burying-place they gain'd, and that was all.

Their mystic seed, who tread their pilgrim path,
Who mark their steps and learn to walk by faith,
Must share their fate; for, whether rich or poor,
May find a grave, but God allows no more.

The Holy Land, which was by promise given,
Their faith constru'd to be the type of heaven;
They ey'd their bom e, and walk'd with God their friend;
Who was in life their shield, in death their end.

O, happy pair; with peace and plenty blest;
Nor God refus'd to be their constant guest:
Throughout their course he lent his friendly aid,
And day by day his constant visits paid.

On Mamre's plains, that sacred spot of ground,
The tents were spread, the herds were feeding round,
The royal master seated at the door,
To see the bleating flocks that graz'd before;

The pensive sire lifts up his rev'rent eyes,
And sees three men appear in such disguise:
Up starts the prince, and runs the guests to meet,
And drops his grave devotions at his feet.

'My Lord,' he cries, if favour found with thee
Will gain attention to thy servant's plea,
Pass not from hence till I may entertain
My Lord, and his attendants, on the plain.

A little water shall be quickly brought,
With rich supplies my homely tents are fraught;
And rest yourselves beneath this spreading tree,
While I thy host will gladly wait on Thee.

I'll from the tent a morsel fetch of bread,
While you shall rest beneath the rural shade;

And after this you shall in peace pass on,
For therefore are ye to your servant come.

To Abraham's request He condescends;
He ne'er refus'd the banquet of his friends;
'Perform as thou hast said,' reply'd the Guest;
And Abraham obeys the high behest.

He to the royal tent will now repair,
And to the princess gives the bill of fare;
'Make ready, quick, of meal three measures fine,
For I have three in number come to dine.

Knead well the dough, make cakes upon the hearth,
And I'll command a youth to dress the calf;
Too much for thee to bear the toil and heat;
Bake thou the bread, and we'll prepare the meat.'

He leaves his orders at the matron's tent,
And to the grazing herd with haste he went,
And brings a Calf that's tender, young, and good,
And bids the servant haste to dress the food.

The whole serv'd up; the butter, milk, and veal,
With all the cakes that Sarah made of meal;
Beneath the tree he spreads the sumptuous feast;
And then, by waiting, serves the heavenly Guest.

The Lord partakes, the rev'rend saint attends,
And soon begins to talk of some amends:
The heart or hand that Jesus entertains
Can ne'er go unrewarded for their pains.

'Where now is Sarah? she doth not appear;
Where is thy wife; why not her presence here?
'She waits on me;' no scorn or slight is meant;
'Behold, thy handmaid's standing in the tent.'

The Lord reply'd, 'I'll certainly return,
And barren nature shall with vigour burn;
The time decreed shall first its circuit run,
And, lo, thy wife shall bear a promis'd son!'

THE MYSTERY

THE CALF.

THE Lord renews the ancient promise made;
To Abra'm's faith reveals the woman's seed,
In whose embrace the weary soul shall rest;
The seed in which the nations shall be blest.

This promis'd Son, this better fatted calf,
Once offer'd up on rebel man's behalf,
Our only hope, the long-expected seed,
Whose flesh is meat, whose blood is drink indeed.

'Tis this shall be Jehovah's mystic feast,
To which from age to age he bids his guest;
Thus Abra'm's dish, so tender, young, and good,
Points faith divine to rich and heav'nly food.

In future days the trumpet shall be blown,
To sound alarm to nations yet unknown;
Awaken'd minds shall fly the fearful doom,
And perish'd rebels hear, believe, and come.

He to his sons impulse divine shall send,
To bring them to their Father, God, and Friend;
With hearts contrite, and cheeks bedew'd with tears,
Shall feel the cancel of their vast arrears.

Poor prodigals, self-lost, distress'd, forlorn,
Their crying crimes and wretched state bemoan;
By hunger drove, by consolations led,
Shall seek, shall crave, and find the living bread.

Heathen, elect, return from banishment,
The angels triumph as the slaves repent;
Enrob'd, adorn'd, and cheer'd with comforts sweet,
With kind embrace the sire and sons shall meet.

The ransom'd race shall hear the joyful sound,
And sinners lost shall both be sought and found;
Their souls renew'd, and fed with heavenly bread,
By faith shall live as risen from the dead.

THE MEAL AND THE CAKES.

THE bread prefigur'd Abra'm's blessed race,
The bread of faces, in the secret place;
Abra'm, Isaac, Jacob; chosen men,
Were typify'd by Sarah's measures then.

Three strikes were bak'd and plac'd beneath the tree
To represent the former chosen three.
These sires and promis'd seed He will restore;
He calls himself their God for evermore.

But when the tribes to numbers great increas'd,
And from the yoke of Egypt were releas'd,
The Lord appear'd to own his rescu'd guest,
And pitch'd his sanctum in the wilderness.

Twelve cakes were order'd weekly to be made,
And plac'd upon the golden table spread;
Each cake presents a chosen tribe restor'd,
And plac'd, like Sarah's cakes, before the Lord.

Each Sabbath-day this bread must be remov'd,
To shew that stale devotion's not approv'd;
The loveless heart, that ne'er to Jesus burn'd,
Is but, like Ephraim, call'd a cake not turn'd.

The bread remov'd the death of saints might show,
How they by death must leave the courts below;
The stale shew-bread none but the priest must have,
The food of Him that lov'd, and dy'd to save.

Fresh bread was plac'd in order once a week;
And fresh devotees God will daily seek.
This shews succession of the chosen race
From age to age to stand before his face.

The blessed Saviour entertain'd his guest
By metaphoric taken from Sarah's feast;
Compares his kingdom, which he would reveal,
To leaven hid in Sarah's strikes of meal.

By leaven here the grace of God is meant,
That runs, and works, and spreads its sweet ferment,
Till all the ransom'd close with Christ their head,
And Jew and Gentile both become one bread.

This leaven hid, in time shall leaven all
The chosen remnant whom the Lord shall call;
By grace renew'd, and purg'd from guilt by blood,
Shall eat one bread, and be one bread for God.

The sanctum built, fram'd by Jehovah's mind,
Did represent the holiest divine,
Where Abraham, with all his blessed race,
Shall dwell, and shine before Jehovah's face.

THE MILK, AND THE USE OF IT.

ABRAHAM'S house consists of weak and strong;
Young men and fathers, babes, and children young;
Each craves his food, and each must be supply'd;
All sue for Christ, nor is their suit deny'd.

The sires must have their sav'ry dish to please,
And meat that's strong young men digest with ease;
But Benjamin must have his usual mess,
His comforts often rise above the rest.

The babe in grace will never seem content
Unless the breast afford it nourishment;
When bastards rude insult the heir and mock,
Then Sarah gives the son of laughter suck.

The heart in which the Saviour Christ is form'd
Must needs be fed, be swaddled, nurs'd, and warm'd;
Divine conception needs a food divine;
Christ eats his honey, drinks his milk and wine.

The little stranger craves the flowing breast
Depriv'd of this 'twill neither grow nor rest;
The lawful princess loves the children free,
Borne on her sides, and dandled on her knee.

Thus pious Sarah shew'd her tender care
When to the breast she plac'd the promis'd heir:
'My God has made me so to laugh,' said she,
'That all who hear will surely laugh with me.

Who would have told my hoary aged lord
That Sarah's womb to life should be restor'd?
A barren wife at ninety years to breed;
My lord an hundred when I bore the seed!

But Zion has two thousand years been wed,
And oft seems barren, to her Spouse's bed;
Yet num'rous sons of her have been foretold,
And they come forth as promises unfold.

From age to age she wears her hoary hairs,
And still prolific bears her promis'd heirs;
While blood divine can ransom from the curse,
She ne'er shall want a babe in grace to nurse.

Some of her sons are creeping to the tomb;
Some on the knee, and thousands in the womb.
Thus Hephzibah till time's no more shall bear,
Th' Ancient of Days shall own each promis'd heir.

Let Zion's infant race be nurs'd and fed,
As Sarah and the virgin mother did.
Who feeds the saint? the Saviour Christ must feed,
He dwells by faith in each believing seed.

The tender wife, with parent's love possess'd,
Will feed with bread before she takes the breast:
Thus Abraham and Sarah both conven'd
To make a feast the day that Isaac's wean'd.

Thus saints to Jesus shew their tender love
When to his little ones their bowels move;
They fee'd, they suckle, yea and wean them too,
As Sarah did, and then her Isaac grew.

THE BUTTER.

ESSENCE of herbage, thus distill'd, by kine
May figure out God's unctuous grace divine;

It cheers the mind, makes stubborn spirits soft,
And callous hearts by hope are rais'd aloft.

The Lord compares his own reviving word
To verdant fields with richest pasture stor'd;
By God enclos'd is this eternal mead,
In which the pastors and the flocks shall feed.

Food brought from hence, digested and prepar'd,
Gives satisfaction when by faith 'tis heard;
From hence the brook to Zion's household flows,
Like milk and butter, drawn from grass by cows.

This unction moves the scales from off the sight,
And brings the plan of sov'reign grace to light;
A precious balm, an unctuous oil of joy,
With which the saints of God can never cloy.

With milk and butter Jacob's seed were fed;
Of brooks of this in pious Job are read;
It makes the bolt of unbelief to yield,
While faith applies the truths that Christ
reveal'd.

THE TREE.

THE Tree, with its extended branches grown,
Might represent the plant of great renown;
The righteous Branch, the Olive Tree divine,
Beneath whose shade the saints of God recline.

This highest branch from David's cedar lopt,
This tender slip from off his twigs was cropt,
And set by God on favour'd Zion's hill,
Beneath whose boughs believing tribes shall dwell;

That all the trees that shade the fields may know
He'll raise the meek and bring the lofty low;
Dry up the fruitless; with his verdant screen
Revive the dry, and make the barren green.

This Branch divine on Zion's eminence
Our only shelter is, our sure defence;
Beneath whose shade the saints of God unite,
Whose fruit and shadow give them such delight.

This Tree of Life its monthly fruit shall yield,
And leaves, by which the nations bless'd are heal'd;
Whose verdant shade makes an eternal spring,
And screens the fowls of ev'ry plume and wing.

Since I began to puzzle my head with these few verses of rugged rhyme, by which I intend to puzzle your head as well as my own, I have heard of your being taken ill, which I am sorry for, knowing that no affliction is joyous but grievous. Your gout, Madam, and my ague, will remind us of mortality as long as we live; they are constitutional, like Timothy's bad stomach, or Elisha's sickness, which is called his sickness, whereof he died, 2 Kings xiii. 14. These will prey upon every pin and cord of these earthly tabernacles until the main standards give way; but, blessed be God, they are consecrated; the Lord hath visited and inhabited them, and has given us a pledge to assure us that they shall be raised again, as tabernacles that shall never more be taken down; nor shall one cord be loosed. The Saviour was partaker of flesh and blood with the predestinated children; he lived and dwelt in our nature, and offered himself up as a sacrifice by death for us; and as his Deity raised up his body, so he is the resurrection of ours; and now appears in heaven for us, as the first fruits of all that sleep in him. He is the Saviour of the body as well as the soul; even our flesh shall rest in this hope, our

end will be peace; the Lord is the strength of our heart, and our portion for ever, therefore be of good cheer.

Remember, Madam, that God doth not afflict his saints willingly, nor grieve them without cause; it is sin that he visits with the rod, and iniquities with scourges: we have a body of sin that must be mortified, besides the many things that we all offend in, and these call for stripes; and do we not procure these things to ourselves? Let not living souls complain then, seeing they are thus visited for the punishment of their sin. It is good for the believer to bear the yoke in his youth; frequent afflictions gradually produce resignation to the divine will, which affords a sweetness mingled with stripes, and makes the yoke sit easy and the burden appear light: these bring us to kiss the rod, and submit to the hand that appointed it; and we learn some comfortable lessons from it, as well as get purged from those evils that were the cause of it.

One who has been inured to the cross by a constant train of lingering afflictions doth not find half that resistance, reluctance, nor perverseness, that many do who, unexperienced in afflictions, are seized in the midst of health and strength; these often start, or fly back, like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke, and require some violent strokes to ply the iron sinew of the neck; until which is done there is little compliance to the will of God; we go like an ox to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks, not considering that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." I have observed some who have long been bowed down under the fear of death, till they have been ready to conclude themselves sick and almost at death's door; such have gone through the whole imagined scene with as much distress as if it had been real; and, when they have come to the trial, the whole sea of sufferings has been waded through before hand; and the soul, having obtained deliverance and

strength, has sustained the infirmities of the body; insomuch, that the formidable king of terrors has appeared but a mere shadow; afflictions having bowed them to the sickle before, and they have gone to the grave as a shock of corn fully ripe, coming in its season; or, as a lily gradually blown, and gathered in bloom.

Afflictions excite fear; they lead us to self-examination; they make us frown on the world, even though it smile upon us: confidence and hope bestir themselves; confession and prayer become seasonable; and the interest that we have in God will be claimed with all the boldness of faith: "by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit."

Afflictions are the portion of the Lord's people; it is the cup they are to drink of, and is no small proof of their adoption; All that the Lord loves he rebukes and chastens; and scourges every son whom he receiveth; they that are without chastisement are affirmed to be bastards and not sons. God's fatherly stripes humble the heart, and work out the old leaven, and so prepare the way for more grace. "He chastens us for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness." Under these chastisements we come to the bar of equity, reason matters over with God, get at the cause wherefore he contends with us, plead his promised mercy in Christ Jesus, while his own Spirit fills our mouth with arguments; and so the controversy ends in the chastisements of a covenant God and Father, instead of the killing sentence of an angry Judge; "we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world."

The whole train of troubles that fall to our share we shall have, but no more; all these things are appointed for me, says Job, and many such things are with him. What we have gone through will be endured no more; that part of our pilgrimage is finished; and God has hitherto helped us, and brought us

through; our strength has been equal to our day; what is yet to come the wheel of time will turn up as it runs: God is the same, his promise is the same, and faith is the same today as yesterday, and will be the same to the end of our race. "God doth deliver, says Paul, and we trust that he will yet deliver us."

As our afflictions are appointed, so there is an exact measure proportioned; "I will correct thee in measure, yet will I not leave thee wholly unpunished," Jer. xlvi. 28. This measure is scant, is filled to the brim, shook together, or heaped up and running over, just as our stubborn old man, whose mouth and back both call for strokes, requires it. God does nothing in vain; if there be no iniquity bound in the heart of the child, there is no need of the rod of correction to drive it out. Here the perfectionist has got the start of us; for we cannot say that we have made our heart clean, nor that we are pure from our sin; therefore we must expect the rod for our parts, unless, like Ephraim, we would sooner run away from our profession than submit to the hand of God: for it is written, that a child left to himself will fall.

The Lord discovers a most tender affection to his afflicted children when in the furnace; he verifies the proverb that speaks of him as a father; "he that spareth his rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him chasteneth him by times." Yet discovers himself a present help, yea a very present help in time of trouble; the Lord strengthens them upon the bed of languishing, and makes all their bed in their sickness, Psalm xli. 3; places his everlasting arm underneath them, and manifests himself the strength of their heart. The arm of supporting power, and the kind embraces of a loving God and Father, remove the troubles of the mind, make bodily afflictions light, and every part of the bed both soft and easy. These are times in which our souls make diligent search after God, and when he is found to be about our path, and about

our bed, spying out all our ways, and, observing the path that we take, he makes bare his delivering hand in our deepest necessities, and at a time when our eyes are up unto him; by which means we get more acquainted with him, by perceiving his precious salvation to be near to us; and we come forth as gold seven times purified, which encourages a holy familiarity with him.

He that is the Father of our mercies is the physician both of body and soul; he kills and makes alive, he wounds, and his hands make whole; the severe rod and the healing balm are both from him; no affliction comes by chance, no trouble springs out of the ground; nor shall either be a burden to us any longer than while we rebel: when submission takes place salvation is at the door.

Afflictions are good for us; when the grain is put into the sieve the chaff rises and flies away; when the branch is purged it brings forth more fruit; when the gold is purified it loses its dross; when the outward man decays the inward is renewed; "by sorrow of heart the spirit is broken," and by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better. Bodily health, bodily ease, temporal wealth and prosperity, contribute little to the growth or happiness of the soul, but contrariwise. In health, wealth, and strength, Solo-mort test his heart; and in prosperity David lost his eyes; and when Jeshurun waxed fat then he kicked, forsook God that made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation, Deut. xxxii. 15. An infected tabernacle becomes loathsome to the inhabitant; none like to dwell in a pesthouse who know in themselves that they have a better house not made with hands, that is, not of this building, eternal in the heavens. A persuasion of this made Paul long to be unclothed, and to be clothed upon with his house which is from above; that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

Tribulation worketh patience; and when patience has had her perfect work we are entire, lacking nothing; patience works experience; the patient waiter on God, and the patient saint under his chastening hand, experience many tokens for good, many soul-humbling visits, many comfortable lifts to heavenly-mindedness, many a pregnant promise to encourage and fill their hopes, and many a pleasing glimpse, which are so many earnest rays of the glorious inheritance of the saints in light. Thus experience worketh hope; "and hope maketh not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." The decay of the outward man often terminates in the renewal and revival of the man of grace; while the former is tumbling into ruins, the latter is building his nest in the stars.

In afflictions the soul seeks out her evidences; ponders over the word and work of God; searches after the girdle of truth to gird up the loins of the mind; feels for the lamp of salvation to burn afresh, that her state may appear clear and bright; and as soon as the house is searched by self-examination, and those things confessed that appear to be wrong, then it is swept in answer to prayer, and the peace found which perhaps was, with respect to the enjoyment of it, lost; then, O! then, the soul is ready; the loins are girded, the candle is lighted, and peace is enjoyed: the longing eye is fixed on the end of our faith and the end of our race; the lamp of salvation is in the hand of divine confidence, and the mantle of an imputed righteousness wrapped dose about; the soul then thinks it could smite the waters with the skirt of it, and go over even dryshod.

The girdle of truth, Madam, is a sure defence against the destroying attacks of the father of lies; "because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation."

The atonement of Christ is an eternal security against the flaming sword of vindictive justice; and, if found upon us, it will give us right and free access to the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. Under the type of this atonement Israel escaped the destroying sword at the midnight cry of Egypt; and under the antitype of that the wise virgins will escape when the second midnight cry proclaims the Bridegroom coming; when the same sword will come down on Idumea, the people of God's curse, to judgment.

An imputed righteousness is a breastplate sufficient to repel the force of every curse or condemning sentence of God's holy and righteous law; there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.

The breastplate of love guards the heart of an afflicted saint against the strong encroachments of surviving friends, who too often make inroads on the resigned and passive soul, and bring it into a strait between two; having a desire to continue, and a desire to depart, and be with Christ, which is far better; but which to choose they wot not.

The spirit of life in us is a divine security against a departure or separation from God, which is called the second death: such have everlasting life, and can never perish; none can pluck them out of God's hands, nothing can separate them from him; "he that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit;" astonishing mystery! This is the armour, Madam, that God has provided for his saints; and it is as sure a defence as the war with death is certain; "there is no man that hath power over the Spirit to retain the Spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death; and there is no discharge in that war." Put ye on therefore the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand, and having done all to stand; for "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, shall be able

to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

It is common with the people of God, when afflictions come suddenly on them, to be much surprised and dismayed: hence Peter tells you to "think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you," 1 Pet. iv. 12, for the same strange things are accomplished in our brethren that are in the world. Temptations, unbelief, doubts, fears, and dark clouds, often gather thick about the poor believer when he goes first into the furnace, which makes him gather all up into himself, until he finds, as the Scriptures say, that in his flesh dwelleth no good thing, and that the more he looks to himself the worse he gets; then he is glad to look to Jesus. "We had the sentence of death in ourselves," says Paul, "that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead." "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall abide for ever." Blessed is the man that trusteth not in his own heart; blessed is the man that leaneth not to his own understanding; blessed is the man that feareth alway, and that trusteth in the Lord with all his heart: "trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

With respect to myself, Madam, I go on the old way, through some tribulation and some consolation: but you may always know my spiritual affairs, and how I do with respect to them, if you look impartially into your own heart; for, "as in water face answers to face, so doth the heart of man to man." If the Lord shines on his word I can say with the Psalmist, "In thy light we see light;" "I have more understanding than all my teachers; for thy testimonies are my meditation" Psalm cxix. 99. But if he hide his face I am troubled, and ready to cry out, "I am a stranger in the earth, hide not thy commandments from me." If

the good work on my soul seems to flag, I say, Search me, O Lord, and try me; and if God answers my prayer I change my voice, saying, "Rebuke me not in thine anger, [lest thou bring me to nothing,] neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure." If God appears about my path and about my bed, and his visitations preserve my spirit, I wish all to know it, and cry, "Shew me a token for good, that they which hate me may see it." But if this be granted, and my God withdraws, then I say, "Who have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee."

Well may we be called little children, for we stand in need of guiding and upholding continually; and, blessed be our God, he has promised to guide us with his eye, to direct our work in righteousness, to keep the feet of his saints, and to hold us up in our goings, that our footsteps slip not. We are compassed about with many exceeding great and precious promises, while divine faithfulness and truth stand bound by a thousand ties to make them all good; search them out therefore, and consider them well. When thou art under the rod, remember every stripe lies in a promise; and look out then for another that promises a cure; "I will bring it health and cure, and I will cure them." When dejected or bowed down, it is written, "The mean man shall be brought low, and the haughty humbled;" and it is likewise written, They shall be exalted to safety. The Saviour told his disciples, that when the Comforter was come he should testify of him, and shew them things to come; and John tells us, in his Revelations, that "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy;" and I believe all the children of God may prophesy in turn. When I seem to go on prosperously in soul, in health, and in temporal affairs, I then prophesy that some trouble or sharp trial is coming upon me, for God hath set adversity against prosperity. And when bereft of all comfort, and I appear to be nothing but corruption, I then prophesy that the Lord will come and shine again; "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy," saith the prophet; "when I fall

I shall arise; when I sit in darkness the Lord shall be a light unto me. He will bring me forth to the light; and I shall behold his righteousness." If I have put up a fervent prayer, and , I then prophesy that I shall surely receive the things that I prayed for; "whatsoever ye ask believing ye shall receive;" and "faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen." When I am conscious that I have done wrong, and have brought guilt on my spirit, I then prophesy that I shall be well whipped for this; God hath promised to visit our sins with the rod, and our iniquities with scourges; and when the rod comes on I prophesy that it is for my soul's good; for God will not be always wroth, neither will he keep his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy, Micah vii. 18. When I have had a most comfortable time in the pulpit, and the power of God has attended me, I prophesy that the next sermon will be a barren one to me; and it often cometh to pass. When I go into any fresh place to preach the gospel, I prophesy of reproach and hard speeches; "the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city," says Paul, "saying, that bonds and afflictions abide me." As soon as I first felt the pardon of my sin, a lively hope to spring up in my soul, and love to God in my heart, I prophesied that my name was enrolled in the book of life; or, as Job says, that my record was on high; and it was a true prophecy: and every believer may prophesy of hope in his death, and of glory in heaven; for "the righteous hath hope in his death;" and whom God justifies them he also glorifies. By this my dear friends will perceive that I am turned prophet at last: and what I shall be next I wot not; but hope ever to remain, in the bonds of the gospel,

Your most affectionate,
And obedient servant to command,
W.H.

Winchester Row, Paddington,
July 4, 1788.

14.02.07.01

The Rule and a Riddle;

or, An Everlasting Task for Blind Watchmen and Old Women.

William Huntington (1745-1813)

Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment: It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well. Which when they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation. Acts x15:24, 28, 29, 31.

Preface.

CHRISTIAN READER,

I BEGAN the following letter with an intent to send it as an answer to a very polite one sent by an unknown friend to me: it came without a name, but I was to direct it to him with the

initials of his name to a certain number. When I had written about thirty folio pages of manuscript, I felt an indignation rising in my mind to publish it; and as the gentleman informs me that he sometimes hears me, I thought it was sure to fall into his hands: and as he seems to be an earnest inquirer after truth, I see no cause why he should be offended at the publication of it, as I think it is an answer of truth, and seeing it may be useful to other inquirers as well as to him, if God's blessing should attend it.

I wish thee, reader, to lay by all prejudice, and to settle thy faith in no man's wisdom, but in the power of God; and to do by this letter as God does with Zion "he lays judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet," and sweeps away all refuges of lies, and deluges all the hiding-places of hypocrites. And if thou wilt come to the light, if thou desirest to be sound in the faith, then criticize and scrutinize this little piece over and over again, and lay it to the word of God, and try it soundly by that standard, and see whether this be Antinomianism, or whether it be the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ, and judge accordingly. And when thou hast satisfied thyself on that head then compare it with the tracts of those evangelists who make the killing letter the rule of life; and when thou hast compared these together, and tried both by the word of God, then let the name of Antinomian be saddled upon the right ass. Give not up the good old way, though, according to prophecy, the way of truth be evil spoken of; but set thine heart to the highway, and turn not to the right hand, nor to the left, but run the race set before thee, "looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of faith."

And when thou hearest men in a pulpit begin to cut at others as Antinomians, without describing what they are, and dropping the subject of the gospel, saying, "but we must do justice to the law, for it is the believer's only rule of life;" then watch their countenance, and observe the scripture proofs

that they bring; and if their countenance falls, their tongue gets fettered, and no proof produced but a jumble of confusion, let it convince thee that they have not stood in God's council therefore he has confounded them before thee; Wisdom is justified of her children, and her children are to stir up themselves against the hypocrite.

The scriptures tell thee that the man who hath not the doctrine of Christ hath not God; and that those who bring not Christ's doctrine are not to be received: And by the doctrine and spirit of Christ the children of God and the children of the devil are made manifest. But in our days matters are altered; the pure gospel is called Antinomianism: valour for truth, zeal for God, fervour in devotion, and earnestness in preaching, are called "the effects of a bad spirit!" But, twisting like the serpent, warping like the willow, shaping a conversation and a sermon to please all and offend none, except it be the experimental Christian; these are the effects or the fruits of an excellent spirit this is the quintessence of candour; this is doing the work of an evangelist, and making full proof of the ministry. These people will not be thy judges, Reader, in the great day; Christ is thy judge and it is not what is called candour, that will acquit thee at his bar; it is the word and spirit of truth that must make thee free, if thou wilt be free indeed; "the word that I have spoken," says Christ, "the same shall judge them in the great day."

Be not offended, Reader, at the title of this little piece "A Rule and a Riddle; or, An Everlasting Task for Blind Watchmen and Old Women." It is taken from real facts from a synod that was convened, consisting of some watchmen and some old women; where counsel was taken against one that never took counsel against them. I call it an everlasting task, because I think the doctrines cannot be overthrown. It is not directed to any body; if every body be innocent, it can be applicable to none; no person has a right to make application unless he be

concerned. The Rule and the Riddle both, with respect to application, are to those to whom they may belong, and for the use, information, or satisfaction of any that choose to try their skill. Reader, fare thee well, and forget not that it is by the testimony of God's word, of his Spirit, and of thy own conscience, that thou must stand or fall at the bar of God; therefore, love the truth and peace; while I rest and remain (with the little knowledge that God has been pleased to give me) thy servant in the truth, and for the truth's sake.

WILLIAM HUNTINGTON, S. S.

The Rule and a Riddle

Part I

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED the packet, which you directed to me, consisting of your very long epistle, of a circular letter in print, and of a sermon on the promises of God. I read your epistle without offence, as I believe you meant well, which I gather from your polite address, civil treatment, and cautious way of expressing yourself; such a letter I have never received from any person who has thought proper to expose or oppose me, as a maintainer of licentious doctrines. Their letters have generally been filled with the scurrility of Billingsgate, and without any truth fairly stated which has only served to convince me that such persons are without Christ, and have no hope in the world.

Was it in my power, I would address you as a gentleman of sense and a scholar, for both appear in your affectionate epistle; but I have neither politeness nor learning, as it is now called, yet will I give you the best answer I am capable of, in the language of Scripture.

If I know any thing of my own heart, I can truly assert that I wish all that fear God to know what he hath done for my soul; and, in declaring it, I desire to speak as the oracles of God; and to live up to what I preach, as far as grace shall enable me while in this body of death; and I wish some of our zealous advocates for Moses would do the same, by letting their light so shine before men, that others might see as well as hear of their works; seeing it is not the hearers nor the contenders for the law that are just before God; but the doers of the law shall be justified.

That the ten commandments are the believer's only rule of life, was insisted upon by the first person that I ever disputed with on that subject; which he endeavoured to enforce and prove by Paul's quoting part of it in his Epistle to the Romans, which church he supposed to consist of saints only by Paul's addressing them as the "beloved of God called to be saints. Not considering that lilies and thorns, servants and sons, Israelites anti hypocrites, wise virgins and foolish ones, are to go and grow together as tares and wheat until harvest. And on account of this mixture it is that the killing letter and the promise of life must go together; the promises are to the heirs of promise; and we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law, Rom. iii. 19. I asked the gentleman which of the commandments he meant? And he replied, "Those in the 20th chapter of Exodus." And if those ten commandments are the believer's only rule the other parts of Scripture one would think might be dispensed with by the believer; for, if that law be his only rule of life, what

can he want more? Though, by the bye there is not the command to love God in that chapter.

"If the ten commandments in the letter be the believer's only rule," Abel, who obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts, had no rule to go by. Enoch walked with God three hundred years, Gen. v. 22, and was translated that he should not see death; for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God, Heb. xi. 5, yet had no rule of life. Noah the just, who took the warning of God, prepared an ark, condemned the world, and became heir of an everlasting righteousness, was without rule. Abraham, the friend of God, and the father of the faithful, and heir of the world, must walk at an uncertainty also. Melchisedec, king of righteousness, and king of peace, priest of the Most High God after whose order Christ is a priest for ever and ever had no rule for his order. Yea, all the ante-diluvian and post-diluvian saints, down to the time of the children of Israel's compassing the Mount Sinai, must be left to walk and to worship at random; for, if the letter of the law, or the ten commandments delivered at Sinai, be the believer's only rule of life, it is clear they were without that rule. Yet they were not without law to God, for they feared him, loved him, and walked with him and they were under the law of faith to Christ for they saw [him] at a distance and embraced him, were united to him, and became one spirit with him.

I have sometimes wondered why these ancient saints should be set forth with the encomiums of being God's friends, walking with him, obtaining witness that they were righteous, obtaining promises, obtaining good report, as strangers and pilgrims upon earth, of whom the world was not worthy, seeking an heavenly country, and a city that hath foundations, despising all worldly pleasure, self, and honour, leaving their own house, home, and country, without any desire to return thither; and why we should be commanded to go forth by the

footsteps of this flock, and, be said to be compassed about with this cloud of witnesses, and be directed to follow those "who through faith and patience now inherit the promises;" when we know that if they were on earth, in this refined age, they would be ranked among the worst of Antinomians.

It is strange that the believer is not commanded to look to Moses the lawgiver, and to the bondwoman that is under the law, instead of looking to Abraham our father, and to Sarah that bare us, whom God called alone, and blessed and increased, Isaiah li. 2. Paul would have us tread in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised, and declares that "the promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not to him, or to his seed, through the law," Rom. iv. 12, 13, and yet affirms, that as many as are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. And this promised blessing, and promised heirship, was given to Abraham, and to his seed four hundred and thirty years before the law, or before our only rule of life was given.

What rule had those glorious pilgrims to walk by, who obtained so good a report, (or so good a testimony) from God? Paul tells us, that Abel offered to God, and obtained witness that he was righteous by faith then faith was his rule of worship: that Enoch walked with God by faith then faith was his rule of walk: that Noah condemned the world by faith then faith was his rule of judgment. "By faith Abraham, when he was called, went out not knowing whither he went" then faith was his rule, by which he took his journey, though he knew not whither, and his obedience was the obedience of faith. But if he had been favoured with our only rule of life, he might have known whither he was going, and not have gone in ignorance, and his obedience would have been the obedience of the law instead of faith. But Paul will have it that all Abraham's children are in the same strait that their father was for they walk by faith, not by sight. But if the letter of the law

be the only rule that the believer is to walk and live by, then he walks by sight, not by faith; he looks at the things that are seen, not at the things which are not seen. It is by faith that Moses saw him who is invisible, and by faith we must look at the things that are not seen, which are eternal.

Paul says, that "he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him;" then faith must be the rule of his coming. "We have access, by faith into this grace wherein we stand," Rom. v. 2 then faith is the rule of our approach to God. "The just [man] shall live by his faith," Hab. ii. 4 then faith is the just man's rule of life. "We walk by faith, not by sight," 2 Cor. v. 7 then faith is our rule of walk. "Thou standest by faith," says Paul, Rom. xi. 20 then faith is the rule of a believer's standing. "Whatever ye shall ask believing, ye shall receive," says Christ; then faith is the rule of that branch of worship. "By faith Enoch had this testimony, that he pleased God; but without faith it is impossible to please him," Heb. xi. 5, 6 -then faith is a rule that God approves of, and is pleased with. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin" then faith is a perfect rule of holiness. "He that believes is justified from all things, from which he could not by the law of Moses" then faith is our rule of righteousness. It is by faith that we overcome the world. To lay hold on eternal life, is to fight the good fight of faith, according to Paul; "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith" then faith was the rule of his warfare, and the rule of his race; and it was the grace of God that made Paul obedient to that rule. "We have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith," Rom. i. 5; that is, by Christ we have received grace to save our souls, and apostleship to be of use to the church, not as a reward of our obedience, but to furnish us with power, to make us obedient to the faith, among all nations for his name, Rom. i. 5 then faith is the rule of apostolic obedience; for it cannot be called receiving grace for

obedience to the faith, if faith be not the gracious man's rule of obedience.

Paul counts all things but dung that he may win Christ, and he found in him; not having his own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, and tells us to "walk by the same rule, and mind the same thing," Phil. hi. If you take this rule of Paul's to be his pressing forward, or any of his attainments, it is answered, by faith he pressed forward, and by faith he attained; for else his pressing and attaining had been nothing but sin; for whatsoever is not of faith, according to Paul's doctrine, is sin.

By faith Christ dwells in our hearts, and by faith we dwell in him; and in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature, which is Christ formed within us: "and as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God," Gal. vi. 15, 16. Faith is the rule of life according to the revealed will of God in Christ Jesus; "and this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day," John, vi. 40. Thus faith appears to be the believer's rule of life, according to the will of God in Christ Jesus; and the letter of the law is the bond-children's rule of life "he that doth these things shall live in them." Let him do according to this rule and he shall live. The law is not the rule of believing, but of doing; "the law is not of faith, but of works, and the man that doth them shall live in them," Gal. iii. 12.

If to see the Son, and believe on him, entitles us to everlasting life according to God's will, then faith must be the rule of that life; and one would think that, if he that liveth and believeth shall never die, faith must be a safe rule to live by.

I have sometimes thought that, if the letter of the law in the 20th chapter of Exodus be the believer's only rule of life, he

would be sorely put to his shifts when the devil sets a troop of Arians, Socinians, or Sabellians at him; he would find these words " I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage; thou shalt have no other gods before me." This rule would hardly set him right. It is by faith that we apprehend Christ; it is by faith we lay hold of him, as the hope set before us, Heb. vi. 18. It is by Christ that we believe in God, 1 Peter i. 21, and "we receive the promise of the Spirit through faith," Gal. iii. 14. By this rule we come to a saving knowledge of the Trinity; for the eye of faith is a light by which we see what is the fellowship of the mystery, Eph. iii. 9. Without the assurance of understanding, there will be no true acknowledgment of the mystery of God [the Holy Ghost], and of the Father, and of Christ, Col. ii. 2. The ten commandments will never guide a man into this mystery, nor set him right if he errs in it.

In your epistle, Sir, you tell me that," if I do not enforce the law as the believer's rule of life, I must in some sense make it void." I think I have sufficiently proved that Paul's rule of life and walk was faith; and he asks, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law," Rom. iii. 31. Paul insists upon it that faith worketh by love, and tells us that "love worketh no ill to his neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law," Rom. xiii. 10. If this doctrine be the fulfilling of the law, it cannot make it void.

The sermon that you was so kind as to send me is pregnant with a deal of scholastic unscriptural logic, little better than nonsense, which may serve to display the worldly wisdom of the author, and excite the admiration of unenlightened people. But any spiritual person will easily perceive that he knows nothing of the killing letter of the law, or of the spiritual power of the gospel.

The law, as the believer's rule of life, he endeavours to enforce "from the fitness of things," which are phrases that stand for any thing or nothing, just as the author pleases. But he does not satisfy me concerning the things that fit. God grant he may not go out of the world with this confusion in his heart! if he does, it is to be feared that he will find the ministration of death and his carnal mind when they come to gripe one another in a dying hour, will not fit so easy as he imagines. Paul delighted in the law of God after the inward man, Rom. vii. 22. And, according to Paul, the law of God and the inward man are things that will fit; a new heart and a new spirit are things that join well; a sense of God's love to us, and a pure love to him, brings about a union that fits sweetly. "Believe," says the Saviour, "that I am in you and you in me:" and when Christ crucified and a broken heart come together, they are things that fit as exactly as the branch in the vine, or as the foundation with the superstructure. And if the author of this sermon dies a stranger to the fitness of these things, as he seems to be at present, it had been good for him if he had never been born. Persons who are strangers to an union with Christ by the Spirit know nothing savingly of the spiritual state of things; they may make a noise about the law just to blind folks, but they bring forth no more fruit to God's glory than a branch that is "not in the vine," John xv. 4.

A friend of mine once asked a certain divine in London "What he thought of the law as the 'believer's only rule of life?'" He replied, "The believer must look with one eye to Christ, and with the other to the law." But he brought no more proof from the word of God than this author has, who attempts to prove it by the fitness of things. My friend replied, "Then every believer must squint." However, there is no call for squinting in this matter; Christ says, "Look unto me, and be saved, all ye ends of the earth;" and adds, "I will keep that man in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on me:" and Patti tells us to "run the race set before us, looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of

our faith," Heb. xii. 2. "Looking with one eye to the law, anti with the other to Christ," is erring from wisdom's rule of direction; which is, "Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established," Prov. iv. 25, 26.

The printed letter that you sent me is a discord upon the same string I perceive; but the author will never be able to prove from the Scriptures of truth, that the ten commandments in the letter are called the believer's rule of life. He tells us that "it is implied;" this brings to my mind an old woman, who had been long contending for this letter rule; being asked "to give a reason of the hope that was in her:" on suspicion of her having none, replied, "You will find my experience in such a verse of Jeremiah's prophecy;" hinting that it was implied there. Which served to convince the inquirer that she had no hope but what stood on the paper. I suppose all the experience of the devil is implied in four texts of Scripture; one says "he is cursed above all cattle;" another, that "he believes and trembles;" another, that "he is cast down to hell;" anti another, that "he is reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day," Jude vi. But the devil has another experience beside this, which will stick close to him, and be like a thousand hells within him, when every letter of Scripture text will be burnt: when the killing letter has slain the reprobate, it has done it's office; the living Word abides for ever, which is in the hand of the Spirit, and which dwells in the saints of God, will be settled in heaven, and abide for ever there. The professor must have Christ in him the hope of glory, if ever he arrives safe to the happy enjoyment of God in heaven. People, who have no hope but in the written letter of Scripture, will find that the flood of wrath and the final conflagration will leave them without an anchor in that storm; and I am persuaded that the believer's rule of life must be found in his heart also, if ever he lives with God in heaven. If the believer's rule be implied in the ten

commandments, according to this gentleman's letter, I believe it would lie there long enough before he would find it out. To put on the Lord Jesus and walk in him; to put off the old man daily, and to put on the new man, which is created in righteousness and true holiness; to follow Christ in the regeneration; to mortify the deeds of the body by the Spirit; to deny self, and take up the cross daily; to stand fast in gospel liberty, and not be entangled with the yoke of bondage; to renounce all confidence in the flesh, and rejoice in Christ Jesus; to hate one's own life, or be unworthy of the Saviour; to walk in the Spirit, in order to escape the fulfilling of the lusts of the flesh; to know that the "strength of sin is the law;" and that it is the ministration of death and condemnation; are things that, if they are implied in the ten commandments, they would lay there, concealed from the believer, to all eternity, if the mystery of faith had not revealed them, or the "gospel, that brings life and immortality to light," had not brought them to light also. When "Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart," 2 Cor. iii. 15. By the law is the knowledge of sin, but it brings not the path of life to light; "that is the new and living way," Heb. x. 20, and is revealed from another quarter; "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ," 2 Cor. iv. 6.

I cannot find it in my heart to criticize the reasons that you assign, because you have not addressed me, as some have, with insolence and lies; but you seem as desirous of information, as you are to inform me, or set me right; therefore, without taking much of your letter to pieces, I will endeavour to make it appear that the believer in his liberty is in no "sense of the word an outlaw," nor yet without law: for he is in no wise excluded from any benefit that arises from the law, "but under grace, Rom. vi. 14.

Paul says "To them that are without law [I became] as without: law, (being not without law to God but under the law to Christ), Rom. ix. 21. Hence it appears that the believer is not without law to God. And, as I have long made it my study to consider the believer's laws, I will endeavour to bring them forth, and set them in as fair a light as I am capable of, and see whether they amount to what is called Antinomianism, or whether they amount to real divinity; because Paul says, we do not make void the law through faith.

Wisdom affirms, "whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed; but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded;" and then tells us that "the law of the wise is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death," Prov. xiii. 13, 14. Let it be observed that Wisdom's wise man, who is always opposed to the fool, is, in New Testament language, the believer, who is opposed to the infidel; and this law is emphatically called the law of the wise, which is the same as household Faith, being their law as particular, as belonging to none else; and it is called a fountain of life.

A fountain is supplied kern its own spring, and yields his contents to supply the poor and needy, when they seek water, and there is none elsewhere, and their tongue faileth for thirst, that they may drink and not Famish, or die by famishing. So this "law of the wise is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death." Can this law of the wise be the ten commandments, which are affirmed by some to be the believer's only rule of life! I trow not. Paul tells us the letter killeth, 2 Cor. iii. 6, that it is the law of death, Rom. viii. 2, that the law worketh wrath, Rom. iv. 15, and is the ministration of death and condemnation, 2 Cor. iii. 7. 9. Nor does our faith in Christ alter the nature of the law, or make it to us what it was not before. It is the yoke of bondage, and gendereth to bondage still; hence we are exhorted to "stand fast in our liberty, and not be entangled again with that yoke of

bondage," Gal. v. 1, it still retains its binding nature, even to the believer, and will entangle him again if he looks to it for help. This rule of life (as some term it) is still a killing letter; hence God declares, that we are delivered from the law, that being dead, wherein we were held, "that we should serve [him] in nearness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter, Rom. vii. 6. If the law be a killing letter, and the law of death, it cannot be a fountain of life; by which the wise man departs from the snares of death. We know that sin is a transgression of the law, and that where there is no law there is no transgression; and that death is the sentence of the law; if so, the commandments are the snares that hold the sinner in the arms of death. The first snare that entangles a thief, is the law; and if he is left to the mercy of that, it will serve him as the spider does the fly in the web, never let him go till it has killed him; it is a killing letter, and so all will find it that weave the spider's web; no web can be woven that will cover the soul on that loom; the commandment is exceeding broad. Nor can we suppose that our calling the ministration of condemnation the rule of life will alter this matter, or turn a killing letter into a living fountain; for that law gives no life, therefore it can be no part of this law of the wise. "Had there been a law given that could have given life, verily righteousness should have come by the law," Gal. iii. 21. This law of the wise, that is, a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death, is what Paul calls "the ministration of the Spirit opposed to the ministration of death," 2 Cor. iii. 11. Solomon's fountain of life is Paul's ministration of the Spirit; and Solomon's snares of death is Paul's law of death. The wise man's law of life is the same as the living water that the Saviour gives, "that is in the believer as a well of water springing up into everlasting life," John, iv. 14.

Blessed be God for ever, it is a fountain of life indeed, by which the poor believing sinner departs from the snares of death, and that for evermore; or, to speak in the apostle's

language, "The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death," Rom. viii. 2, that is, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ has made me free from the law of sin that works in my members, and from the law of Moses, which is the ministration of death. We may call this "law of the wise the believer's only rule of life," without talking nonsense.

But perhaps my unknown friend may ask, why this dispensation of the Spirit is called a law? To which I answer; first, because of its binding power, the cords of everlasting love, the bond of peace, and the girdle of truth, will hold the soul faster than all the lifeless commandments in the world, whether they be from heaven or of men. Secondly, It is called a law, because of its constraining power the love of Christ constrains us, says Paul; it is a powerful constraint from evil, and mightily influences the mind to that which is good. Thirdly, Because of the obedience it produces; the Blessed Giver of this law "circumcises our hearts, that we may love the Lord our God with all our heart and with all our soul, that we may live," Deut. xxi. 6. It produces the fruits of the Spirit, which is evangelical obedience; we are taught of God to love one another by the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, which is attended with "filial fear that keeps us from departing from God," Jer. xxxii. 40. "God directs our work in truth by it," Isa. lxi. 8, "and works all our works in us," Isa. xxvi. 12, he works in us an inclining and moving power, "both to will and to do, and that of his own good pleasure," Phil. ii. 13. Well may this be called the law of the Spirit, when it produces such spiritual obedience; well may the "desire of the righteous when it cometh, be called a Tree of Life," Prov. xiii. 12, seeing it produces love, joy, peace, meekness, temperance, &c. This law of the wise is called a fountain, because it plays all its productions high enough to reach the spring from whence it is supplied; evangelical obedience springing from the Spirit of life and love, directed to the glory of God as the believer's

chief end, makes the assembly of the saints like "a garden enclosed, a spring shut up, or a fountain sealed," Song iv. 12. This law of the Spirit of life produces more real obedience to God in one hour, than ever hath been produced by all the living rules that have been drawn by human wisdom from killing snares. This law of the wise is, "Christ's yoke that is easy, and it is his burden that is light," Matt. xi. 29, 30, those souls that are under this, are, "the circumcision that worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh," Phil. iii. 3. God writes this law on our hearts, "and in our minds does he put it," Jer. xxxi. 33. This is the "law that goes forth of Zion (not from Sinai), and is the word of the Lord that went from Jerusalem," Micah, iv. 2, and those that receive it are the "people that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus," Rev. xiv. 12. By this "law are the servants of God warned, and in keeping this there is great toward, for charity abideth for ever," Psalm xix. 11. This is the holy commandment delivered unto us, from which legions have continually departed," 2 Peter ii. 21, because it was only delivered, to them in the letter of it, not put into them as a fountain of a life. Hence they begin in the Spirit, or with the dispensation of the gospel, and end in the flesh, or under the killing letter.

The law of the wise may be called a fountain of life, because it quickens the dead soul, and raises it to a lively hope; it procures that life which, the law promised but could not give, because we, could give it no obedience; but this law enables a soul to live unto God, to live by the faith of the Son of God; it produces a lively, motion toward God; it is attended with life and peace, and enables us to love God that we may live eternally with him.

Thus, Sir, the believer is not without law to God, for God has written his law in his heart, and he is under this law to Christ as his eternal head, king, and ruler. And I think this is

speaking as the oracles of God, and preaching of it is doing the work of an evangelist, and making full proof of the ministry, much better than telling poor blind souls "to look with one eye to Christ, who is our life, and with the other to the law, which is death;" and it is better than brining "rules of life from a law which is the strength of sin," 1 Cor. xv. 5, 6, or telling people that the rule of life is implied in the killing letter; or that it appears from the fitness of things; when we know that a living soul serving God in the oldness of the letter, are things that can fit no better than darkness and light; the eye of faith and a blinding veil; perfect liberty and a yoke of bondage; real love and a gendering to fear; a display of mercy, and a revelation of wrath; one working friendship, and the other the motions of sin and vengeance. Are these the things that will fit; or what is the fitness that rises from them? I should "like to hear that author again of this matter," Acts xvii. 32.

In order to convince my friend farther that we "do not make void the law through faith," or represent the believer without law to God, I will fetch in another law, which is not another, but a branch of this that has been considered; and it is a branch that debases the proud boaster, cuts up the self-righteous, exposes the foots lays the legalist in the dust, exposes the blind guide finishes the spiritual soldier of Christ with weapons against him and secures the whole glory, of salvation to God, to whom it belongs, and to whom it must be given without reserve.

"By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified, for lay it is the knowledge of sin; but the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets, even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his

righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law; of works? Nay, but by the law of faith," Rom. iii. 26, 27. But what doth Paul mean by the law of faith? Does he mean the gospel, which is sometimes called faith, as Paul, who persecuted the saints in times past, is said now to preach the faith? No; for the gospel is the revelation and explanation of the covenant of promise; and all the blessings of it are the free gifts of God; Christ the covenant head the Spirit of promise, everlasting righteousness, everlasting salvation, life, and glory, are all the gifts of God, held forth in unconditional promises, which are all yea and amen, to the glory of God, and our everlasting salvation.

As all these things come freely from God from the better covenant, a covenant of promise made with Christ, and with his seed in him, and are purely free in their fountain, in their administration, and bestowed to a God dishonouring and hell-deserving people, irrespective of any work, worth, or worthiness in them, there can be nothing like a law in it; that is, there is nothing that binds with rigour to obedience, or that threatens damnation for non-performance; there is nothing in it that sets a man to work for life, reckoning the reward to be of debt; for God gives grace to make us obedient to the faith, and by grace he preserveth and rewardeth the faithful. The Lord gives both grace and glory, and will display the riches of his grace in glory by Christ Jesus: yea, even the kingdom itself is given of God in his good pleasure. Therefore, I presume that the word of faith dwelling richly in us, the spirit of faith working powerfully, and the grace of faith working by love, purifying the heart, holding an imputed righteousness, and giving Christ a residence within us, is Paul's law of faith. For it is not hearing the gospel, nor imbibing a speculative knowledge of it, that will exclude boasting, but the word, Spirit,

and grace of faith, when powerfully applied to the heart, will stop the sinner's mouth, and for ever silence him upon that head. If you ask why Paul calls this the law of faith? I answer, because faith works by love, which is the fulfilling of the law, which is the end of the commandment, and lays hold of Christ, who is the end of the law; and puts on an everlasting righteousness adequate to the law; because it is Christ's obedience thereto, and because "he that believes hath everlasting life," which was the greatest thing the law ever promised-and which that law could never give; and because the believer has the Spirit of holiness as the law is holy; by faith, he is a just man, as the law is just; a good man, as the law is good; a spiritual man, as the law is spiritual: anti thus "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," Rom. viii. 4. I will shew my friend that I have yet to speak on the saints' behalf, on the subject of their being not without law to God.

As Paul divides the believer from the infidel, and divides the laws between them also, applying the law of faith to the believer, and the law of works to the infidel, declaring that "whatsoever things the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law," Rom. iii. 19; "and those that are under the law are under sin," Gal. iii. 22; "and ureter the curse," Gal. iii. 10: so James divides the hearer from the doer. He tells us that "God of his own will begat us with the word of truth," that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures; and then tells us to be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving ourselves. By doing, he means the works or fruits of faith " Shew me (saith he) thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works; and then adds for if a man be a "hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass, for he beholdeth himself and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was." Here James compares the gospel preached to a glass, the light of which, reflecting upon the sinner's

conscience, makes manifest the state of his soul; as Paul speaks "but we with open face beholding as in a glass," 2 Cor. iii. 18: so here the sinner hates the light, and goeth his way; he will come no more to it; this glass has shewn and the light of it has reprov'd his deeds, therefore he hates it, and goeth his way into the world again, and so hardens his heart and sears his conscience, until all is forgot, and then he rank,, into a deeper security; or, as the text saith, "he straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was: but whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth in it, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, tiffs man shall be blessed in his deed," James, i. 25. Here is a law of perfect liberty, or a perfect law of liberty, to be looked into, and to be continued in, if a man will be blessed in his deed.

If my friend asks what this law of liberty is, I will endeavour to shew him. It is taken from the law of release, when the jubilee trumpet was to be sounded, and liberty to be proclaimed according to the tenor of that law. "If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years shall he serve, and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing: If he came in by himself he shall go out by himself; if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him," Exod. xxi. 23. Every poor elect sinner is like this Hebrew servant, "he has sold himself for nought," Isaiah, lii. 3, and is the servant of sin, and under the dominion of the law two hard masters indeed, who show no favour; he that is under the dominion of sin is also under the law of death; he that is delivered from the power of sin, is delivered from the law also, as the apostle intimates, "sin shall not have dominion over you; but why? because you are not under the law," which is "the strength of sin," I Cor. xv. 56, "but under grace, which reigns through righteousness unto eternal life." In this state of servitude the sinner live till "the great trumpet be blown," Isaiah, xxvii. 13, and the "joyful sound reaches his ears," Psalm lxxxix. 15, by which, "Christ preaches

deliverance to captives, and set at liberty those that are braised with this yoke of hard service, Luke iv. 25.

When the Hebrew servant's liberty was proclaimed, he was delivered from his master, from the command of his master, from the threatening of his master, and from the service of his master he was a free man he shall, says God, go out free; and yet this man, that went out at the year of jubilee, is, says God, my servant, Lev. xxv. 42. So the believing sinner is "delivered from the law, that being dead," Rom. vii. 6; from the "command of the law," Acts xv. 24, "for the letter killeth," 2 Cor. iii. 6 From the "curse of the law," Gal. iii. 13; and from the service of the law, for he shall "serve in the newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter," Rom. vii. 6. He is a "free man: if the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed, John, viii. 36; and yet he that is this "free man is Christ's servant," 1 Cor. vii. 22; for though he is not under the law, yet he is not "without law to God, but under this law of liberty to Christ, who has made him free indeed," and he that looketh into this law of liberty, and continues in it, shall be blessed in his deed.

No doubt but many of the mercenary Hebrew masters were grieved at this law of liberty; they were galled and chafed in their minds to see their slaves go out free. Hence we read that "Zedekiah made a covenant with all the people at Jerusalem, to proclaim liberty to their servants unjustly detained: That every man should let this man-servant or maid-servant, being an Hebrew or Hebrews, go free: that they should not serve themselves of them. When the princes and people heard of this covenant of the kings, they obeyed it, and let their servants go free; but afterwards they turned, and caused the servants and the handmaids, whom they had let go free, to return, and brought them into subjection as servants and handmaids again."

"I made a covenant with your fathers," says God, "that when the servant had served six years ye shall let him go free, and you had now turned and done right in my sight, in proclaiming liberty; and ye had made a covenant before me, in the house which is called by my name, but ye returned and polluted my name, by causing every man and maid-servant whom he had set at liberty at their pleasure to return, and brought them into subjection. Therefore, thus saith the Lord, Ye have not hearkened unto me in proclaiming liberty; Behold, I proclaim a liberty for you, saith the Lord, to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine, and I will make you to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth, and I will give you into the hands of your enemies, and into the hands of them that seek your life, and your dead bodies shall be meat for the fowls of heaven;" read Jeremiah chap. xxxiv.

"He that leadeth into captivity must go into captivity," says John, Rev. xiii 10: and so it was here, the masters hated the Lord's release they refused to "break the yoke," therefore God put their "necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon," Jer. xxvii. 8, and left them in his service threescore and ten years, and then proclaimed a jubilee to them, which they were as glad to hear of as their poor servants had been before; as it is written, "when the Lord turned the captivity of Zion we were like them that dream:" but the deliverance that God proclaimed to them was more than a dream, though that was little better that they had formerly proclaimed to their servants: God's release of them was real, "which filled their mouth with laughter, and their tongues with singing," insomuch, that the "heathens said the Lord hath done great things for them," Psalm cxxvi. 1, 2. These mercenary masters are lively figures of many of our preachers and it is with allusion to them that the inspired penmen often speak of "false apostles and deceitful workers," who under the vail of the law, and the influence of the devil transformed, call the everlasting gospel antinomianism, the preachers of it antinomians, the powerful

operations of the Spirit of it enthusiasm, and the liberty of it licentiousness; as if the Word, Spirit, grace, and ministers of the Lord, were the only instruments of Satan; and graceless men, the only infallible preachers of holiness, who under a false show of it tempt God bring forth the old yoke lead the saints into bondage, pervert their way, and set their hearts to fretting against the Lord, Prov. xix. 3. Of this number are some I may say legions, for they are many that go from our universities and academies; who have no other qualifications for the ministry, authority in it, credentials for it, right to live by it, or to claim the honour of it, than that which is of men; they are ministers of men and by men. And among all the mysteries that puzzle the wise this is none of the least, that men "of worldly wisdom, which God calls foolishness," 1 Cor. iii. 19, and "wise and prudent men, from whom he has hid the mysteries of his kingdom," Matt. xi. 25, should be able with the help of that "wisdom that is earthly, sensual, and devilish," James iii. 15, to turn carnal men into ministers of the Spirit, spiritual lords, divines, and doctors of divinity; but so it is, it we may credit all that we hear but how it is done must remain a mystery, until he that has promised to "reveal the mystery of iniquity" reveal this also as a main branch of it. And who set these men to heap to themselves teachers, is also as great a mystery. I know Paul bids Timothy commit his "doctrine to faithful men, that they might 'be able to teach others;" but to turn infidels into faithful men and divines is another thing. Paul speaks of some in his days that acted as the Hebrew masters did by their servants, who proclaimed liberty to them, and subjected them to servitude again; and calls them "false brethren, unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Jesus Christ, that they might bring us into bondage, to whom we gave place by subjection, no not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel, (or the freedom that Christ has promised to them that 'receive the truth,' John, viii. 32), might not continue with you," Gal. ii. 4. 5. And what was the bondage that these spies, who came privily, brought

in unexpectedly, wanted to bring them into? why they wanted to subject them to the "command of the law, which genders to bondage," by telling them that they were under the law as a rule of life. There "rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying that it was needful to circumcise the believing Gentiles, and to command them to keep the law of Moses," Acts xv. 5. Here is the command to the believers they were to keep the law of Moses; to which Peter answers, "God who knoweth the hearts bear them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did to us, and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we, were able to bear?" Acts xxv. 8, 9, 10. The liberty which Peter here alludes to, is the liberty of the Holy Ghost, which God had given them, which Paul calls the "law of the Spirit of life," which made him "free from the law of sin and death" for "where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty," 2 Cor. iii. 17: for, as David says, the Spirit of God is a "free Spirit," Psalm li. 12. The rule that Peter gives them is faith, which purifies the heart. The unbearable yoke that they were going to tempt God with, by galling the neck of the disciples, was, first, the "needfulness of circumcision:" 2dly, a "command to keep the law of Moses;" and it is called tempting' God, because it was a reflection cast upon his work who had purified their hearts by faith, and sent his Spirit to govern and lead them into all truth as if the Holy Ghost was not sufficient to make them obedient, nor God's purifying their hearts a sufficient purification, nor faith a sufficient rule-without yoking them with the killing letter as the only rule of life And as it was then so it is now every man that refuses to temp God, and that will not bring forth this yoke, and that does not affirm that the killing letter is the living man's only rule of life, is an antinomian, a licentious person, a man in errors, one that makes void the law, and is cried down by every blind watchman, though they cannot bring one text to prove that the believer is under the law as a rule of life; nor

one text that calls Moses's law the believer's rule of life; nor one text from God's book to overthrow this doctrine, this everlasting gospel: Paul says, they know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

If it be urged the command, "thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," is still a yoke upon the believer's neck, it is answered, the believer is not under the law, but under grace not an heir of wrath, nor of the commandments, but an heir of promise: and he is to take the commandment to the promise, which belongs to the better covenant; and he will find that God has promised to circumcise his heart, and that he shall love the Lord that he may live. Paul makes a difference between the commandment and Christ "I have loved them with an everlasting love, and with loving-kindness have I drawn," is in a promise, and is better than a command: they shall love me is safer and better than do love me; it comes from the better covenant, established upon better promises than conditional ones, and is sure to all the chosen seed.

I have considered Solomon's conclusion of the whole matter, "fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man," Eccl. ii. 14, and have deliberately considered all that you have drawn from the text; and I have likewise considered Paul's comment on Solomon's words, which differs much from yours "Now the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned; from which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling, desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm," 1 Tim. i. 5, 6, 7. What Solomon calls "the conclusion of the whole matter," Paul calls "the end of the commandment;" which James calls "the perfect law of liberty;" which Peter calls "the gift of the Holy Ghost and of putting faith;" which is the Saviour's easy yoke, and springing well; which is Paul's "law of the Spirit or life;" Solomon's law of the wise;" the

prophets' "law that went forth out of Zion; the apostle's "law of faith". Peter's "holy commandment delivered unto us;" and that end of the commandment, which is charity, out of an heart purified by faith, attended with a good conscience, which all turn from who end in the flesh, and give themselves up to vain jangling, or to talking about things which they understand not.

If my friend objects, and enforces the commands of Christ concerning hearing the word, attending the Lord's supper, &c. &c., it is answered, the Spirit shall lead them into all truth; and if the Spirit lead them not it is serving in the oldness of the letter, contrary to the apostle's doctrine " which he received not of men, nor was he taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ," Gal. i. 11, 12. And if purifying faith be not the rule of the believer's actions or obedience to the commands of Christ, and if he be not fully persuaded by the Spirit of faith in his own mind, his works are sin; "whatsoever is not of faith is sin," Rom. xiv. 23; "to the unbelieving there is nothing pure, their mind and conscience is defiled," Titus, i. 15; nor does their obedience spring from that charity which is the end of the commandment, out of a pure heart, of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned but is a swerving from it. This is gospel that can never be overthrown; gospel, which God ever has and ever will set his seal to; gospel which no hypocrite ever knew in the power thereof; gospel that shall never pass away, even when heaven and earth are both removed.

It will be expected that my unknown friend will send me, in his answer to this, from the word of God, an account of the bad effects, licentious practices, and libertinism, that this doctrine has produced in the saints of God; and likewise an account from Scripture of the superior holiness, fruitfulness, or usefulness, that has demonstrated itself in those who have tempted God, by putting the commanding yoke of the law upon the disciples' necks; or, as Paul says, "swerved from this

end of the commandment," which is charity out of a pure heart, to the study and practice of "vain jangling, or desiring to be teachers of the law," knowing neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

It is not to be wondered at that men love or desire to be teachers of the law; the letter is more superficial, it lays nearer home, and is within the compass of nature. But as for this mystery, to an unenlightened, unquickened, uninspired, unrenewed minister of the letter, it is too profound a depth; the natural man receives it not, nor can he know it, because it is spiritually discerned, and by the saints powerfully felt, but it will ever remain a "parable in the mouth of fools," Prov. xxvi. 7 These are the "great things of God's law, and they are accounted a strange thing," Hos. viii 12. It contains all the weighty matters of the law, judgment, mercy, faith, and the love of God, and teaches a man to do the lesser matters in faith, and under the constraining power of the Spirit of love and of a sound mind sound in the faith, and inspired with love, which will make a man obedient unto death "love is strong as death;" and so those saints found it who "loved not their lives unto the death," Rev. xii. 11. I come now to another branch of this perfect law of liberty which is to be continued in, if a man will be blessed in his deed.

"Know you not brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then, if while her husband liveth she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband be dead she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from

the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God," Rom. vii. 1, 2, 3, 4. If Paul has any meaning, I think it amounts to this that the law has the same dominion over the sinner, that expects life or help from it by his own obedience to the rules of it, as the husband has over his wife by the law of marriage; and the law communicates bondage to the soul, which the soul naturally genders to, until the soul be pregnant with horror, despair, and misery, just as a man communicates seed to a wife, who brings forth a stillborn or dead child, which is the worst of labours without any heir to satisfy the husband, as Paul aims to prove "for, when we were in the flesh, the motions of sin, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death," Rom. vii. 5. But when God tells the poor sinner, who is so fond of being Moses's disciple, that Moses my servant is dead, Joshua, i. 2, and the soul is quickened to feel and enlightened to see that the law is a killing letter, the law of death, and the ministration of condemnation; and that the soul can bring forth no fruit to God under its gendering bondage, no knit but fruit unto death, or dead works; the soul seeing a dead husband, and a dead law, that cannot give life, the soul is loosed from that law; nor is it an adulteress, nor an antinomian, though it be married to another man. For that law has no more power over such a soul than the corpse of Anna's husband had over her, who had been a widow upwards of forty years, and had lived with her husband but seven years from her virginity, and was then waiting to be married to the consolation of Israel, Luke ii. 36. The way that the soul gets released from that law is by the body of Christ. The soul sees that the law cursed the Saviour as well as the sinner, and that the Lord died under the law; that it was the law of death to the Saviour as well as to the sinner; and, finding Christ raised from the dead, it goes after him and unites with him, and is begotten to a lively hope by his resurrection from the dead; and Christ formed in the soul the hope of glory is an incorruptible seed indeed, a precious fruit. Such are no adulteresses though they be married to

another man. Nor do they deserve the name of licentious antinomians, seeing the Holy Ghost affirmeth that this is done that they may bring forth fruit unto God, Rom. vii. 4, namely, the fruits of the Spirit. If the rigorous husband of a poor simple woman be dead, according to Paul's doctrine, Rom. vii. 2, one would think that he could command her person, pinch her belly, and beat her back no more; and that the other man whom she had married had got the sole and whole command of her; I am sure he has by the laws of God, and by the covenant of wedlock, or else I know not who would marry a widow, to have her hunted with the commands of a ghost. However, if the killing commandments of the dead husband be the believer's only rule of life, who is espoused to Christ by faith, this is the case Moses, the Lord's servant, has still the command and dominion over the bride the Lamb's wife, Rev. xxi. 9. And notwithstanding his being dead, as God affirms, yet he must manage the household of faith, and give the only rule of life to the queen, although she be exalted to stand at the right hand of the king in gold of Ophir, Psalm xlv. 9. If she be at the right hand of the king, they do her much wrong who place her at the foot of a servant; one would think that, as he was not permitted to go into the promised land (though he fain would), which was but a faint type of heaven, he could never have such power over the house or church of Christ, which is so often emphatically called heaven.

We are under the law as the rule of life, say some; then the law of liberty is far from being perfect. One would think that souls espoused to Christ, and married to him, that they should bring forth fruit unto God, were under no law but that of the husband; or, as Paul says, under the law to Christ. And I am sure it is so with souls wedded to Moses; he has the sole command of them, for they are without the spiritual law of life altogether: and surely the second husband has as much right as the first; "if we allow this man to be worthy of as much," Paul says, "he is counted worthy of more glory than Moses,

inasmuch as he who hath builded the house, as Jacob built the house of Israel by Rachel and Leah," Ruth, iv. 11, "is worthy of more honour than the house," Heb. iii. 3. It is clear that all the fruit brought forth under Moses was but dead works, or fruit unto death; therefore he built no house or household but that of the bondwoman, who is affirmed to be desolate; and, with respect to God, she is said to have no husband, Gal. iv. 27, and therefore all her offspring are a bastard race of dead children, dead in trespasses and sins, which are sunk into the synagogue of Satan instead of a righteous nation, called the living, that are to rise up and praise Christ, Isaiah, xxxviii. 19. Hence we learn that souls under the law wedded to Moses are not God's wife they bring forth fruit unto death, not unto God they are free from righteousness. God says, I am not their husband Moses has full command of them though he accuses them day and night; and Christ himself always sends such souls to the law, that they may not marry another while the first husband lives. But when an accusing Moses, and his killing law, have executed their sentence of death on the soul, it is then dead; and if Christ quickens it and enlightens it, and it flies, as Ruth did, to his skirt, if he spreads his skirt over it, it is a time of love, and if he enters into a marriage covenant with such a soul it becomes his own, Ezek. xvi. 8. He has the whole command of such, and the full possession of them; he has married the soul that was in a state of widowhood, and says, "Thy Maker is thy husband thou shalt remember the reproach of thy widowhood no more." Thus he marries the widow, discharges her debts, redeems the mortgaged inheritance, raises up the name of the dead upon it, and does worthily in Ephratah, and is famous in Bethlehem, Ruth iv. 11.

Paul tells us that he was dead to the law "I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God," Gal. ii. 19. He tells us that when the commandment came sin revived, and he died; that "sin took occasion by the commandment, deceived

him, and by it slew him," Rom. vii. 9, 10, 11. One would think that when a law has apprehended a transgressor, arraigned him, tried him, cast him, condemned him, executed him, and buried him, he was got out of the reach of that rule of life. Paul says the law came to him, it apprehended him, sin revived, he was found guilty it took an occasion by the law to expose him to death, deceived him, with respect to all hopes in it, and slew him by the sentence of it; that he was dead and buried with Christ, or planted together with him in the likeness of his death. If so, one would have thought that it had done with him.

But, according to some, this killing letter, or moral law, has never done with the believer they would make it like the Popish law, which makes a believer in Christ a heretic; condemns him, curses him with bell, book, and candle, and burns him to ashes, and yet pursues him still; if he goes to purgatory it follows him; if to heaven, it holds the keys of that; and at the judgment day there can be no favour or mercy without Popish absolution. So some handle the law of Moses; though it kills a man, and he is crucified, dead, buried, and risen again through the operation of God; yet the commandment that came, which deceived and slew him, is "still his only rule of life;" it is still binding, and if he goes into heaven itself it pursues him, for the "very angels round the throne are governed by it," as some affirm; which is strange, as God's voice, whether in the law or in the gospel, is declared to be to the sons of men, Prov. viii. 4.

It has been a puzzling matter to me to find out what it is that appears in Moses's ministry, with respect to success, that makes people so eager to copy after him. He led the people forty years in the wilderness it is true, but he was so far from exceeding the apostles and evangelists in success, a with respect to eon-version work, that he declares" God has not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear unto thru day," Deut. xxix. 4, and calls them "a perverse

generation, a nation void of counsel, and children in whom is no faith," Deut. xxxii. 20. And we know that their "carcasses fell in unbelief twenty thousand together." Yea, and the Jews for rejecting Christ and cleaving to Moses were destroyed by infinite numbers, and with an infinite destruction; and a Pharisee, who is the greatest advocate for the law, "is farther from the kingdom of God than publicans and harlots;" and if Moses be but read, "the vail is upon their hearts, nor can it be taken away till they turn to the Lord."

No fruits are brought forth under the law but wild grapes, wild figs, untimely fruits, dead works, mercenary and eye-service, and fruits unto death; and all spring from the base principles of slavish fear; done to get a name or to be seen of men, to merit heaven, and bring God in debtor to them: their works spring from the fear of a condemned criminal, which is the worst of roots, and are directed to self, the worst of ends; hence Israel is said to be "an empty vine (not united to Christ the true vine) therefore he brings forth fruit to himself," Hosea, x. 1, whereas the Christian finds that "from God is his fruit found," Hosea, xiv. 8, and instead of bringing forth fruit to himself, he must deny himself daily.

With respect to its "usefulness to instruct the children of God," it may be answered believers are not without teachers; "the Lord their God teaches them to profit," Isaiah, xlvi. 17. He teaches them by "the Spirit of love," 2 Tim. i. 7, "to love him," Deut. xxx. 6. Yea, "and they are taught of God to love one another," 1 Thess. iv. 9. Christ, the great prophet of the church, teaches them also. It is not now, "remember the law of Moses my servant",-but it is, "this is my beloved Son, hear ye him. All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children," Isaiah liv. 13. The Spirit of God, "the anointing which ye have received of him, abideth in you; and ye need not that any man teach you," if he be a minister of the letter, or one that brings rules of life from the

snare of death: "but, as the same anointing teacheth you of all things and is true, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him," 1 John, ii. 27. The grace of God, that bringeth salvation," teaches them to deny ungodliness and worldly lust, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world," Titus, ii. 11, 12. The believer's own reins, when God "tries him, instruct him in the right season," Psalm xvi. 7. The heart of the wise, being a new heart, which contains a new spirit, "teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips," Prov. xvi. 23. Thus the children of God are not without teachers, nor yet without divine and infallible teachers. And I would to God that the saints would attend a little more to their divine teaching; they would not "stumble upon the dark mountains," be tossed about with every blind guide and wind of doctrine, and go hood-winked, "groping for the wall at noon-day," as numbers of them do. But, alas, alas! instead of searching the Scriptures, as they are commanded to do, "which are able to make them wise to salvation, through faith that is in Christ Jesus," they load their shelves, and stuff their heads with the notions of what are called the fathers; when, if they would try them by God's standard, they would find that not one half of their notions would stand the touchstone of God's word. If believers were to go to the great infallible Head and Prophet of the church by humble prayer, they would find their judgment better informed, their thoughts more established, and their hearts more firmly fixed, than ever they will be by reading a thousand folio volumes of such mongrel divinity, dashed with whole bowls of popery; where you may hunt for seven years and never find one page that can, in the strictest sense, be called the "everlasting gospel," Rev. xiv. 6.

There are libraries, consisting chiefly of ancient books, that cost fifty thousand pounds, and I would not go fifty steps to call them all my own if stripped of that despised book called the Bible, and a few more that I could name, which were

written by our own divines. I am fully persuaded that every believer may get divinity more pure from adulteration, more powerful, more satisfactory, more establishing, by humble prayer to Christ Jesus, in one hour, than ever he will get from all those authors that are called the fathers, who were as blind as bats, and their writings as full of confusion as a gentleman's garret is full of lumber. If a man "lack wisdom let him ask it of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him," James, i. 5.

It is when men get cold to God dead to study powerless and faithless in prayer shy of the Lord at a distance from his throne and beneath heavenly mindedness, and void of heavenly meditation that they fly to these fathers instead of flying to the Father of Eternity, where wisdom, mercy, and comfort may be got; for "he is the Father of all mercies, and God of all comfort," 2 Cor. i. 3; and I know that he will "withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly," Psalm lxxxiv. 11.

As to the letter "of the ten commandments being an infallible rule of direction," is answered thus they lead to the unity of God; that law prohibits idol worship and all covetousness, and commands love to the neighbour; but we are neither to serve God nor worship God in the "oldness of the letter; he will be worshipped in spirit and in truth, and served in the newness of the spirit also:" it is he that caused the "light to shine out of darkness, that shines into our hearts, and gives us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," God's worship, and God's service, are to be performed under the Spirit's influence; God is "a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Although the law forbids covetousness, the power of it will never make any man 'hate it "the law is weak through the flesh;" the law of unfeigned faith, that works by love out of a pure conscience, will make a man hate covetousness. "Pray for us," says Paul,

"for we trust that we have a good conscience in all things, willing to live honestly," Heb. xiii. 18.

God has not left his people "without sufficient directions," nor yet without a director. "In all thy ways acknowledge God, and he shall direct thy paths," Prov. iii. 6. "Wisdom is profitable to direct; I will direct their work in truth," says God; "and I will make an everlasting covenant with them," Isaiah, lxi. 8. It is "not in man that walketh to direct his steps," Jer. x. 23. "I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go I will guide thee with mine eye. Be not like a horse or a mule that have no understanding," Psalm xxxii. 8, 9. "I will bring the blind by a way that they know not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight: these things will I do unto them and not forsake them," Isaiah, xlii. 16.

Sending the citizens of Zion to Sinai for rules of life and direction, is a contempt of "mount Zion, and of the heavenly Jerusalem, to which the Spirit of God leads all believers," Heb. xii. 22, and is no less than a contempt of the King of saints, whom God hath set on that most holy hill. Making the letter the only rule of life, is sending the saints wrong, forasmuch as "the Lord hath said unto them, they shall henceforth return no more that way," Deut. xvii. 16. "They have compassed that mount long enough," Deut. ii. 2, 3. Moses is dead and buried, Joshua i. 2. Joshua is to take the lead. It is bewitching the people, Gal. iii. 1; it is sending them to the old yoke of bondage, Gal. v. 1, which is a contempt of the Saviour's yoke, Matt. ii. 29; it is turning their back upon grace, Gal. v. 4; it is abusing their liberty, Gal. v. 1; it is making Christ of none effect to them, Gal. v. 4; and that he should profit them nothing, Gal. v. 2.

Elijah, who traveled forty days into the wilderness in order to go to Horeb, instead of going to mount Zion, was asked twice,

by way of reproof, first in a storm, and then by a still voice, "What dost thou here, Elijah?" 1 Kings xix. 9, 13, which was attended by an earthquake, a whirlwind, and a fire; God would not take him to heaven from that mount, though he requested to die there; that is not the "new and living way," Heb. x. 20; he must go back to the Holy Land, over the river Jordan again, and into the plains of Jericho, where Joshua, typical of our Captain, first took the lead, before the fiery chariot appeared to take him to heaven, 2 Kings, ii. 11.

Nor can sending living souls to a killing letter for rules of life be any way promotive of fruitfulness. There can be no fruit brought forth to God's glory without an union, by the Spirit of love, to Christ the living vine: the branch cannot bear fruit of itself. No good fruit till the corrupt tree be made good by grace; "make the tree good, and his fruit will be good; a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit." No good works without faith; "whatsoever is not of faith is sin;" no honest labours without love: no spiritual fruits without the Spirit of God produce them: no works done acceptable to God, unless he work in us both to will and to do them.

Nor does this doctrine "remove the bounds of the church, nor leave her without her enclosures," unless it can be proved that God's putting his laws in their hearts, and writing them in their minds, giving them a new heart and a new spirit; putting his fear within them, and promising they shall not depart from him; holding them in his hand so that the gates of hell cannot prevail against them; causing them to walk in his statutes, to keep his judgments and do them; being a wall of fire round about them, placing salvation for walls and bulwarks, and keeping them by his mighty power through faith; can be called "removing the bounds and taking away the enclosures of the church." And I think it is a pity that such a dispensation of superabounding grace, the ministration of God's eternal Spirit, should find no more favour in the eyes of poor miserable

sinners, nor any better name than that of antinomianism. For my part, I believe it will go by another name at the restitution of all things; for, if Christ restores all things, he will doubtless restore his own gospel to its proper name.

As for "correcting unruly Christians by the law," I believe the saint's law is written on the fleshly tables of every believing heart by the Spirit of God; and that Christ dwells in them by faith; and that he keeps his royal court in mount Zion for all his friends, as he is crowned king there; but, as for Sinai, it is his court of judicature; he appears there as the judge of all. We are to apprehend the unruly, and take them to the royal court, and to the bar of equity; and appeal, as Paul did, to God and to conscience in God's sight, and when the unruly feels the three of faithful reproof, backed with the Scriptures of truth, and seconded by his own conscience, it will be more mortifying and humbling to him than flogging him with all the scourges that can be brought from the ministration of death. This never brought a sinner to Christ, nor restored a backslider; it is with the cords of love that God leads a soul to the Saviour; and by the same is the backslider restored. "I will heal their backslidings, I will love them freely," Hosea xiv. 4.

Your "enforcing the command to love God, calling it the believer's rule that must ever remain binding," is not speaking as the oracles of God. We know that the law commands us to love God; and we have received favours enough to bring us in debtors so to do; but "the carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to that law, nor can be." There is nothing that the law demands but what the gospel gives; and there is nothing that the law commands that it helps us to perform, nor does it afford strength, life, love, holiness, mercy, inclination, or power, to enable us to give it its dues.

I know we are commanded "to walk in love as Christ hath loved us;" but we must settle things on their proper basis. The

end of the commandment is charity; but where do we get this charity or love? why, it is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. If it is given, it is from the covenant of promise, not from the covenant of works; if salvation be of grace in every part, it is no more of works in any part. Love is the basis of a covenant of grace I have loved thee with an everlasting love; the gift of Christ is the wonderful effect of it God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son. It is with loving-kindness that God draws us to Christ no man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him. Love is the bond of the everlasting covenant. "My loving-kindness I will not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail." Love is the bond of eternal union between Christ and his church. "Thou, O Father, hast loved them as thou hast loved me," John, xvii. 28. Love is the bond of heartfelt union between the Lord and us" He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God dwelleth in him," 1 John, iv. 16; and it is called the love of God perfected in us not our love, which is of the law; for it is said, not that we loved God, but that he loved us. And whoever sent men to preach, who can make no difference between the law that worketh wrath, and love which casteth out fear, which the law genders; no difference between the killing letter and the bond of the everlasting covenant? Let love stand upon its own bottom, fix it not on the letter of the law. The law reveals the wrath to come it is God's magazine which contains all the "treasures of hail reserved against the day of battle and war," Job xxxviii. 22. And who could ever have thought that the only rule of life for believers could be fetched from the "ministration of condemnation," 2 Cor. iii. 9; "the snares of death," Prov. xiii. 14; "the voice of words," Heb. xii 19; "the law that worketh wrath," Rom. iv. 15; "the killing letter," 2 Cor. iii. 6; "the law that is against us," Col. ii. 14; "the adversary that delivers us to the judge to be cast into prison," Matt. v. 25; a law that furnishes the sinner with an accuser before God," John, v. 45; that is contrary to us, Col. ii. 14; that cursed the Saviour

himself, though innocent, Gal. iii. 13, because he undertook for his friends. A fiery law, Deut. xxxiii. 2; a fire kindled in God's anger, Deut. xxxii. 22; seven thunders that are to utter their voices, Rev. x. 3; "a shower of snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest," Psalm xi. 6; "a fire that shall burn to the lowest hell," Deut. xxxii. 22. But so it is; and every preacher that does not bind this grievous burden upon men's shoulders; that does not turn aside to vain jangling; that refuses to tempt God by putting this yoke upon the disciples' necks, which none are able to bear; is an erroneous man; a man of a bad spirit; one that makes void the law; and is (as I have been often called) a stinking antinomian: God be merciful to such men! I have no other glass to view them in but the scriptures of truth and my own experience. And, as God liveth, I do believe, if fifteen out of twenty of our present preachers, who are called gospel ministers, were to see themselves as I see them in the light of God's word, that they would wish they had never been born; curse the day in which they took upon them the office of the ministry, and wish it to be "blotted out from the number of the months; Job, iii. 6. But, alas, alas! there are none who think themselves sufficient for these things but those of no understanding! A blind man knows not how to go to the city, Eccl. x. 15. "A blind man beholdeth not the way of the vineyards," Job xxiv. 18.

This very polite letter of yours, Sir, has drawn into public print what I never intended to make public. I have suffered so much by what I have before advanced, that I intended to have kept these truths close between God and my own soul; who was pleased, unless I am deceived (without the help of any author), to lead me into them. I have suffered a deal for what I have already advanced from the pulpit and the press of these matters; and, for my part, I have not one single doubt of the whole of them being the truths of the everlasting gospel of Christ Jesus. But I have been termed a man of a bad spirit; a dangerous man; an erroneous man; a stinking antinomian; a

contentious man; a man of controversy; a man of pride and reservedness, putting his own constructions upon scripture; a bully; a singular man, who wants to represent all other ministers as neuters, and himself all in all.

Old women have pursued me with twopenny, fourpenny, and sixpenny pamphlets, of their own manufactory; a boy crying them from one chapel door, where I preached, to the other; and their squibs have been sent to Portsmouth, Bristol, &c., wherever they heard that my books were sold. Ministers, behind the curtain, (who pretended friendship to me) have told these old wives what brandy, meaning strength, to put into their fables what sugar, meaning candour, to use and what gall, bitterness, or wormwood, to withhold.

I was asked to go to Bristol by a gentleman (whom I cautioned to have nothing to do with me, as I was so dangerous a man,) who would insist upon my going thither; and without my desire, had me down. The poor people had been prejudiced to that degree that they expected to find me a minister of Satan. The parson-maker levelled his artillery from the pulpit till he was quite out of breath, and set off for London. Another, in obedience to the Rev. R. H., refused to invite me to his pulpit, or to give me the right hand of fellowship. I wrote to Bristol since, offering to preach them a sermon, being engaged to go into Dorsetshire, but was denied; and all this sprung from a reverend gentleman of Plymouth, who has settled the matters of Bristol tabernacle so as to secure the pulpit against antinomians. And the same gentleman (I shall not mention his name) has not acted like a brother, nor has he done the kinsman's part by me, but took some people to task for bringing my books into Plymouth; and a reverend gentleman, who is now settled at Walthamstow, when he lived at Plymouth, made it his business to ridicule what I had written, in order to embitter the people's minds against the doctrines; and no wonder, for, if these doctrines be true, what becomes

of theirs? The Bishop of Spa-fields Chapel lampooned me in public, till he got into the smoke of Sinai, insomuch, that some discerning people quite lost sight of him. Some of his people he excluded from the society because they came to hear me. His mandates went to Bristol, that they might not be infected; and to Lewes in Sussex also. Mr. Barnet refused me his pulpit, and threatened to leave the people if I were admitted; but a Baptist minister kindly threw open his meeting, which God filled with people, and my mouth with arguments. The congregation at Woking, which God raised by me, must send me their final dismissal before they could get any assistance from the Evangelical Association in London. The Rev. Mr. R. H. left his prelatie commands at Chatham, and twice since at Greenwich, never to admit me on peril of his final leave. If any of these charges are false let them plead their innocence; and if the doctrines be false let them be overthrown. My friend may well ask, What is my sin? What have I done? Seeing some cry one thing and some another, the assemblies are confused, and no account given of the cause of this concourse; and I can give none, unless it be for this one voice that I cried among them; touching the law, I said it is not the believer's rule of life. And this I do insist upon, that bondage, hardness of heart, revealed wrath, enmity against God, desperation, curses, hell and damnation, are the best things that men can fetch from the killing letter of the law of Moses; whether the man be a believer or an infidel it matters not. The law will pursue the believer if he goes there, Christ alone is his refuge; it will entangle the believer, and yoke him again, if he looks for help there. The law is not of faith, but of works; it is not of believing, but of doing; "he that doth these things shall live in them," is its language to the end of the chapter. Works are works, and grace is grace; the one is a covenant of works, the other a covenant of grace; one was given by Moses, the other came by Jesus Christ. The covenant of works was made with man; it belongs to Adam, and all his children in the flesh that bear his image: the covenant of grace was made with Christ,

and all his seed in him. The one is established upon unconditional promises, the other upon the conditions of dead men's performances; and who would call this law the believer's only rule of life, he is to walk and live by faith; he is to worship and serve God in the newness of the spirit, not in the oldness of the letter; he is to walk in love as Christ hath loved him. And it is plain that faith worketh by love, and is attended with divine life, which are all the gifts of God in Christ Jesus; they are received from his fullness, and wrought in us, and are no less than the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which makes us free from the law of sin and death. If faith, life, how ness, and love, come from the law of the spirit, why are they engrafted upon the killing letter? and why is the believer sent to fetch his rule of life from that law which was once his death warrant? why this confusion? why this turning things upside down? The man that has got the law of the Spirit of life in him is the man to whom the Lord speaks by his Son; he speaks not to the believer out of the cloudy pillar, nor out of thick darkness. He has spoken unto us in these last days by his Son; and it is to the believer that he thus speaks "Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law." A believer is a righteous man, made so by imputation; and "the law is not made for the righteous, but for the lawless and disobedient," 1 Tim. i. 9. God speaks to the children of the flesh in the law. "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law," Rom. iii. 19. "But the saints are not under the law, but under grace," Rom. vi. 14. The law is a yoke of bondage for bond children, a covenant of works for proud workmongers, and a ministration of condemnation, to curse them for their pride and evil works.

As to what David says of the law being perfect, converting the soul, and of its being a light to his feet and a lamp to his path, it is soon answered. The killing letter never converted one soul to Christ yet; conversion consists in turning a soul from

darkness to light, from the love of sin to love of God with all his heart; which is attended with faith, repentance, and godly sorrow, which flows from a sense of God's love to him in Christ Jesus; all which come froth the covenant of grace. Faith is a coming to Christ, and the love that faith works by draws his heart as he goes; and both these are the free gift of God. Christ did not furnish Saul with these spiritual weapons, which are mighty through God to pull down strong holds from the killing letter. "I send thee Paul to turn sinners from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in me," Acts xxvi. 10. The brightest light that shines in the law comes from the eye of off ended justice; it was in the flames of wrath that the law was give., at first; it was added because of transgression, and it is in that awful light that sinners see their own condemnation, as Saul and Balsam saw their own future destruction; and it is in that light that sinners will see their endless misery, who are said to lift up their eyes in hell; but that light discovers not the path of life, which is called the path of the just. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God shines in the face of Jesus Christ, who m the true light, and the everlasting light of all his people; "he that believeth in me," says the Saviour, "shall not abide in darkness."

David was not without the law of faith; he tells you he believed, therefore hath he spoken; nor was he without the law of the Spirit of life, as appears by his prayer "Take not thy holy Spirit from me." It was in this law that he saw wonders; as for the ten commandments, he prayed that God would not enter into judgment with his servant under them, for he knew the commandment was exceeding broad. If the commandments afford such a deal of light to our feet, how comes it that our present advocates for them are so exceeding blind? by them it appears that Paul's assertions are true, that the vail remains untaken away in reading the Old

Testament. I am bold therefore to affirm, Sir, that David and you had two different meanings.

With respect to what you have heard "about my speaking lightly of the law," I believe you will find, in this my answer to yours, all that I have ever said about it; and you must judge for yourself whether I have spoken the language of Scripture or net. If I have, lay the blame where it ought to be laid; "if a man consent not to the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ, he is proud and knows nothing."

However, as I am determined to publish this answer to yours, my accusers will have a fair opportunity to attack the doctrine. I have advanced on the ground of truth; I have fled to none of those poor shills called implications and the fitness of things; I have used no weapons but those that I believe to be spiritual. They cannot have a fairer opportunity, nor a fairer field to meet me on, nor a smaller number to engage. If this be antinomianism let them, muster all their forces against it, prove it to be so, and overthrow it. I am open to conviction, my conscience is not seared, nor am I past feeling; and, if I cannot defend it by God's word, I will fly to no other shifts; and therefore I hope my opponents will not puzzle my brains with St. Basil, St. Augustine, St. Ambrose, Hermon Witsius, and saint nobody knows who. Jesus I know; but who are these? For my part, I have not a single doubt but God will enable me to defend this doctrine; for I know it is the doctrine that he applied to me, and set my soul at liberty by. And as I am the antinomian, according to their accusations, it lies with them to overthrow it, and prove their charge; and, if upon trial it be found to be the everlasting gospel then let them hear and say, it is truth, Isaiah, xliii. 9, and acknowledge that for the truth's sake I have suffered reproach.

These are the doctrines that have caused so many counsels to be taken so many pulpits to be shut against me; yea, in

every place that I have gone, the people have been armed with prejudice against me as an erroneous man or an antinomian, and have come to hear me as if I was a second Simon Magus, or Judas Iscariot, risen again. This has been the case at almost every place I have gone to except Portsmouth, where I met with such a kind reception from the ministers as I never met with before in my life. The Rev. Mr. Horssy, and his assistant, the Rev. Mr. Phillips, and the Rev. Mr. Dun, welcomed me to their pulpits in turn every night during my stay there, and treated me with the greatest respect and civility, which I mention to the honour of those gentlemen, and as a matter of wonder to me, it being what I had never been accustomed to.

I have not gone any country journey for the sake of gain, for my own people do not let me want; nor did I ever clear a shilling by any journey I took, because I have paid the same that I have received for a supply in my absence, that I might not be brought under the power of any; therefore they could not refuse me their pulpits under an apprehension of my seeking filthy lucre. The reasons that they assigned were, that I held errors in making void the law. Anti this has been carried so far, that, if any minister has happened to drop a word in the pulpit concerning the law, if he did not make it the believer's only rule of life, it has been called one of Huntington's texts; let them prove it is from Huntington, and I will endeavour to prove it is from heaven.

If the law of works be binding to the saints, as some affirm, then James's law of liberty is not perfect, nor can we be blessed in our deeds by continuing in that. If the law of worlds be binding, then "the law of the Spirit of life did not make Paul free from the law of death," unless it can be proved, that legal bondage and gospel liberty can stand together. If the believer be under the law as a rule of life, then he is under the law and under grace both at once; which Paul says he is not he is not

under the law, but under grace. If he be under the law as a rule of life, he has got Peter's unbearable yoke and Christ's easy yoke both on his neck at one time. The man that makes the killing letter his rule walks by sight, not by faith; he looks at the things which are seen, not at the things which are not seen. He serves in the oldness of the letter, not in the newness of the spirit; he worships God in the letter, not in spirit and truth; nor is he free indeed. I know the law will bring a man into bondage notwithstanding his grace, if he stands not fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made him free; nor does the law of the wise, as a fountain of life, cause a man to depart from the snares of death; or, as the Saviour says, pass from death to life by faith, because the believer, according to them, is still under the snares of death; he is still under the law of death as his only rule of life. This is called preaching the gospel, doing the work of an evangelist, being a minister of the Spirit, making full proof of the ministry; and every man that cannot turn the law that worketh wrath into a law of love; that cannot bring the living fruits of the Spirit out of the killing letter; that cannot turn the snares of death into rules of life; is an erroneous man and an antinomian. Welcome reproach! welcome names! welcome antinomian! These names bring no guilt on the conscience; they stop not up the new and living way between God and the soul; they seal not up God's book, nor bind the spirit of liberty. Election secures every minister in his station, and all the success that shall attend his labours. It has been observed that those, who have been the most forward at lampooning me for an antinomian, have been the greatest novices in divinity; and, that while they have been contending for the law as the only rule of life, they have preached the greatest confusion, discovered the greatest ignorance of the nature of the law, and have evidently appeared in the strongest bondage; "He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity;" he that binds grievous burdens on other men's shoulders goes a sure way to load his own back.

No wonder that legions are flocking back to Sinai; it is a proof that the law is not dead to them, nor they to it; they begun in the Spirit before they had been killed by the letter. Their first husband, it is to be feared, is not dead, therefore they are not loosed from that law; and being adulteresses, the first husband has taken them up and brought them back, not being loosed from their old bond of wedlock, nor favoured with a writing of divorcement; therefore, as the wife of the first covenant, the eloped Lo-ruhamah is brought back, Hosea i. 6, Hosea ii. 1, 2; but Hephzibah, the Lord's delight, whom he has espoused to himself, if she goes back, will return again to her first husband, saying It was better with me then than it is now. Consider, Sir, and see if there be any thing that you want to make you holy or happy that does not come from the law of the Spirit of life; and whether any of these things come from the law of works; whether mercy, grace, hope, or help) comes from that quarter: and take heed that you do not jumble these two covenants together. One is a covenant of works, the other of grace one is the law of death, the other the law of life; bond children are under the law free children are under grace; the)' that are under grace are under the blessing those under the law are under the curse; one are heirs of promise, the other heirs of wrath; one are children of God, the other are children of the devil. The free-born children receive the inheritance freely, the bond-children work to earn it. "The gift of God is eternal life, the wages of sin is death." And, in order to clear this doctrine from the charge of antinomianism, I will inquire what this law of' the Spirit of life produces, for we are told that the gospel brings forth fruit, Col. i. 6. Paul says, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law," Gal. v. 22, 23.

Now let us see what the law of the wise, which Solomon calls a fountain of life, produces. I think we shall find the same things springing from his fountain as comes from Paul's law of

the Spirit: Solomon says, "Wisdom loves them that love her;" and that "love is better than a house full of sacrifices;" and that, "if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would be condemned: here is what Paul calls the first fruit of the Spirit; the next is joy: "the heart knows its own bitterness, but a stranger intermeddled not with his joy." Peace; "Wisdom's ways are pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." Long-suffering; "the patient in spirit are better than the proud in spirit." Gentleness; be not hasty to go out of his sight; stand not in an evil thing." Goodness; "the upright shall have good things in possession." Faith; "in the fear of the Lord is strong confidence, and his children have a place of refuge. Meekness; "God scorneth the scorers, but giveth grace to the lowly." Temperance; "the righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul." Thus the fruits of Paul's law of the Spirit are the same as those that spring from Solomon's law of the wise, which he calls a fountain of life: and remember the gospel is called the ministration of the Spirit, and the law is the ministration of the letter; the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. Solomon's fountain of life is supplied from God in covenant, who tells us that all his springs are in Zion; therefore it is in vain to expect help from Sinai. The law of the Spirit will remain what it is, notwithstanding men's legality; and the ministration of the letter will remain what it is, notwithstanding men's faith and love; one will ever give life, and the other will ever give death: the one will ever produce freedom, and the other will ever gender to bondage.

Those that have felt the bondage, wrath, terror, and death, that the law works, will prize their liberty, and take heed how they approach that blackness and darkness again; but those that never felt its power can play with it as with a bird, for they are alive without it. It is in vain that ministers send men to Sinai in order "to promote holiness:" the works of the flesh are these: "adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife,

seditions, heresies, envy, murder, drunkenness," Gal. v. 19, 20. And will sending men to the law destroy these? Nay, says Paul, "these are the motions of sin, which are by the law that works in our members to bring forth fruit unto death," Rom. vii. 5. Nor was the law manifested to destroy those works of the devil, but to make them appear exceeding sinful; nor does the law weaken sin but aggravate it; for "the strength of sin is the law," 1 Cor. xv. 5, 6. It is grace that makes the believer what he is, nor will the law ever make him better. "Those that came privily in to spy out the apostle's liberty that they might bring them into bondage," Gal. ii. 4, agree exactly with you in sentiment; for, if the law be binding to the believer, and he be under it as a rule of life, it is the same as what they enforced; namely, "it is needful to circumcise them, and command them to keep the law of Moses," Acts xv. 5; they said this was needful; you say the believer is under this necessity: they called it keeping the law of Moses; and you call the law of Moses the believer's rule of life. There is no more difference between your assertions and theirs than there is between my two eyes. If you object that it is circumcision only that is called the yoke that was unbearable; it is answered, they were circumcised at eight days old, therefore the fathers could give very little account of the unbearable part of it. The yoke consisted in this, "He that is circumcised is a debtor to do the whole law, circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God," is what is meant, 1 Cor. vii. 19; submitting to circumcision is rejecting Christ, "who was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers." And submitting to the yoke of keeping the law of Moses is rejecting Christ's yoke, which consists of faith and love in the Spirit. The yoke therefore is this, it is needful to circumcise the believers, "and to command them to keep the law of Moses," Acts xv. 5; and you say that the law is binding, and that the believer is under the law as his rule of life; you might just as well have stuck to the old text, for it amounts

exactly to the same, nor doth your different way of expression alter the matter. Their need of keeping the law of Moses is your binding law as a rule of life; it is the spirit of legal bondage that obliges and binds you; and it was the same that influenced those who made it needful; different names make no alteration in the things. Those men tempted God by putting that yoke on the saints, and subverted their souls by saying ye must be circumcised and keep the law of Moses, to whom God gave no such commandment, Acts xv. 10, 24; and they do no less than tempt God and subvert the souls of believers, who tell them the law is binding, and that they are under it as a rule of life, "for God has given them no such commandment," Acts xv. 24. Nor can men expect that the broad seal of heaven should attend a ministry that tempts God and subverts the souls of his saints, when it is expressly said that "it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to the apostles, to lay on them no such burden," Acts xv. 28. However, this is the way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death," Prov. xiv. 12; it is turning people from grace to works; from the liberty of the Spirit to the bondage of the law; from the law of the spirit of life to the law of death. Liberty and bondage, grace and works, Christ's yoke and the yoke of Moses, the true light and the old veil, death and life, can never stand together, one must give way; grace shall reign, and Moses must be subject. If a believer be a new creature, has a new heart, a new spirit, walks in "the new and living way," and must serve God in the newness of the spirit, and walk in newness of life, old things must be done away: and if old things are done away the yoke of bondage is included among them, which Paul calls the law of death, or else the apostle's assertion cannot stand good; "therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new," 2 Cor. v. 17; "and he that sits upon the throne says behold I create all things new. God has granted us boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which

he hath consecrated [or new made] for us through the veil, that is to say his flesh," Heb. x. 19, 20. Take heed, Sir, that you despise not this new and living way; it is the old way that you contend for at present, which is stopped up; it is hedged about with thorns, namely, the curses of the law; and so poor sinners will find it, when, like Balaam, they fall before that terrible sword of God that turns "every way to keep the way of the tree of life," Gen. iii. 24; none will ever get to God that old way; the sword that keeps the way of life destroys all thieves and robbers that climb up any other way, John x. 1; or dare to look through, or gaze, where God has fixed his bounds, Exod. xix. 21, 22, 23.

I know the law is holy, just, and good, because it defends a holy, just, and good God, and will certainly cut off and destroy for ever every adversary that is found under it; but though the law is holy yet it sanctifies none; it is just, but it justifies none it is good, but it imparts no goodness to men: God is our justifier, and sanctifier; and Christ is our righteousness and sanctification God's goodness to us comes by grace; severity comes by the law "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but towards thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off," Rom. xi 22, with the sword furbished at that armory. It is the fiery law that gives the sword of justice its flaming edge; "where there is no law there is no transgression; sin is the transgression of the law, and the law is the transgressor's adversary that makes his crimes appear exceeding sinful, and delivers him to the judge here lies its power; "the strength of sin is the law." But with respect to our obedience, its lending us any help, pardoning of us or justifying of us, "it is weak through the flesh," Rom. viii. 8.

I would to God, Sir, that you would pray a little more over your Bible, or ask wisdom of God. When Paul says "the law is spiritual," but I am carnal, "sold under sin," Rom. vii. 14, he

does not mean thereby that spiritual life, spiritual health, spiritual help, or strength, is communicated from thence. The law gives neither righteousness, life, hope, help, nor strength. The law is strong to destroy, but never was mighty to save, nor is help laid upon that. It is called spiritual, because it reaches to the thoughts of men's hearts, and curses them for a "lascivious look as being adultery itself," Matt. v. 28, for anger as "murder in the abstract," 1 John, iii. 15: yea, if a man "break one command he is guilty of all," James, ii. 10; it casts him for every idle word; for all that is "more than yea, yea, or nay, nay;" it brings him into judgment; and both "heaven and earth shall pass away before one jot or tittle of that law shall fail," Luke xvi. 17.

It is called spiritual, because it reaches to spirits, yea, to the wicked souls of men and devils also; for they are under one curse it reveals wrath, spiritual death, damnation, and everlasting destruction, both to the bodies and souls of all them who die under it; and it will hold all rebellious spirits, whether men or devils, in the "prison of hell till they can pay the very last mite," Luke xii. 59, which will be done when lying in goal can be called paying of debts. God says this fiery law, which is a revelation of wrath, kindled in his anger, shall burn to the lowest hell. Christ, our passover, was roasted in that fire, and it "made his heart like wax, it melted in the midst of his bowels," Psalm xxii. 14; therefore, take heed that thou attempt not to turn that ministration of death into rules of life. Cleave close to him that is "a hiding place from that north wind, and a covert from that tempest," Isaiah, xxxii. 2. In Christ Jesus thou shalt find refuge when God makes the "wicked as a fiery wheel, and persecutes them with all these storms," Psalm lxxxiii. 13, 14, 15, but no where else.

If this be handling the law lawfully, and holding forth the word of rule, as a faithful steward of the manifold grace of God; if this be rightly dividing the word of truth; if it be giving to each

his portion in due season. a portion to seven, and also to eight; if it be doing the work of an evangelist; if it be preaching the gospel according to Christ's command; if it be handling the word faithfully as a minister of the Spirit; if it be acting like a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, being approved of God; in short, if this be preaching the mystery of faith, then where are legions of our present preachers got? and if this be the pure, unmixt, unadulterated gospel of Christ, what is nine parts out of ten of the doctrine that is delivered in our days under that name! and if this be error and antinomianism, then what is gospel?

I understand your hint, Sir; those speak it more plain who call me "in public, a stinking antinomian:" and this "doctrine antinomianism which leads to licentiousness." And I wish they would speak it plainer still; then they would appear in their proper colours, and be less capable of deceiving the simple. They must either prove this doctrine to be errors instead of truth, licentious antinomianism instead of gospel, or else acknowledge that their calumny amounts to this in the sight of God that, instead "of walking in the spirit" and delivering people from "fulfilling the lusts of the flesh," it leads them into it; that, instead of the "grace of God teaching men to deny ungodliness and worldly lust, and to live soberly, righteously, and godlily," it encourages ungodliness, and a licentious way of living; and, instead of the "law of the spirit making men free from the law of sin and death," that it leads them into sin, the wages of which is death. This is their reproach, and this is the meaning of it in the sight of God; and it is plain to any spiritual mind where this reproach falls; namely, on that God who is gracious and merciful; on that Saviour by whom grace and truth came, as if he was the minister of sin; and upon the Spirit of grace, who gives the law of faith, and who is the real giver of the law of life, it being emphatically called by the apostle his law, or "the law of the Spirit of life." This, Sir, borders close upon the unpardonable sin; it is trifling "with the

folds of infinite wisdom," Eph. iii. 10, and with the greatest dispensation that ever heaven revealed to men, 2 Cor. iii. 8. It is making free with the spiritual court, from which there is no appeal; it is sinning against the last condescending lawgiver that ever appeared in this lower world. The Holy Ghost gives "that law of the wise man is the fountain of life;" he gives the "law of faith that excludes all boasting." The Holy Ghost is the giver of the law of grace, that takes men from the law of sin and the snares of death. It is this lawgiver that brings every blessing from heaven, testifies of Christ, and glorifies him on his throne; whose kingdom stands not in word, or in rules of life drawn from the letter of Moses's law, but in power, in "righteousness, peace, and joy," in the Holy Ghost. To do "despite to the Spirit of grace is treading under foot the Son of God whom the Spirit testifies of," Heb. x. 19. Sin against him, the Saviour that saves to the uttermost. says, it shall "never be forgiven, neither in this world nor in the world to come," Matt. xii. 31, 32. O, Sir, keep your distance, drop no such hints here; "he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation; because they said he hath an unclean spirit," Mark, iii. 29, 30, and those that declare the law of the Spirit of life leads to licentiousness, say little better; for they charge him with the devil's works, though they do not call him in express terms an unclean spirit. It is a bold, daring, presumptuous, perilous step; it is spiritual wickedness in the worst sense; it is leaving sin at the foot of a lawgiver that shed no blood; it is committing rebellion against Him that "will by no means clear the guilty," Exodus xxxiv. 7; it is doing despite on the bounds of the most meted enclosure; it is venturing on the most dangerous spot of holy ground in all the holy land. Sins against God the Father in the law are pardoned; he "that speaketh a word against the Son of man it shall be forgiven him;" but he that blasphemes against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness. He will by no means (no not by the blood of Christ) pardon those that are "guilty of the sin unto death," 1 John, v. 16. Let

me as a friend remind you of, and recommend you to, David's prayer, "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins, let them not have dominion over me; then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression," Psalm xix. 13.

I have watched narrowly to see what good effects this doctrine of yours produces among those where it is perpetually enforced, and I can see nothing produced to make me fall in love with it, unless it be blindness, confusion, feigned humility, and struggling under bondage; being influenced with malice against the gospel; calling every thing that tends to make poor sinners free and happy, antinomianism, not knowing what they say, but taking it from their teachers. The saints are a 'people that God has formed for himself to shew forth his praise, he has created them anew in Christ Jesus unto good works, which he hath before ordained, that we should walk in them. It is therefore their new creation in Christ Jesus, and their abiding in him, as the branch doth in the vine, that produces these good works, which they are to walk in. As they received Christ Jesus the Lord, so they are to walk in him. Every saint must acknowledge, as Paul did, that, "by the grace of God I am what I am." If grace makes them what they are, sending them to the law will never mend this work, nor make the subjects of this workmanship better; God's work is perfect, nothing can be added to it by the wisdom of men nor by the law of Moses; "the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did do it," Heb. vii. 19. The church is subject to Christ; subject to the civil power where they live, and subject to one another: but not subject to Moses, nor to his law; they "are no longer under a schoolmaster," Gal. iii. 25; "no longer under tutors and governors," Gal. iv. 2; they are not under the law but under grace. When the false brethren "came in to spy out the apostles liberty, that they might bring them into bondage, telling them that they must keep the law of Moses, we gave place to them by subjection, no, not for an

hour (says Paul); nor did we reject the truth and admit their yoke of bondage, nor" we gave place not for an hour; "that the truth of the gospel might not continue with you," Gal. ii. 4, 5.

My friend will be ready to say the way to heaven is a difficult way to find; and I answer it is so, because there is a ditch so close to it, which many fall into, being led by false preachers, deceitful workers, and blind guides, who turn from the truth that came by Jesus Christ, and get to groping about mount Sinai for help, till the old vail and the god of this world blind their eyes; and when they have lost sight of the puzzling mystery of the gospel (for such it is to unconverted men), then they think they see every thing in the letter of the law and in themselves, and so become vain in their imaginations, their foolish hearts being darkened; then they follow vain jangling, and make shipwreck of faith, lampoon the power of religion, become haters of those that are good, deceiving themselves and deceiving others, till they get desperate against the truth, and it becomes a vexation only to understand the report of the gospel, but the path of the just hath the light of God's countenance upon it; he that walks and lives by faith is in the narrow way that leadeth unto life, Matt. vii. 14; for the just man shall live by his faith, and he shall walk in newness of life. This is wisdom's way, "a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen. The lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it," Job xxviii. 7, 8. Christ is the way as well as the truth and the life; to live and walk by the faith of him is to walk safely indeed. "In this way of righteousness is life, and in the pathway thereof there is no death," Prov. xii. 28. Through this way appears narrow and difficult, yet the poor believing sinner, who is nothing in himself, but looks to his Saviour for all, though he be a fool he shall not err in this way: the Lord has promised to guide him and uphold him; and I will, says God, "lead them in a way wherein they shall not stumble; for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born," Jer. xxxi. 9.

The bad use that ungodly men may make of the truth of the Christian's liberty in the Spirit is not to silence spiritual ministers: Christ's yoke must be brought forth; the children of God must be fed; the gospel must be preached; the saints' liberty must be shewed, and they cautioned not to abuse it, and counselled to stand fast in it; notwithstanding the villainy of those that come in privily to spy it out. Ungodly men will abuse the Most High God, and even the Bible itself; therefore no wonder if they abuse the sermons or writings of his servants. The impenitent infidel, whose mind and conscience both are defiled; to whom there is nothing clean; who are condemned already, and under the wrath of God; will turn every thing to bane. But are we to muzzle the truth, yoke the saints of God with Moses's law, and call the snares of death rules of life, to please them; No; this is putting stumbling blocks before the eyes of the blind, and making men stumble at the law, Mal. ii. 8; this is not declaring the whole counsel of God; this is not leaving the work with the Lord, who has power over all flesh, that he may give eternal life to as many as are ordained to it. We are not to make such men as these the objects of fear in the pulpit, not keep back God's word from his people on account of their abusing it: they called the Master himself Beelzebub; and what can be expected from such men but sin? Ministers are a savour of death unto death to them, and are sent to preach the gospel for a witness against them; and their desperate wickedness against the gospel serves to shew us that "they were before of old ordained to this condemnation," Jude, 4.

I have considered the text you refer me to, "If ye love me keep my commandments," John xiv. 14; and I find his commandments are joyous, not grievous for the commands are that we should believe on him and love one another. But those that call the law the believer's rule of life, and me an antinomian, shew but very little of this love. He keeps the Saviour's commandments who receives the word in an honest

and good heart, and keeps it; such persons receive the word with power in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; such and only such "keep the word of Christ's patience, and he will keep them from the hour of temptation," Rev. iii. 10. He that keeps the Lord's commandments is united to him by the bond of love in the Spirit; he that keepeth his commandment dwelleth in him and he in him; he that is a stranger to this union is alive without the law alive to sin and lead to God; for "hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the quickening Spirit which he hath given us," 1 John, iii. 24.

I have had a world of legal cities formerly pressed upon me, and I know what effect such preaching had; and I see it has the same in others that fear God. It serves to nurse the pride of those that know nothing of the power of godliness. I have heard misers, persecutors, and hypocrites, applaud and admire the doctrine, but they have been dreadfully exasperated at some who are called antinomians, if they have happened to enforce the necessity of the Spirit's assistance in the performance of these things, and of their being done in faith. Men may load people as much as they please with moral, relative, and church duties; but if they spring not from union with the true vine; if not performed under the influence of the Spirit of God; if they are not done in faith, and with an eye to God's glory; they amount to nothing more than the works of the flesh, or dead works; while the legal performer is as proud as Satan himself; and, by resting in these things, is "farther from God's kingdom than publicans or harlots."

A devil transformed into an angel of light is more dangerous than when he comes in character; that is, as an accuser, a thief, or a robber: nor does Satan do the seeking sinner so much hurt when he throws him down and rents him, Mark ix. 20, as he does when he points us to legal preachers, or ministers of the letter, crying out these men are the "servants of the Moss High God, that shew unto us the way of

Salvation," Acts xvi. 17. He was as much a devil when he promised this world and the glory of it to Christ as he was when he wished him to throw himself down from the pinnacle of the temple, Luke iv. 9. Satan sometimes turns reformer in times of danger, when the gospel makes a stir in his territories, then is the time that he fires the zeal and increases the numbers of moral preachers; he knows what the law can do if that had never appeared in the world, the devil had never got one human soul into hell: "the law worketh wrath; for where no law is, there is no transgression," Rom. iv. 15, consequently no transgressors. He knows that "the strength of sin is the law," 1 Cor. xv. 56, better than we do; and he knows that those who are under the law of death are under tile law of sin; hence it is that he never stirs men up to reproach, revile, belie, scandalize, or persecute, a graceless preacher of moral duties; for it is by the instrumentality of such men that he has brought thousands to his dark dominions: by such preachers as these the devil keeps both the pulpit and the pew he stirs up the preacher to blind the people, and the people to applaud their blind guide; and thus the god of this world holds both the leader and the led. When he stirred up the Jewish priests to reject Christ, and cast out his disciples, he became head ranger both of the temple and the synagogue. The doctrine that routs the devil is preaching the kingdom of God, which consists in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; telling Zion that her King is come. When the disciples preached this the Saviour saw "Satan like lightning fall from heaven," Luke x. 18; he cast abroad the rage of his wrath and set the world in a blaze. This sort of preachers are the only adversaries that the devil has got, he gains ground by the others. He was very nigh bringing over the whole church of Galatia by the instrumentality of moral preachers. If God does not "uphold his people with his free Spirit," Psalm li. 12, I much question if any other yoke will do when trials come on; for my part, I never found any doctrine that would beget souls to God, keep them alive, make their minds heavenly, their

conversation pure, keep their consciences tender, or make their lives exemplary, but that of enforcing regeneration, or a spiritual birth; justification by faith; union and fellowship with Christ by love; and a walk in the testimony and liberty of the Holy Ghost. However, this I can say that the religion that God has taught me has been sufficient to make me industrious and willing to live honestly; and I must declare, and will with my dying breath, that I never knew what happiness, peace, rest, quietude, comfort, joy, or pleasure, meant, until Jesus Christ appeared to my soul: in him I have seen the perfection of all beauty; I have felt him to be the foundation of all real happiness: the light of his countenance, and the anticipation of his love, is the quintessence of all that is called pleasure; and to have him is to be possessed with an immortal, incorruptible, undefiled, and never-fading inheritance; which has so crucified me to this world, and to the pleasures of it, that I have just as much desire to return to it again as Abraham had to return to Err of the Chaldees, when God had promised to be his shield and everlasting reward in the land of Canaan.

Whatever the law of God enforces the Spirit of God impresses the mind with, and leaves the impression as legible upon the fleshly tables of the believer's heart, as ever he did on the two tables of stone, 2 Cor. iii. 3. The devil is never more to be suspected than when he appears in a pulpit in a large wig and long bands with a grave countenance, an audible voice, ambiguous speech, zeal mixed with candour, enforcing moral virtue, and bringing in Christ as an example, but not as the root of the matter; nor yet enforcing the need of his Spirit, nor of union with him. These things, and a few zealous strokes at the power of religion, under the name of enthusiasm, and a candid application to those blind and bond children, that cannot see through their mask, have been of very great use to the devil, because it has served to stumble the faithful and establish the pharisee. Such as these have sent my soul

bleeding home many a time, swaddled with the spirit of bondage; sin has took an occasion by the commandment until the corruption of my heart and my carnal enmity has been stirred up against God, my mind be-gloomed with horror, and terrors have drove to my feet; wrath has seemed to pursue me; Christ and comfort was gone; my sins, that had been long pardoned, came afresh to my remembrance; my heart was filed with hard thoughts of the Saviour, and the devil tempting me; that Christ had left me, was become my enemy, and as a proof of it, he was now pursuing me with fire and sword. But when the Lord appeared and delivered me, I then saw the bondage was from the law, not from the Saviour, and that it was the devil pursued me, not the Lord: I could see the difference between the tempter and my great Deliverer. And all this was communicated to my soul from the pulpit, and that by the devil himself in a large wig and a long band. Christ calls the scribes, notwithstanding their long robes, "a generation of vipers; and says they were "of their father the devil and his works they did, in binding grievous burdens on men's shoulders, which they never touched," though others laboured hard under them. If Satan can get preachers to obscure the gospel and enforce the law, he knows the old vail will gather on the minds of the people; and when a man is blinded you may lead him any where and he shall never know the want of a leader while Satan can furnish the world with blind guides: for it is by these men that he leads them into the ditch. Such preaching drives many poor distressed souls from all religion; they hear of nothing but wrath and duty: and the more they labour the worse they get, and then they shake off all, and are glad to get out so; and such become the greatest enemies of religion afterwards: and the instruments of all this mischief are legal preachers for without Christ man can do nothing, John xv. 5; it is looking to Jesus that enlightens us; abiding in the cleft of the rock that shelters us from Satan's rage. Souls flying here are compared to doves flying to their windows, where they are sure of light; but going to the law is going to

"blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and to the burning fire," Heb. xii. 18, which pursues the sinner. Satan is not displeased at men's dressing up the law, calling it the believer's rule of life, the law of love, the law of kindness, &c. He knows the law is the snares of death, that has entangled all the prey which that artful fowler has caught. This law is the sinner's adversary that entangles him in his sin, and delivers him to the judge; and the just judge delivers him by the law to the tormentor, Matt. xviii. 34. Are there souls in hell? it was the law that cast them, condemned them, and fixed them there. Are they holden with the cords of their sin? the strength of those cords is the law I Cor. xv. 56. Are they under the curse? then they are under the law, Gal. iii. 10. Are they under the dominion of eternal death? they received it from the law, which is the ministration of death, 2 Cor. iii. 7. Are their souls boiling with desperate indignation against God? the motions of sin are by the law. Are they under the wrath of God? the law worketh that wrath, Rom. iv. 15. Are they in alter darkness? it came from the law, which is "blackness and darkness," Heb. xii. 18. Are they in hell-fire? they received it from the fiery law, Deut. xxxiii. 2. Can they never come out of the bottomless pit? the immutable sentence of the law is the gulf fixed; let the law be repealed, and nothing can detain the prisoner: but not a jot or tittle of that law can fail, therefore no jail delivery can ever take place; what God doth, it is done for ever. The devil has not a greater friend in this world than a blind legal preacher; nor the children of God a greater enemy. I have sorely felt the effects of such a ministry; and I know where such ministers are better than they do themselves. "Those that are spiritual," says Paul, "judge all things, but themselves are judged of no man," 1 Cor. ii. 15.

If the covenant of grace does not afford the believer a rule of life, it must be very deficient; however, Paul could bring a rule from thence sufficient for the believer to live by, walk by, worship by, and converse by. God's sovereign will is man's

rule; and to the saints" God makes known the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure," Eph. i. 9, which runs thus "This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day," John vi. 40. This mystery is called, by way of distinction from the law, God's "good-will towards men, which brings peace upon earth, and glory to God in the highest," Luke ii. 14; it is the good-will of him that dwelt in the bush, Deut. xxxiii. 16; when this is revealed to men's hearts by the Holy Ghost it is called "the mystery of faith in a pure conscience," 1 Tim. iii. 9; and this is the saints' all-sufficient rule by faith the just man is to live; by faith, and not by sight, is the just man to walk; in the Spirit, not in the letter, is the just man to serve; in spirit and in truth is the just man to worship; he that is faithful unto death shall have the crown of life; the end of faith is the salvation of the soul. Let the law be what it may, and aim at what it pleaseth, "the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned," 1 Tim. i. 5; be that swerves aside from this turns aside to vain jangling; knows not what he says, nor whereof he affirms, 1 Tim. i. 6. God tells us to "hold faith and a good conscience, which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck," 1 Tim. i. 19. Let men bring what rules they please from the law; let them drive their flocks with that storm as much as they can; I know the real believer, though he be not to make haste, in one sense, will hasten his escape from that stormy wind and tempest, for he knows that whatsoever is not a fruit of the Spirit is a work of the flesh; whatsoever service be performed, if not done under the influence of the Spirit of life, it is a dead work; and if not done in faith, it is sin; for "whatsoever is not of faith is sin" for "without faith it is impossible to please God." We read of ministers of the Spirit and of ministers of the letter; and if there be any such things as ministers, and a ministration of the Spirit, I think these things belong to that

ministration, and to preach them is doing the work of an evangelist, and making full proof of the gospel ministry.

No man ever heard me say or hint a syllable against the goodness of the law; the law is good, "and it works death in us by that which is good," Rom. vii. 13. I suppose no nation hath more wholesome laws than this; and I believe no nation under heaven of its size sends more criminals out of the world by a halter. There are heathen nations destitute of such wholesome laws that do not execute half the number of felons that we do. Be so kind Sir, as to send me word what the law requires that this better testament does not furnish a believer with; when the imperfection or deficiency of this law of the Spirit is made to appear, we shall be able to justify the conduct of those who send numbers that have begun in the Spirit to the law to be made perfect by the flesh. This must be done, or else we shall conclude that this doctrine, of allowing the believer no rule of life but the law, is no better, in the language of the Holy Ghost, than witchcraft. "O, foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth! This only would I learn of you, received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh!" Gal. iii. 1, 2, 3. These people did not intend to give up the Saviour, they were only going to help him; they did not intend to cast off the Spirit, they were only going to perfect that which was lacking in his work; they had begun in the Spirit, and were going to the law to be made perfect. Ah! says Paul, the law belongs to the children of the flesh; to them it speaks; the works of it are the works of the flesh. Your perfection from thence will be only perfection in the flesh, and where you go for perfection there you must go for righteousness. Christ is our righteousness and sanctification too go to the law for one, and you must go to the law also for the other; by going for perfection there, that yoke will entangle you again, and bring you into bondage. God makes us perfect

by the Spirit, which unites to and makes us one with Christ, in whom we are complete. These poor souls were going to be circumcised, and take the law on them as rule of life, in order to perfect the Spirit's work. These preachers, Paul says, bewitched them, zealously affected them; yea, they would have excluded them from Christ, that they might affect them: "Ye are fallen from grace," says Paul, "Christ shall profit you nothing."

Peter on the mount of transfiguration did not intend to exclude the Saviour when he said "Let us build three tabernacles; one for thee, one for Moses, and one for Elias;" which when Moses and Elias heard, they withdrew, as all good servants ought to do. "And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son, hear him." Moses resigned his office to the Mediator of the better testament, who is the end of the law for righteousness, to whom Moses had borne witness. And Elias withdrew also, and left the Saviour in his prophetic office, as that great prophet to whom all the prophets gave witness; and I believe that Jesus is (in the highest sense) that Elias that was for to come. And it is said that, suddenly, when the disciples had looked round about, that is, after Moses and Elias, "they saw no man any more save Jesus only with themselves," Mark, ix. 4, 5, 6, 8; and he is sufficient; and it is a thousand pities that we have so many in our days who are fetching Moses in again; but they will get neither peace nor good works from him, but rather confusion. The master and the servant must not be coupled together; they are not co-masters, co-rulers, co-yokers, co-mediators, co-builders, co-lawgivers, co-husbands, nor co-sovereigns. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." There are several of our present divines who, notwithstanding their zeal for Moses, and desire to copy after him, do not at all imitate him in this point; he kept the blessing of Abraham and the curse of the bond-woman apart; he pointed out two different mountains for the blessing and the curse; and

different men were named and appointed for each work; these were typical of ministers of the Spirit, and those of the letter; "Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin, shall stand on mount Gerizim to bless; and Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali, shall stand on mount Abel to curse," Deut. xxvii. 12, 13. Zion anti Sinai must be kept apart; they are two different mountains, and two different cities are founded on them; "for this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage to her children," Gal. iv. 25; and we be to that man that is found a citizen of this bond city in the great day! Tyre, Nineveh, Babylon the literal, and Babylon the mystical, may one day understand the awful allegory, when they will be found to belong to the city of destruction," Isaiah xix. 18.

But God hath built his city on the mountain of eternal election, he hath laid his everlasting foundation there, "his foundation is in that holy mountain, and he loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob," Psalm xxxvii. 2. God hath founded this city himself, and the poor of his people shall trust in it, Isaiah xiv. 32. "He hath appointed salvation to be her walls and bulwarks; he is known in her palaces for a refuge; his dwelling-place is in Zion; he hath chosen her, she is to be his rest for ever: here will he dwell; for he has desired it. He will abundantly bless her provision and satisfy her poor with bread; he will clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints shall shout aloud for joy," Psalm cxxxii. 13, 14, 15. It was this city that Abraham and Isaac had in view; they kept it in the eye of their faith, and it made them forget their own country and their native home; "they sought a city that hath foundations, whose maker anti builder is God," Heb. xi. 10. "Upon mount Zion God hath commanded the blessing, even life for evermore," cxxxiii. 3. To this mountain Jacob looked when he was on his death-bed, and knew that God's eternal love was the bounds of this city, and that all his blessings came from thence. "The blessings of thy father have prevailed

above the blessings of my progenitors, even to the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills," Gen. xlix. 26. This is Solomon's "little city with few men in it, which the great king came to besiege with great bulwarks, which the poor wise man by his wisdom delivered, who is so little regarded for his great deliverance." Eccl. ix. 14, 15, 16. This is the only city of refuge under the gospel; and it is near to flee into, and it is a little one; but God will never destroy it, nor the lot of his inheritance who become citizens of it.

In vain men grope in the wilderness to find it, and all religion is vain that doth not bring men to it "The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city," Eccl. x. 15. "It is on the holy hill of Zion that God has set his king; and the daughters of Zion are to go forth and behold their King Solomon, whom Zion their mother crowned in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart," Song iii. 11. This is the city of the great King, of which such glorious things are spoken; it is beautiful for situation, being built upon the Rock of ages; encompassed with a mountain of brass," Zech. vi. 1. "A city set on a hill that can never be hid," Matt. v. 14, and is "the joy of the whole earth; for God is known in her palaces for a refuge," Psalm xli. 3; "he hath redeemed her with judgment, and her converts with righteousness; and out of Zion the perfection of beauty God hath shined," Psalm 1:2. It is his own metropolitan; it is "the city of the great King;" this mountain brings peace to the people, and the little hills (obtain it by faith in an imputed) righteousness, Psalm lxxii. 3. "The river of life, and all its streams of comfort, are to make glad this city of God," Psalm xli. 4; divine singers and all celestial musicians shall be there; all God's springs of love, mercy, and peace are in her, Psalm lxxxvii. 7; and every saint of God, whether a native of Rahab, Babylon, Tyre, or Ethiopia, shall be born in her; this and that man shall be born there, Psalm lxxxvii. 4, 5, 6. As soon as Zion travailes she brings forth, and of her womb

shall a nation be born at once: of the breasts of her consolations shall every babe of grace suck, and upon her knees shall every child of God be dandled; for God hath extended peace to her like a river, and righteousness as an overflowing stream.

Zion's laws are in the heart of Zion's King; the law of faith, the perfect law of liberty, and the law of the Spirit of life, go forth from hence: "out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem," Isaiah, ii. 3. "And as for them that say, Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast their cords from us he that dwells in heaven shall laugh, and have them in derision." The throne of grace is in Zion "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered; for in mount Zion shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call," Joel, ii. 32. This is our comfort, that God will never depart from this city; "for the name of the city from that day shall be, the Lord is there," Ezek. xlvii. 35; from this city God sends help to his people; they are strengthened out of Zion: and it is against this city that all our blind legal watchmen are levelling their vain janglings; but "all that fight against mount Zion and her munition, and all that distress her, shall be as the dream of a night vision" Isaiah, xxix. 7. "The Highest himself shall establish her; God shall help her, and that right early! she shall never be moved; not one of her stakes shall ever be removed, nor any of her cords ever be broken," Isaiah xxxiii. 20. This city shall be let flown out of heaven at the final conflagration, and shall be at the right hand of the King when he makes all firings new," Rev. xxi. 2, 5; and all that compass about this beloved city fire shall come down from God out of heaven and devour them," Rev. xx. 9. To mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, are all the saints to be brought; here are the innumerable company of angels: this is the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven; here is God the judge of all, and here are

the spirits of just men made perfect; here is Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant, and the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel; and what would the believer have more? "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh," Heb. xii. 22, 23, 24, 25. It is out of Zion the Deliverer shall come to the Jews when he appears to turn away ungodliness from Jacob, Rom. xi. 26. blessed are those ambassadors who stick by this city, especially when she is as she is now, low in a low place: "blessed are they that sow beside all waters, that send forth thither the feet of the ox and the ass," Isaiah, xxxii 19, 20. O Zion, if my pocket did but spring as fast as my heart, I could write a volume upon thee, thou art almost hid by the smoke of Sinai: surely those that despise thee know not the thoughts of the Lord; and those that depart from thee shall never divide the spoil. They never could enjoy the freedom and privileges of this city; they never could be within her walls; they were only spies that came to count her towers, observe her palaces, and mark her bulwarks; and are hastening away, having robbed her ambassadors of the name of Evangelist, which belongs to Zion's watchmen and no others; and can be no more applicable to a minister of the letter than the word grace would be to one of the Dukes of Edom. However, God calls them in his word by other names; such as vain janglers, subverters of his people, tempters of God, bewitchers of his saints, authors of shipwrecks, zealous affecters, but not well, excluders from Christ, perverters of truth, spies that come in to see the liberty of his children, and bring them into bondage; tinkling symbols; and declares that "if an angel from heaven preach any other gospel than that which his servant Paul preached, let him be accursed," Gal. i. 9.

As to the secret lashes that these gentlemen have given me, is little grief to me; I know that God the Saviour revealed this doctrine to my soul, and I defy either hill or dale, scot or lot, parsons or parson-makers, groves or avenues, wilks or

mussels, wills or testaments, kinsmen or uncles, towers or castles, backs or bellies, knights or days, watts or whims, to prove that God's word points out either law or rule that mount Zion doth not furnish the believer with. Zion's King sends the rod of his strength from hence, his kingdom stands not in word but in power, in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; for he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men," Rom. xiv. 17, 18.

No man can couple these two mounts together; and he that is a stranger to the sentence and wrath of the one, is a stranger to the feats and joys of the other; such never publish their conversion, nor their call to the ministry; and it is best not, for any discerning Christian may easily perceive that they are strangers to both. I doubt not but men may learn some of these things notionally, and preach them; but what know they of these things? What know they of the terrors of God, the law of faith, the law of the Spirit of life, of the dominion of grace, union with Christ, and liberty by the Spirit? To plunder and preach these things without an experience of them in the heart, is only "a parable in the mouth of fools." I did not so learn these things, nor did I find them in any authors; for the few that I have read, whether they were called antinomians, or whether they were ministers of the letter, which now-a-days are called evangelists, neither of them pleased or instructed me; for those called antinomians seemed to have no experience, and those who pretended to be evangelists seemed to have as little understanding; this I know, that while I suffered the terrors of Sinai I was distracted, and when I was brought to Zion I was clothed and in my right mind. I did intend to have sent out a riddle at the end of this; but, as it swells too big for the pockets of many of my friends, must postpone that till another opportunity.

The Rule and a Riddle;

or,

An Everlasting Task for Blind Watchmen and Old Women.

PART II.

And if by grace, then is it no more of works. - Rom. xi. 6.

TO MRS. R. J. AT B.N.D.

I RECEIVED my sister's kind epistle; and have considered her numberless complaints, and the difficulty of her way. "That which is crooked cannot be made straight, and that which is wanting cannot be numbered," says Solomon, Eccl. i. 15. Every epistle comes with heavy tidings; and no wonder, for thou art compassing about the old mount, and hast got the vail on again; and thou wilt hold it fast enough, unless some evangelical watchman, or keeper of the walls, be sent to smite thee, wound thee, and take away thy vail from thee, Song v. 7. Thy poor husband must have need of patience, now, to bear with thee, for thy temper will try him to purpose. There is no living at peace where Hagar keeps house. Let the bond woman once get between thee and the Everlasting Father, and she will soon make you feel the difference between the yoke of a bond mistress and the freedom of a married wife. Hagar will soon bear rule, entangle thee in the yoke of servitude, and provoke thee to jealousy, till thy flesh is ready to crawl upon thy bones; and thou wilt become a burden to thyself, and to all about thee; and then 'tis well if thou dost not say, "My wrong be upon thee." 'Tis thy own foolishness that perverteth thy way, and "thy heart fretteth against the Lord, Prov. xix. 3. Truth hath told thee that Hagar is Mount Sinai in

the figure, and genders to bondage; but if the Lamb's wife sets no more store by her dignity and honour than to commit the management her affairs to a bond servant. 'tis a pity but she should bear the yoke till she knows the worth of her liberty, honour, and privileges. Hagar was appointed to serve, not to bear rule. There are three thing that disquiet the earth, yea four that it cannot bear; and the first is, for a servant when he reigneth. Thou art not to serve in the oldness of the letter; therefore cast out the bond woman and her son, for the bond woman must not govern the Lamb's wife, nor shall the bond child be heir with the children of promise. This thing will not be grievous to the Father of the faithful concerning the bondwoman and her son; for he has told thee that "the servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the son abideth ever" and those sons are free sons, who are delivered kern the yoke of bondage, and stand fast in their liberty and the free woman is one who cleaves to her royal Husband, manages her house with discretion, and keeps her servants in their place.

Thou hast not got this yoke on thy neck, nor this grave-cloth wrapped about thy head, when thou satest under what is now called antinomianism: thy soul seemed then to be healthy, thy conversation savoury, and thy countenance comely; thy heart was like the chariots of Ammi-nadib, and thou didst run the race set before thee with delight. But where art thou got now? They have drove thee with the Law till thou art both blind and bound. They zealously affect thee, but not wall; they that lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths; thou art not now in Wisdom's pleasant ways, nor in the paths of peace.

Remember from whence thou art fallen thou art fallen from thy first love, from heart-felt union and fellowship with Christ, from joy and peace in believing, and from the happy enjoyment of God's free Spirit. Thou didst then enjoy the liberty of the

Gospel; now thou feelest the bondage of the law. The Lord did attend the word with a marvellous power, and ministered the Spirit among you by the preaching of faith: does he the same now by the works of the law? I trow not. Thou hast felt the Saviour's yoke to be easy, and Iris burden light; and thou never wast more holy. nor happy within, nor more circumspect without than thou wast then. I would have thee try and see what the law can do for thee: stick to it, and try what love, life, peace, and holiness, can be fetched front thence; and, when thou hast perfected the work of sanctification by that rule, then be so kind as to send me an exact account of it; explain the operations of your sensations under it, and a true account of the super-abounding practical holiness, that your family, fellow-members, and neighbours, see in you.

Not one holy motion, not one divine and pleasing sensation, not a single flame of pure love to God or man, wilt thou ever fetch from that covenant. The law worketh wrath; and the carnal mind is enmity against the lawgiver, nor can it be subject to the law. Those that are under it may cleave to one another, but the union is only the bond of natural affections; and some are held together by corrupt affections, and some given up to vile affections. But pure love flows from a reconciled God in Christ Jesus; and is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, who is the Spirit of love, and of a sound mind.

"Thou canst not discern one from the other:" no; for Paul says, "the preacher knows not what he says, nor whereof be? affirms;" and, if so, the flock, and thyself among them, must be tossed to and fro with a tempest; afflicted, and not comforted nor will be, until God appears to lay their stores with fair colours: and, as soon as the Elect Foundation, Chief Corner Stone, Stone of Help, and the Living Stone, appears with divine lustre, thou writ quit the storm, and be glad to "embrace the shadow of that Rock in this weary land. If thou aim at

holiness by the law, remember thou must be perfect in the flesh as well as spirit. The law is perfect; it will allow of no infirmities, no evil thoughts, no adulterous looks, no anger nor evil tempers, no fire to be kindled on the sabbath day; nor speaking thy own words, nor thinking thy own thoughts, on that day; thy neighbour must be loved as thyself; halt' thy goods must be given to the poor; one coat of the two must go to them that have none; and linen there is no getting to heaven but by "taking up the cross, and following Jesus." No man shall ever stand the test of that law without a pure love to God, divine life in Christ, holiness by the Spirit, and an everlasting righteousness from the God of his salvation. When you come to London, we will compare notes together, and see which has gained most by trading: until which time, pursue your present path, and I will pursue mine.

Make the law your only rule of life, read it, keep your eyes upon it, and live by it; and I will pray that I may be kept dead to the law, and live unto God; that I may be crucified with Christ, and yet live; yet not I, but that Christ may live in me. If you make the law your rule of life, you are alive to the law, and walk in the law. And if Christ lives in me, I shall be kept alive unto God, and walk in newness of life.

Go you on with the commandments, and I will go on with the promises. Make the law your "rule of walk," and I will pray God to perform his promise to me; for God hath said, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them," 2 Col. vi. 16. Thus you go on by the law, and I go on by the Gospel. Do you perform your duty, and I will plead my privileges. Act thou as an industrious servant; and, by God's grace, I will act as an affectionate son. Be thou obedient to the law, and I will pray for grace for obedience to the faith. Live thou in the fear of thy master, and I will endeavour to honour my heavenly Father.

"Make the law thy only rule of action," and act accordingly; and I will depend upon God to work in me both to will and to do of his own good pleasure; yea, to fulfil all the good pleasure of his will in me, anti the "work of faith with power."

Make the law your only role of conversation. "Speak of the commandments when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thine house, and upon thy gates; that your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children - that your days may be long in the land which the Lord sware to give thee, as the days of heaven upon the earth," Deut. xi. 19, 20. And I will pray God to create the fruit of my lips; to give me a mouth and wisdom that all my enemies shall not be able to gainsay or resist: and that it may not be me that speaks, but that the Spirit of my heavenly Father may speak in me; and then my conversation will be with power, and my words seasoned with salt, ministering grace. Thus runs the promise, and the excellence and the power is of God; and if God performs his promise to me, he will have all the glory; and if thou perform thy task, thou hast whereof to glory, but not before God, whatever thou dost before men.

Let the ministers of the letter bind all the grievous burdens upon your shoulders that you can possibly bear, and I will cast my burdens on the Lord, who hast promised to sustain me Be thou careful to observe all the grievousness which they prescribe. and I will cast all my care upon him that careth for me. Walk thou by sight, and I by faith; walk thou in the letter, and I in the Spirit Look thou to the commandments, and I will look to Jesus.

They that say, "This doctrine opens a door to all licentiousness," know not what they say. You saw nothing like that in me; and those that are setting the law perpetually

before your eyes, and enforcing holiness from that, in order to blind your mind, and prejudice your soul against the truth and the preachers of it, give you no other proof of their superior holiness than what you hear from their mouth. There is no mere power in their discourses, no more favour in their conversation, no more knowledge of the word, no more experience of grace, no more success in their ministry, no more liberty, no more prevalence with God in prayer, no more circumspection before men, nor conscientiousness towards God, than what appears in some that are called antinomians; nor half so much. Men who have nothing to recommend them, either in heart or life, must do all by the sound of the trumpet. He that laboured more abundantly than they all (and much more to the purpose) said, "It is not I, but the grace of God that was with me." But we have got some in our days, who tell us they fetch all their comfort from their holiness, and their holiness from the law: and I believe them; for they seem to have no fellowship with the God of comfort, nor experience of the Holy Ghost. Cleave thou to the Saviour, and depend on his grace; and, when these fail, then try the law. The way to Sinai is broader than the way to Zion; the path is the most beaten, and there are the greatest number of travellers. It is easier to get law than gospel; and a throne of judgment is more accessible than a throne of grace. We have legions of unconverted preachers of morality, but ministers of the Spirit are few. Most men will proclaim their own goodness, but a faithful man who can find? Men who are unacquainted with the power of godliness must enforce the letter, for that is all their stock. With the letter, a great noise, and a fair shew in the flesh, they deceive the simple. The mystery of faith is a puzzling thing to an unexperienced heart, and an unenlightened head: when they attempt this, they only betray their ignorance. The gentleman was right " Without holiness no man shall see the Lord:" and if he has no holiness but what he gets from the law, he will never see the Lord with acceptance; for, except a man be born again of the Holy

Ghost, he cannot see (much less enter into) the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is in power: regeneration enlightens us into it, and gives us a sensible enjoyment of it; for it stands in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; nothing of which comes to us from the law. If enforcing the law as the only rule of life, and setting it before thee as thy only standard of holiness, be accompanied with power; if it produces love to God and man; if it promotes true holiness; if it refreshes the new man, and clothes the soul with humility and self-loathing; if it endears Christ, and strengthens faith; if it produces spiritual life and peace; if it enlightens the eyes, enlarges the heart, weans from the world, purifies the soul, encourages diligence, and makes God, his ways and worship, the delight of thy soul, thou mayest well bear with them, for these things come from God, and do accompany salvation. But I know there is nothing of all this attends such preaching; and this letter of yours is a sufficient proof of it. I have set before my sister the law and the gospel, commandments and promises, life and death, a blessing and a curse. If thou cleave to the letter of the law, and make that thy rule of life, walk, actions, and conversation; then thy obedience will be the obedience of the law; not of faith; they will be thy fruits, not the fruits of the Spirit. By the law you work, by the gospel God works in me. You produce fruit in obedience to the letter; in Christ is my fruit found. You work by the law; by the gospel God works all my works in me. By the law you must make a new heart, and a new spirit; by the gospel God creates me anew in Christ Jesus. By the law you must love God; by the gospel God's love is shed abroad in my heart. By the law you must wash you, and make you clean; by the gospel God cleanses me from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit. Thus God works by the gospel, and by tide law you work: by the one self is denied, and Christ is all in all; by the other, self is exalted, and you are all in all. One of these agents must give way: grace must be grace, and works no more works; or works must be all, and grace nothing at all. "I do not frustrate the grace of

God; for if righteousness come by the law, Christ is dead in vain." And as righteousness did not come by the law, neither did holiness, life, nor sanctification, come by the law. Christ is made of God unto us wisdom, life, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; and he doth sanctify and cleanse his church, and present it without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. "If this opens a door to all licentiousness," then it follows, that man's dead works are true holiness; and all God's works, which are perfect, are licentiousness. Will not this be bitterness in the end? God tells me that I am "become dead to the law," am "delivered from the law," and that I am not "under the law." And what is all this death and deliverance for? what we might live in sin? Nay, we are become dead to the law, that we may "live unto God;" we are delivered from it, that we may "serve God in newness of the Spirit;" and we are brought from under it, that we might be "under grace." But why living unto God, serving in the Spirit, and being under grace, should be called a door to all licentiousness, I know not: I must refer this to the hearing of the great God, when "the year of revenges comes on for the controversy of Zion." But, if my sister uses to live to the law, be under it as her only rule of life, walk, and action, not accepting deliverance, she is welcome: let her "bowed shoulders to bear, and become a servant to tribute;" she will find, ere long, that that lamp will go out, and then she will be calling for oil. She is poor and needy now; but the legal vail sometimes blinds the eyes to that degree, that a person may be "poor and wretched, miserable, blind, and naked," and yet not know it. If thou wast to adhere to the voice of Christ in the promises, and to the voice of the Spirit in thy conscience (if it be there), thou wouldst find a living rule much preferable to a killing letter and a yoke of bondage. On the other hand, she is at full liberty; I have no dominion over her faith. Let her take the portion of goods that fall to her, and gather all together, and trade away with her "rule of action;" it will not be long before she will find the law, with its gendering yoke, will bring her into the

wilderness; and, when in a far country, and a dry land, she may remember her first husband, turn beggar, and be glad to live by faith on the fatted Calf and Bread of Life. Until when, I shall leave Mrs. Instability to make the most of her two opinions: only add, should she ever fail in business; should the citizen of that country turn swindler; should she waste her present substance; should the ministers of the letter starve her with husks; when she comes to herself, when her belly is in want, when she is humbled to beg, and longs to come home, I shall not be offended at the music and dancing, but remain the willing servant of Mrs. Prodigalis when the father makes merry.

W. HUNTINGTON.

Winchester Row Dec. 29, 1788

TO MRS. R. J.. AT B N D.

AT the first sight of my sister's letter, these words darted into my mind, "Behold, yonder is that Shunamite!" Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child? I mean, Is it well with conscience? is it well between Christ and thee? is it well with the new creature, which is "created after the image of him that created him in righteousness and true holiness," which is so often called a licentious antinomian?

There is little in this letter that savours of union with the true and living Vine: or of joy and peace, the blessed effects of that union; but quite the reverse. The vail hangs heavy on thy mind, which has obscured him that is fairer than the children of men. Thou dost not with open face behold, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, that changes us into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord. Moses is turned accuser; and that is the way he serves all who put their trust in him. No enlargement of heart dost thou enjoy; no fresh discoveries of the beauty, suitableness, and invaluable worth

of the blessed Saviour. Bondage damps all joys, contracts the heart, produces servile fear, opposes love, and fills the soul with fruitless slavery, rebellion, murmuring, discontent, deadness in devotion, leanness of soul, and enmity at those who stand fast in the Lord, and in the liberty wherewith he has made them free. I have, by the help of God, brought my religion into a narrow compass: that is, by faith, by prayer, by examination, by self-denial, by confession, by watchfulness, by reading, by meditation, and by diligence in these things, to keep up a comfortable communion and fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ; and in this way I am as happy, as holy, as Tree and lively in the pulpit, as useful in my ministry, as much favoured of God both in providence and grace; am as well attended in my ministry, and by as discerning, knowing, experimental, and upright a people, as any evangelist in London who is a stranger to this sort of antinomianism. And my poor sister, after she has galled her neck, spent her strength, and wasted her substance, with her rule of life, walk, and action, must come back again, and fetch virtue from the same vine, if ever she brings forth any fruit unto God. Without Christ she can do nothing. If the branch abide not in the vine, it is cast forth, and withered. He that abides in Christ brings forth much fruit; and God purges such, that they may bring forth more fruit. Blinding folks with Moses's vail is not "sowing light for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart." Christ came to proclaim liberty to captives, and to open the prison-doors to them that were bound; he, therefore, that brings thee into bondage, does not preach the gospel, but acts as Paul did with his commission from the high-priest; endeavours to bring all bound to Jerusalem. You suffer if a man smite you; and so you do "if he bring you into bondage." I once went to hear an ancient divine, who was the first man that honoured me with the name of an antinomian; and who has dealt enough in law terrors to frighten the whole metropolis into holiness, could the ministration of death perform that work: but I saw nothing of any operation upon the

people that appeared likely to produce fruit that would turn to their account. There were fourteen persons, within twenty feet of me, in a sound sleep, and as unconcerned as Jonah was in his voyage to Joppa. There was nothing of the outgoing of God in the sanctuary; nor did he "stir up his strength, and come among them." The labourer spent his arrows, and his breath too, but to little purpose. Nor did his rage stay here; for, when he rose to conclude in prayer, there was not one petition nor tribute of praise uttered; the audience were addressed, not God; the people were accused; and no little rage appeared against the Almighty himself. They that are under the law never can be subject to it; and those that are destitute of the Spirit of love are at enmity in their minds against God. I thought the legal cords of the ministry and the name of the meeting had a very apparent agreement: it was Ropemaker's Alley, in more senses than one.

As thou art obliged to hear all sorts of preachers, good and bad, take the following advice. When any of them begin to flog thee with the law, watch him narrowly, and hear him attentively; and, if you find that he can describe a saving knowledge of God, then depend upon it he will handle the law lawfully. The knowledge of God is first learnt in the law "Every one that hath learned of the Father cometh unto me," says Christ. Such know the terrors of God, and therefore persuade men. They know him by his powerful voice "They shall know in that day that it is I that speak: behold it is I." By the discovery of their sins "It is I that make a man know-what are his thoughts."

By his supporting hand "My hand shall be known towards my servants." By his word "He revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord." As reconciled in Christ, he gives them an heart to know him by pardoning them that he does reserve. By a sensible enjoyment of his love "He that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." If a man knows the

bondage of the law of works, and the preciousness of the law of faith; if he knows the terrors of God in the law, and the love of God in Christ Jesus; he is the man to whom, and the man by whom, God speaks "Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness; the people in whose heart is my law." Others may begin in the Spirit, and end in the flesh: they may begin to build upon the Rock, and then make Christ a rock of offence; destroy at one time, and then build again that which they destroyed. But it is not so with poor souls whose hearts are established with grace: "the law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide."

God has written his law within him, and in his mind has he put it: and says he shall not depart from him. There is no handling the law lawfully without a knowledge of God in the law. When "God speaks to a man in the secret place of thunder, and proves him at the waters of strife." Psalm lxxxi. 7, he will ever remember the storm, and the inquisition for blood; and if God reveals his Son in him; he will ever keep the law of works and the law of faith apart. It is for want of a knowledge of God that we have so much linsey woolsey doctrine, and so many poor souls kept in perpetual bondage, groping like the blind for the wall. Of such preachers God complains: "The priests said not, Where is the Lord? and they that handle the law knew me not. The pastors also transgressed against me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal," Jer. ii. 8. "Such. run, but I have not sent them," says God; "therefore they shall not profit this people at all." I know many will say in that day, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and done many wonderful works?" Yet casting out devils is not converting souls to Christ. A devil in one man may command a devil in another; and the unclean spirit may go out, and Satan may get praise by counterfeiting the power of Christ. There is not a little of this among the arminians. The seven sons of Sceva the Jew cast out devils, though the Devil was at the same time in full possession of them as we read in Acts

xix. 14. Real conversion is not only casting the devil out of the heart, but it is attended with farming Christ in his place; which is done by the power of the Spirit et God attending the word. The parched ground of a barren heart must become a pool, the thirsty land a spring of water; and the habitation of dragons must bear the herbage or green pastures of heavenly truth; "there shall be grass, with reeds and rushes," Isa. xxxv. 7. Thus Satan is supplanted; and not only cast out, but kept out.

I have considered all the texts that you refer me to. The gospel leads us to Zion; there God is reconciled; there Christ was crowned; there is the King of saints, and the throne of grace. At "Sinai God dwells in thick darkness:" there is the flaming sword unsheathed, the throne of judgment, and a terrible Judge. There is Moses,' the accuser of them that trust in him; and a fiery law, before which there is no standing. Go there for rules, or whatever help thou wantest, thou wilt not be long there before sin will stare thee in the face: the law will bind thee, and hold thee; the old enmity will boil up afresh; a thousand doubts and fears will surround thee; heaviness, dejection, and dismay, will sink thee; the arrows of God will drink up thy spirit; spiritual strength will fail thee; relaxation, utter helplessness, and weakness, will seize thee; and thou wilt stand before the judgment-seat quaking and trembling, till despondency itself will overwhelm thy foolish heart. However, go on, till you find, as Job did, that "the arrows of the Almighty are within you." Judgment appears just before you; and then "beware lest he take thee away with his stroke, then a great ransom cannot deliver thee." When thou hast had thy fill of this storm, and been broken with this tempest, thou wilt call about, as he did, for the mercy-seat "O that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat! I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments. There (but nowhere else) the righteous may dispute with him: so should I be delivered for ever from my Judge."

I know several, at this present time, who have had a savoury. experience, and enjoyed spiritual liberty in Christ, who, by getting into company with arminians, and sitting tinder ministers of the letter, have been brought into bondage again; and have lain withered, both in body and soul, and bound hand and foot, from year's end to year's end. They often look back to the pleasing mount on which they formerly stood, "crying out, My leanness! my leanness! Woe unto me!" They see their error; but unbelief and the yoke of bondage hold them fast, and refuse to let them go; and they have no life, fervent, or power, in prayer, to wrestle for deliverance. The spirit of God is grieved; his freedom has been abused; from gospel simplicity, and simple dependance on Christ, they have been seduced; joy is withered away from them; nothing but complaints, discontent, and murmuring, possess them: they are unfruitful to God; useless in his cause; a stumbling-block to the weak; and, by their perpetual complaints before all ranks of Christians, they spread a legal damp and melancholy gloom over many a healthy conscience and comely countenance: but, alas! they stood not fast in their liberty, and therefore are justly entangled with the yoke of bondage.

These are the effects of cleaving to the law; and my sister is no stranger to them in her present state: she sensibly feels a barren heart, and a contracted spirits though she knows not from whence they spring. She may thank the ministers of the letter for her bondage; and she may depend upon it, that nothing but the ministry of the Spirit will ever bring her out of it. Not long since, one Fry, a linen-draper in South Moulton Street, a mere novice, lifted up with pride, had a mind to cut a flourish in the pulpit, and to have a stroke at me. He told his audience, "that if he had a thousand souls, he would venture them all upon the law;" as if that was the foundation that God has laid in Zion; when we know, that "as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse;" and if the sword bathed

in heaven is come down on the people of God's curse to judgment, what will become of all the souls ventured there? If "God is terrible to the kings of the earth," to whom he has committed the temporal sword, what must he be to such impostors as these, who thrust themselves into the highest office in the church, and pretend to handle the spiritual one?

Thou dost not seem to understand what the Scriptures mean by the word Law. Sometimes, in the Old Testament, it means the whole Scriptures, as the New Testament was not then written: though the substance of it lay in the unaccomplished prophecies, the promises, and the ceremonial law, which was the gospel of the Jewish church; "for unto them was the gospel preached as well as unto us; but the word did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." Even the promise made to Abraham is sometimes called a law: "He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations. Which covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac; and confirmed the same unto Jacob for a Law, and to Israel for an everlasting Covenant; saying Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance," Psal. cv. 8. &c. This covenant is the covenant of grace; the oath secures the inheritance given to Abraham by promise; and the law was given four hundred and thirty years after. This is manifestly the law of faith; for as many as are of faith are heirs of this promise, secured by this oath, and shall enjoy the inheritance, for they are blessed with faithful Abraham. In this covenant of promise, or law of faith, the Psalmist believed " I believed; therefore have I spoken."

If some of our letter-preachers had ever received the command-sent, as Paul, David, and others, have done; and their wicked life and deceitful hearts had been laid open; and they had properly felt the killing power of the letter of the law; and had felt a strong faith in the holiness justice, and

immutability of God, in the law; they would have been glad to find out .the law of faith as well as David " Teach me good judgment and knowledge, for I have believed thy commandments," Psalm cxix. 66. This faith had sunk him, (the Psalmist) unless another object had appeared " I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living," Psalm xxvii. 13. This goodness of the Lord which he saw was in Christ, in whom he believed; whom he galls by that name, "Blessed be the Lord, my strength, my goodness, my fortress, my high tower, my deliverer, and my shield, in whom I trust," Psalm cxliv. 1, 2. Had our present bond ministers firmly believed the commandments, as David did, they would have been glad to exercise faith on David's Lord: if they had "believed Moses, they would have believed Christ;" but if they "believe not his writings, how shall they believe the Saviour's words?" Men that are destitute of a saving knowledge of God in Christ Jesus know nothing of the power either of law or gospel, though they may pretend to it;' They that handle the law know me not," says God. And men that are destitute of gospel faith in Christ, never believed the law of commandments to be what they really are: they believe neither Moses's writings nor the Saviour's words; nor will they, unless God bring them, as he did David, to the Rock higher than they; or else sink them in despair, as he did Francis Spirah, under the wrath, bondage, and curse, of that fiery dispensation.

When David says, "Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law I am a stranger in the earth, hide not thy commandments from me," Psa. cxix. 18,19; it was the ceremonial law that discovered wondrous things to him things which those that are dead, and under the curse of Moses's law, know nothing of; for "God does not shew wonders to the dead," Psalm lxxxviii. 10. But in the ceremonial law, which was a part of the Jews' gospel, David saw the Saviour represented; which led his faith to him whose hands

and feet he saw, in the vision of faith, pierced for him. In that Sacrifice he believed; which broke his heart, and made his soul as a weaned child. Faith in him, a broken heart, spiritual prayer offered up through him, and offerings of praise and thanksgiving for him, he knew, pleased God better than a bullock that hath horns and hoofs. These were the wonders that David saw; and these were things that he meditated on, things touching the King. It was not the breadth of the commandment that David was charmed with, but the perfection of beauty beyond it; "He that was fairer than the children of men;" whom he saw to be "the end of the law for righteousness to all that believe:" as he says, "I have seen an end of all perfection, but thy commandment is exceeding broad." In that blessed object he believed for the pardon of his sin, and the justification of his soul; and pronounces the man blessed "whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile," Psalm lxxxvii. 8. The bondage of the law held him fast; and he brought forth no more fruit to God's glory under that yoke, than my legal accusers do, who say and do not. But, when he got out of his fetters, then he honoured his God, like an adopted son indeed: "O Lord, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thy handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds. I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord, now in the presence of all his people; in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the Lord" Psalm cxvi. 16, 17, 18. When my sister gets her fret out of the stocks, she will offer praise as well as David. Delivering grace does not lead to licentiousness; it lays us under the strongest, highest, and most constraining obligations to God, that it is possible for a mortal to feel; such as bond children and hypocrites never felt.

"Paul loved the law of God after the inner man." True; stick to that, and you are right; and, when you hear a man crying up

and enforcing the law upon you, mark him, and see if he can define the new man, and whether he feeds the new man in you. Christ in the heart eats his honeycomb with his honey. If no power attends the word, no refreshing comes from the Lord's presence; if he is a stranger to that experience that worketh hope, he knows not God; he believes neither Moses', writings, nor the Saviour's words: he is not a new creature, but is in the flesh, not in the Spirit, and only trades with the letter. He does not know the law; he has not got the law, nor does he love the law. The end of the law is love: God's love is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. Such love the law after the inner man. and love is the fulfilling of the law. To walk in love, as Christ hath loved us, is Paul's "more excellent way;" and this David calls" the way of God's commandments," which he pursued when love cast out the slavish fear of the law, delivered him from the bondage of it, and enlarged his heart from the contraction and straitness which the law brought him into. "I will run the way of thy commandments when thou shalt enlarge my heart. Make me to go in the path of thy commandments, for therein do I delight," Psalm cxix. 32, 35.

Thou art endeavouring to fetch all thy good works from the law of Moses, and to make that thy only rule of life and action; but David fetched his help from another quarter, which did not lead him to licentiousness. He would praise God when he had loosed his bonds; but thou contendest for more bonds. He would run the way of God's commandments when God's love had enlarged t, is heart; but the law of the Spirit of life and love is not sufficient for you. He delighted in God's path, and says, "Make me to go in it," but God's spiritual might in the inner man is not sufficient for thee. David's liberty from bonds, his heart-enlarging love, and God's strengthening him with strength in his soul, is what leads to licentiousness according to the doctrine that you hear. Your divines can fetch all their works from a dead letter; and keep the law without imitating

poor David in his humble petition, "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe."

"Then I shall not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments." If this quotation be true, that respect to all God's commandments sets a man out of the reach of shame; then it follows, that if I go on enforcing the everlasting love of God to us, and insisting on a pure love to him, and a love to the law after the inner man; a walk in love, or keeping ourselves in the love of God; which love is the fulfilment of the law, and the bond of the everlasting covenant, and which is called serving God in the newness of the Spirit, for he is the Spirit of love and of a sound mind I shall with my mind serve the law of God; and therefore have no cause to be ashamed, though all the world call me an antinomian; for respect to all God's commandments sets me out of the reach of shame. Let me live, then, under the influence of God's everlasting love; and let my sister go to the law. Be the former my rock, and the latter yours. Work thou in the letter and may love for ever work in me! With this bond I will box the compass all round with my sister, or any of her legal preachers. Is she labouring to keep the law? God is not forgetful of my labours of love. Does she make the law her only rule of action! "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Is she trying to fulfil the second table? "Love works no ill to his neighbour." Is she trying to keep all the commandments? "Love is the end of the commandment." Or, is she sick of the old veil, the old yoke, and the bond child's rule of life? If so, let her return to her first husband: love is an easy yoke, and a light burden. Would she believe? "Chanty believeth all things." Would she be saved by hope? "Love hopeth all things." Would she escape real antinomianism? "Love rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." Would she escape legal pride? "Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed' up." Would she escape evil thoughts? "Love thinketh no evil." Would she be patient? Love beareth and endureth all things. Would she be free? Love is a free spirit. Would she

escape the anoyant behaviour and carnal conversation of hypocrites? "Love doth not behave unseemly." Would she run the path of holiness? Love is "the more excellent way." Would she keep the commandments? He that hath the gospel in his heart, and keepeth it, "he it is that loveth Christ, and in him verily is the love of God perfected." Would she enjoy the pardon of sin? "Where much is forgiven, the same loveth much." Would she know her state to be safe? "We know that we are passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." "Would you know what it is draws souls to Christ? "With loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Would you know the reason why some preachers get worse in their ministry instead of better? and why some professors stand still, or go back, instead of forward? It is because the Lord doth not draw them with love; therefore they do not run after him. Would you know who they are that love Christ? "He that hath my word (the gospel), he it is that loveth me, and shall be loved of my Father." Would you know why so many, in Christ's days, went back, or fell away? The love of God was not in them: they had no root in themselves. Would you know why so many stick in the birth, and never come forth? It is because perfect love never casts out fear. Would you know why you halt so long between two opinions. Because thou art not made perfect in love. Would you enjoy a spiritual birth, and a knowledge of God? "He that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." Would you know who doth, and who doth not know God? Mark their descriptions of love, and the power that attends it: "He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love." Would you know who they are that obtain victory over sin? They whom God crowns with loving-kindness and tender mercy. Would you know what brings the saints through all their heavy trials, and the shadow of death? It is love, which is strong as death; which no water can quench, nor flood drown. Would you know what keeps the saints alive, active, and obedient? The love of Christ constrains them. Would you know what brings them off victorious? "They are more than conquerors

through him that loved them." Would you know what that is that unites to God? It is love: "He that loveth dwelleth in God, and God in him." Would you know who they are that keep the commandments? It is he that lives in union with Christ; "He that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him." Would you know to whom God speaks in his word? "To him that loves him: "Hearken to me ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law." Would you know the reason the saints never fall away? "Because loving-kindness is never taken from them: the law of God is in their heart; none of their steps shall slide " from that Rock on which God has established their goings. Would you know what displeases the Saviour most in the saints? It is when they leave their first love. Would you know what secures heaven? "Charity never faileth." Would you know the greatest of all graces? "Faith, hope, charity; but the greatest of these is love." Would you know who shall live for ever with God in glory? They that love him: "I will circumcise their heart, that they may love me with their whole heart, and their whole soul, that they may live." Would you know the saint's worst times? It is when iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxes cold. Would you know what a real antinomian is? A hypocrite, or a minister of the letter, is? He is one that pretends to have all knowledge, understands all mystery; and with his empty eloquence attempts to speak with the tongue of men and angels; lays a claim to faith, as if he could move mountains; and yet hath no charity, no love to God in his heart: he is the sounding brass, the tinkling cymbal, the false imposter, the deceitful worker, the child of the devil, the snare of the saints, and the enemy of God. Such are men of a bad spirit indeed! uncharitable men with a witness! and from all their" uncharitableness, good Lord, deliver us!" Would you know where this love is to be got? It is at Mount Zion; "for there God commanded the blessing, even (the Spirit of life and love) for evermore."

What says my sister to this? I think she is ready to hang towards this balance of the sanctuary; she is almost ready to let go her "rule of life and action," and submit to lie passive, and be acted upon. I tell her, that her strength is to sit still; that the weak are strong; that grace is sufficient; and that God's strength is made perfect in our weakness. God forms the vessel of honour while the clay lies passive; and puts his treasure in the vessel when he has formed it, that the power may appear to be of him. He laid the foundation of mercy's building at first; and builds up Zion himself: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit saith the Lord of hosts;" and, when he builds up Zerubbabel appears in his glory. The work never goes on better then when self is denied, and the Lord depended on and trusted in. Uzzah's arm of flesh, Peter's self-confidence, and Israel's flight to Egypt for help, was their shame, but neither their safety nor their honour. If love is the fulfilling of the law; if continuing in the perfect law of liberty be the way to be blessed in one's deed; if the law of faith excludes boasting, and gives the glory to God; and if the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus makes us free from the law of sin, and the ministration of death, whether it be called antinomianism, licentiousness, or the everlasting gospel; I do insist upon it, that it is the most blessed dispensation that ever Heaven revealed, or the children of men embraced. My cruse has sprung up so fast on this subject, that I cannot at present answer the other Scriptures that you have heaped together: but this I know, that the gospel is written that we may have fellowship with the Father and the Son; and, while I enjoy and enforce this union, I defy you to bring one text in God's book, either against my soul, my religion, or my ministry. It is the proud doer that God resists. "The poor (in spirit) heareth not rebuke." Prov. xiii. 8. How should they! Poverty of spirit is the mark that secures" the prize of the high-calling of God in Christ Jesus" ,"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for their's is the kingdom of heaven." The bond of love with which God drew my soul to Christ, and the enjoyment of this three-fold cord,

the love of the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost, has held my soul faster to God and godliness than all my sister's rules of action, or than all the bonds and cords that ever were made in Ropemaker's Alley: they may hold the bond children down to sin, wrath, and malice, against others; but they will never hold the affections to God, nor the mind from vanity. I doubt my sister has not felt the dreadful effects of that tremendous dispensation: if she had, she would have cried out, as others have done, "Let the Mediator speak to us, and we will hear; but let not God speak to us, lest we die," Exod. xx. 19. To be short. If my sister will be fruitful, she must abide in the vine. If she would live, she must "mortify the deeds of the body by the Spirit." If she would have sin subdued, she must continue in the grace of God, or be contented to be under grace. If she would be holy, she must not seek for the old veil, but "with open face behold, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, till she be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord." If she would enjoy peace, let her lay by one of her opinions, and cleave to Jesus: he will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on him; and if she is not contented with an everlasting gospel, let her make full proof of the killing letter. She is not an entire stranger to the liberty of the gospel; and, if fids will not suffice, let her try the bondage of the law. If ever she gets deliverance, it shall be by what is now called antinomianism; and, if she rebels against this, bondage and barrenness are sure to follow: "He bringeth out those who are bound with chains, but the rebellious dwell in a dry land." For my part, I shall be content within the walls of Zion; and I wish she was contented with abiding in the field of Boaz: but, if she be not, I shall not stroll after her, (Adam paid dear for that;) only stand upon my watch-tower, and observe her motions. The command to me is, "Let them return unto thee, hut return not thou unto them," Jer. xv. 19. Will answer the rest as soon as convenient; and conclude with an ancient speech of one of the friends o! Job My desire is, that my sister

may be tried, till, like Pharaoh, she intreats to hear no more mighty thunderings.

Amen, and Amen.

Says her humble servant to command,
W. HUNTINGTON.

Winchester Row Jan. 15, 1789.
TO MRS. R. J. AT B.N.D.

MY sister's letter is like Sheba's journey to Jerusalem. She has visited me with a long train of Scriptures, and intends to prove me with hard questions; and I believe that, on the subject of law and gospel, I have told her much of the workings of her own heart. We poor lost worms of the dust are very proud; and do not like to become nothing, that Christ may be all in all. Not to be able to speak a good word, or think a good thought; to become fools, that we may be wise; to have a woe put upon our righteousness, our wisdom, and our prudence; to be unclean things by birth and practice; and unprofitable servants when in a state of grace are hard sayings; who can hear them? For our natural reason to be called darkness; our understanding foolishness; and our wisdom earthly, sensual, and devilish. For self, holy righteous self; consequential, co-working, and wonder performing self; to be denied daily, and a cross laid on it, to keep it fretting under the burden, that it may not intermix its bane with the stream that comes forth from the springing well that God has put in the earthen vessel; to have the sentence of death in one's self, that we may not trust there; to be debtors to grace for a mouth, wisdom, and door of utterance; to be buffeted by the devil, till self is nothing but weakness, that the power of Christ may be made perfect in that; that the decay of self should be the renewal of the inward man, and the weakness of self the cause of divine power and grace being manifested are lessons that are hard to learn; but they are the lessons of

the gospel; on which account unhumiliated, unrenewed, and uninspired preachers and professors, do not love the dispensation of the Spirit. The law of Moses has not these self-abasing tasks in it. The grand human agent, thou, stands almost in every verse thou shalt not do this, and thou shalt do that. Boasting is not excluded by the law of works, though by the law of faith it is. This the bond family are aware of, and therefore are determined to stick to that covenant, that sets man forth; choosing rather to be the acting. than the passive thou; without considering the great and terrible name that stands in the preface, "I am the Lord."

Circumcision and signs are called for among the Jews; wisdom among the Greeks; free-will, self-righteousness, and legal rules, among the arminians; and traditions among the papists: but we preach Christ crucified; to the Jews a stumbling-block; to the Greeks foolishness; to the arminians, antinomians, and to papists, heresy. By them self is exalted, the Saviour debased, and the offence of the cross is ceased. If we are under the law as a rule of life, walk, and action, our arminians, or modern calvinists, ought to preach up circumcision, for it is that which makes a man a debtor to do the whole law; but driving the saints of God from Mount Zion, from union with Christ, from the Saviour's yoke, from the service of the Spirit, from the liberty of the gospel, and from a life of faith, and, at the same time, not insisting upon circumcision, is not doing the duty of a minister of the letter.

What a terrible thing it is, that a dispensation for the salvation of sinners should be sent into the world on purpose to stain the pride of all glory! that Free Agency should be brought to nothing; and her magnificence be despised, whom not only the Ephesians, but the whole, unelected world, worshippeth! But so it is; the greatest apostle, and the brightest saint, must stoop to this that it is God that prepares the heart; yea, is the strength of the heart when heart and flesh both fail; that the

excellency and the power of religion are of him; that the fruit of the lip, the success of the ministry, and the strength and fortitude of the minister, are all of God. All our fruits must be attributed to the Spirit; all our labours to love; our works to faith; and our victories must be ascribed to Him that hath loved us. Poor Free Agency must be excluded in every sense. Excluded from God's decrees: "He works all things after the counsel of his own will." From predestination'. "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." From the spiritual birth: born, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, nor of blood, "but of God." From the labour also: "Yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me." And all the share that falls to poor Free Agency is, that she has done all the mischief she could; and been a hinderer, instead of a help-mate. The flesh and the Spirit: "These are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." This indignity, and the title of an "unprofitable servant," is all the share that falls to self: the glory must all be given to God; and we must be satisfied with the honour that God confers, if we would be found among the faithful; "for how can they believe that receive honour one of another, and not the honour that cometh from God only?" Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, nor let the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches; "but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord, which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things, I delight saith the Lord," Jer. xxix.23, 24. Shame, abasement, and disgrace, are all that will ever fall to the old man in the saints, and to all old Adam's family under the law; and to glory in the knowledge of God, in the loving-kindness, judgment and righteousness, which he exercises, will be the delight of all new creatures in Christ Jesus to all eternity; and I believe that every one who knows the plague of his own heart, and the grace of God in truth, will cheerfully pocket the affront; though the arminian is determined to shoot the gulch, blaspheme the

decrees, alter the Bible, arraign and condemn the Host High, rather than be brought in guilty, or submit to the self-abasing terms of the covenant of grace.

Now for the passage quoted, "Do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God." It is a text in the mouth of every child of the flesh, though there is not a word in it but what militates against them. They are not enlightened into the mysteries of the kingdom of God, therefore God hath not showed them what is good; and, as they are all for bringing something to God, instead of receiving the cup of salvation, or grace, from him, the text cuts off their withered arm: "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God! Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" Micah vi. 6, 7. If burnt offerings, calves of a year old, thousands of rams, ten thousand rivers of oil, and the fruit of one's body, will not do for a man to present himself before God within this life; what figure must they cut who think to stand before God's tribunal, to merit and live in the heavenly glory, by boasting of free-will, which is corrupt; by self-righteousness, which is filthy rags; by trusting in an arm of flesh, for which they are cursed of God; and by dead works, performed under the sentence of death and damnation { The unbeliever, who is condemned already, and under the wrath of God; to whom there is nothing clean, but even his mind and conscience are defiled; and who, without faith, cannot please God; cannot be the person that is supposed in the text to do justly: they must be persons in covenant with God, and partakers of the sore mercies of David, or obtain mercy, that the text means. How can he love mercy that has not obtained mercy? He may justify the wicked, and call that mercy; or, give alms with the intent of getting a name, or meriting heaven: but these "tender mercies of the wicked are cruel," for

they cheat the soul; and, as to" walking humbly with thy God," we know he is the God of the living, not of the dead. The proud legalist the rebellious free-willier, cannot submit to this truth; much less obtain pardon of sin, and a sense Of God's love; and, without submission, pardon, and a sense of love, there is no getting at God, no standing in his presence, nor finding favour in his sight; much less walking humbly with him. "How can two walk together except they be agreed?" All the list of worthies received a good report through faith; but nothing of this appears to be given to them that "say and do not." They that are in the Vine bring forth much fruit; but nothing of this is said of them who abide under the law. By faith God has been pleased, and glorified; but without faith it is impossible to please him.

Let my sister read the eighth chapter of Isaiah; it contains the whole of my doctrine, and an exact portrait of my legal opposers. First, the prophet tells us of the instruction that the Lord gave him. "For the Lord spake thus unto me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying, Say ye not, a confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread," vet. 11, 12, 13. Secondly, he ascribes the blessed state of them who fly from the wrath to come, which is revealed in the law to Christ, the only refuge and shelter that God has appointed; and the falling, stumbling, broken, and shattered condition of them who stumble at the gospel, and are offended at Christ: "And he shall be for a sanctuary [to those that trust in him;] but for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence, to both the houses of Israel; for a gin, and for a snare, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem: and many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken," ver. 14, 15. Then the prophet goes on to tell us how the testimony of the gospel shall come in the demonstration of

the Holy Ghost; and be bound up, by the bond of love, in our souls; and that the law shall be sealed by the Holy Spirit, upon the fleshy tables of our hearts, that we may have it, and do it; not on tables of stone: it is in our mouth, and in our heart; and, under the impression of the Holy Ghost, it sinks deep. The blessed Spirit gives us the law of liberty, the law of life, and the law of love; and bears witness to our justification unto life, and to our adoption; seals us to eternal redemption; and keeps every needful law in our souls under the impression of his own seal: "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples. Behold I, and the children whom the Lord hath given me, are for signs, and for wonders, in Israel, from the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth on Mount Zion," Isa. viii. 16, 18. Let my sister consider this. The testimony (which is an experience of the gospel of Christ) is called the law, and is said to be bound up and sealed on the hearts of the Lord's disciples; and such are called "the children that God (the Father) has given to Christ," Itch. ii. 13, and such, on account of their knowledge of gospel mysteries, are said to be for signs and wonders in Israel; and all this is not from Sinai, but from the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth in Mount Zion. The prophet, having given us this choice experience, and an account of his own instruction, goes on to caution us, first, against seducers. Secondly, gives us instructions how to try them. Thirdly, how they will fret and behave if they cannot prevail against us. "And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits; and unto wizards, that peep and mutter: should not a people seek unto their God?" ver. 19; my sister will reply, "Sending souls to Mount Sinai cannot be acting under the influence of familiar spirits, or leading people to enchantments." Paul says, "False apostles are ministers of Satan;" and leading believers to the law, to be made perfect in the flesh, is witchcraft; "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth?" Gal. iii. 1. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them," ver. 20. The prophet having informed us that the

testimony bound, or law sealed, is among the disciples of Christ; bids us try blind guides by the testimony, law, or word, that we have received. The testimony is the gospel; the law is the law of faith; and the word is the word of life: and; when ministers of Satan would bewitch us, by sending us to the law, to be made perfect by the flesh (for that is not the ministration of the Spirit), that we are to try them by the testimony or law that God has bound and sealed among us: and if they cannot describe the testimony of the gospel, or the law of faith; nor the law written on our hearts; nor the seal of the Spirit, nor the witness that he bears of our being the children that God has given to Christ; that they are blinded by the law; they are in the flesh, not in the Spirit; "If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them," ver. 20. The prophet goes on to describe the rage of these false apostles; their starving condition; their reward galling of conscience; their malice, even against God himself; their anguish of soul, and fearful end: "And they shall pass through it, hardly bestead, and hungry: and it shall come to pass, that when they shall be hungry, they shall fret themselves, and curse their King and their God, and look upward. And they shall look unto the earth; and behold, trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish; and they shall be driven to darkness!" ver. 21, 22. An awful, but a true picture, of an uninspired preacher. Many lashes such men receive, both from God and conscience; "yet they return not to him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the Lord of hosts," Isa. ix. 13. the prophet compares them to withered branches and rushes, and pays no regard either to their age or their honour. "God shall cut off from Israel [after the flesh] head and tail, branch and rush, in one day: the ancient and honourable, he is the head; and the prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail. For the leaders of this people cause them to err, and they that are led of them are destroyed: therefore the Lord shall have no joy in their young men, neither shall have mercy on their fatherless and widows;

for every one is an hypocrite and an evil doer, and every mouth speaketh folly," Isa. ix. 14, 15, 16, 17.

The law of Moses the prophet applies to the ungodly, who are under it, and under the curse of it: to whom it belongs; "For the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient." "Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear to the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah," Isa. i. 10. But to the elect he says, "Christ shall magnify the law, and make it honourable," Isa. xlii. 21. And of the law of faith he speaketh on this wise: "Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you; for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him. For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody." "Hearken unto me, my people, and give ear unto me, O my nation: for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people." "My righteousness is near; my salvation is gone forth; and my arms shall judge the people: the isles shall wait upon me, and on my arm shall they trust," Isa. li. 2, 3, 4, 5. Here is a law that is to proceed from Christ: it is to be attended with a looking to Abraham's call, and Abraham's blessing; it is to be accompanied with joy and gladness, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody; it is to consist of a divine righteousness, of free salvation, and a firm trust and reliance on the arm of the Lord. This is called the law of God's people, and the law of his nation; a chosen people, and a righteous nation, is opposed to a sinful nation, and a people laden with iniquity. This is the law that went forth out of Zion, and the word of the Lord that went from Jerusalem, Isa. ii. 1. And it is in the hearts of all God's justified people, Isa. v. 7. "Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law: fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be afraid of their revilings;" even though they rage, and

reproach you as antinomians (who make void the law,) and lead people into licentiousness; while themselves are the servants of corruption, being enemies to, and destitute of, that grace that can make them clean.

When the Lord says, "Bind up the testimony, seal the law, among my disciples;" believers are meant; as appears from John: "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and his disciples believed on him." The testimony and the law are one and the same thing. To have the testimony bound, is to receive the truth in the love of it; which love is the bond of the covenant of promise. To have the law sealed, is to mix faith with the word, and receive it in power, in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance: "The day you believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." This is the law of faith, and the seal of it. If my sister asks why this testimony bound up is called a law sealed? I answer, because every other law is included to this testimony, and is couched under this seal; on which account it is called a law. For instance: one says, "Do this, and thou shalt live." Life is the thing promised to the doer, and death threatened in case of non-performance. "The law of the wise is a foundation of life, to depart from the snares of death." Prov. xiii. 14.

Another law says, "This shall be thy righteousness, if thou observe to do all the things which are written in this law." This lies under the seal also "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Rom. viii. 4.

The law of circumcision lies under this seal. Circumcision is a seal of the righteousness of faith. Abraham received the promise in uncircumcision, that he might be the father of the uncircumcised Gentiles who believe through grace; those who receive the Spirit of love, and of a sound mind. "God has circumcised their hearts to love him;" and such, and such

only, are "the true circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh," Phil. iii. 3.

If we speak of the law of the leper, and of cleansing him, Levit. vi. 9, it is under this seal. Our High-priest cleanses us by a look: and, when all our own comeliness is turned into corruption, as Daniel speaks; when we cover the lip, and cry Unclean! unclean! from the head to the foot there is no soundness in us; and that in our flesh dwelleth no good thing then we are said to be all-glorious within. The Lord saves us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. Thus the lepers are cleansed, to the poor the gospel is preached; and blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me."

If we speak of the jubilee trumpet, the jubilee year, and the law of release; here is the great trumpet that is to be down, the Saviour proclaiming liberty to captives, and the acceptable year of the Lord, and the Spirit applying the same: "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. Whosoever looketh unto the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, this man shall be blessed in his deed," James, i, 25.

It includes the whole law of redemption. We are redeemed from a vain conversation by the precious blood of Christ; from the curse of the law also, from the wrath to come, from the pit of hell, and from the second death: "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness, Isa. i. 27.

The law of marriage is couched under this seal. Here is Christ the bridegroom, and Zion the bride; his choice of her, and her choice of him; his love, and her love. Here is their mutual espousing each other; his betrothing her in righteousness, loving-kindness, and in great mercies, and that for ever. Of their being joined in one Spirit: yea, "we are of his flesh, and

of his bones. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and his church."

The law of the man-slayer lies under this seal. The elect sinner has destroyed himself; and has had a hand, by his sins in crucifying Christ; yet he hated him not aforetime, namely, when he stood complete in Adam: but the devil seduced man into this state of enmity; and justice is the avenger of blood. Zion is the walled city of refuge to which the alarmed sinner flies: salvation is her walls and bulwarks; Christ is the high-priest he stands before, under whose wings he takes refuge, and by whose death he shall be restored to his heavenly home, from whence the devil and sin drove him at first.

Speak we of the law of washing, or of baptism, it is included in this law of faith. Our hearts are sprinkled from an evil conscience; Christ has washed us, and we have a part in him. We are washed in regeneration; clean water is sprinkled upon us, and we are clean. "We are baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire." All baptism short of this is washing the outside of the cup and the platter, and amounts to no more than carnal washing. It is not the washing away the filth of the flesh, but purgation from guilt, and a testimony by the Spirit to our justification and adoption, "that is the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead." 1 Peter iii. 12, through whom, and by whom, the Spirit comes.

Some Jews say, "there are three hundred and thirteen laws;" and some say, "Six hundred and thirteen;" and, if there be six thousand, I will be bound to prove, that the whole of them, in their spiritual sense and meaning (except the law of divorce) are couched in this text " Bind up the testimony, seal the law among the disciples."

The law made nothing perfect, and man makes nothing perfect: but the Spirit is God, and his work is perfect; and the

bringing in of a better hope makes us perfect and complete in that hope. This is antinomianism; this is licentiousness. Be it so; it is all from heaven; and they do very little less than blaspheme God, his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven, who utter such blasphemy. However, it is a covenant of free grace that God has made with Christ, and with us in him; and their dead works can find no footing in it. It is the ministration of the Spirit; and natural men discern not the things of it, for they are foolishness to them. As they know not the Lord, they have nothing to trust in but their own righteousness; which they perceive cannot be established by the gospel, for it reveals only the righteousness of God: "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith. This the bond children are aware of; and therefore abuse the grace of God, charge it with bad consequences, and run to the law for some ground of boasting; and, being ignorant of its spiritual meaning, they trust in the letter, make a fair shew in the flesh, and establish a righteousness of their own before men, which cannot stand the inquest of their own thoughts, much less the impartial test of the Judge of quick and dead. But, without an union with the true Vine, Christ says they shall do nothing. By our abiding in Christ, we shall bring forth much fruit. Without faith they shall never please God; but those that are strong in faith shall give glory to him. By the law let them glory in the flesh; by grace "we shall be to the praise of his glory, who have trusted in Christ." If thou bring thyself under the law in any sense whatever, thou wilt soon lose sight of Christ, and sin will gain the ascendancy over thee. Sin shall not have dominion over them that are under grace; "but those that are in the flesh, the motions of sin, which are by the law, do work in their members to bring forth fruit unto death," Rom. vii. 5. These are all the fruits they produce, and all the good works they perform: God and their own conscience know it. They may talk about works, as the Jews of old did; and say that the grace of God leads to licentiousness, as they said Christ kept

not the Sabbath-day; that he was not of God; that he cast out devils by Beelzebub; and that he received sinners, and eat with them; and, under all this pretended shew of zeal for holiness, they blasphemed against the Holy Ghost, and exposed themselves to the sentence of eternal damnation.

Paul gives us a description of the people who perform good works in reality: "For the grace of God, that bringeth salvation to all men, hath appeared; teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present evil world: looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works," Titus, ii. 14. These are the people who perform good works: they are redeemed from all iniquity; they are purified unto the Lord by faith; they have a good hope through grace; they look for the appearing of the Lord Jesus; and are zealous of good works," knowing their own election of God," and their being unto him a peculiar people. Thus zeal for good works is the effect of redemption and purifying grace.' Ask these hypocrites what they know of redemption, and how applied? What of faith, the operations of it, and its purifying effects? And if they are strangers to these things, they are dead in sin, condemned already, and the wrath of God abides upon them. And if you watch them narrowly, you will hear nothing but vanity from their mouth, nor see any thing in their life but sin. To be short. "Those that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts; and against such there is no law." Those that in faith, love, and purity of heart, serve Christ, "are accepted of God, and approved of all good men." And, if my sister is not satisfied with the truth, blessings, and benefits, of an everlasting gospel, let her try the yoke of an eternal law; that will soon discover her folly, make every offence abound, stir up all her carnal enmity, and make her temper unbearable.

Peevishness; hastiness of spirit; discontentedness with her frame of mind; doubts about her state; hard thoughts of God; labouring to make herself better, and getting worse; striving against sin and her own evil tempers, and tumbling into them; making secret vows, and breaking them; watching against evil and daily entangled in it; are the things that will ever follow a legal spirit that is under the law; insomuch, that the bodily frame withers, weakens, faints, and sinks under the burden; and I should not wonder if I were to hear that my poor friend goes sick to bed every month in the year. I shall add no more at present: only wish to see her contented with one husband; and let her go back to the law as soon as Jesus ceases to do worthily in Ephratah, or fails to be famous in Bethlehem.

WM. HUNTINGTON.

Winchester Row, Feb. 5, 1789.

TO MRS. H. J. AT B.N.D.

MY sister need make no apologies; she is very welcome to any instruction that the Lord shall think meet to give her by me. I know the terrors and bondage of the law and the natural bent of our own legal spirits to it; and I know by sad experience the miserable effects of such miserable doctrine, having formerly sat under a deal of it, and to little purpose. When they have delivered an unintelligible harangue on the letter of the law, none are fed or refreshed but the carnal hypocrite; he applauds it, and is furnished from the pulpit with weapons to wound and torment the simple babes of Christ. The goats are polished and armed; while the poor flock are sent off stripped, wounded, and put to shame. The free children are bound, the bond family encouraged; by which means the uncircumcised and the unclean are huddled among the saints, till you scarcely know the one from the other.

"Judgment, mercy, faith, and the love of God, are the weighty matters of the law." These are called the great things of it, though at present they bear a very scandalous name; and so they ever did by hypocritical professors: "I have written unto them the great things of my law, (says God) but they were counted as a strange thing," Hosea, viii. 12. These are called the weighty matters, or the great things of the law; not because they come from thence, (for they do not) but because they are the great things that the Old Testament treats of; for on "love to God and our neighbour hang all the law and the prophets." And if shewing the judgment of God to unrenewed sinners concerning their state, enforcing the sure mercies of David in Christ, preaching faith and the love of God, be making void the law; then all the apostles made it void. However, Paul says we establish the law through faith; and I think it would puzzle the learned to shew how the law can be established, to the honour of God, or to the comfort of his people, any other way. If preaching the faith of Christ be establishing the law, how can it make it void? and if it is making it void, then all the primitive servants of God did it; for they preached Christ to the people, as the sinner's only Saviour, refuge, and example; and performed all their wondrous works by the faith of him. They did not go from place to place to lampoon ministers of the gospel for antinomians: nor did they cry out The law is the only rule of life, the only rule of action. "You must look with one eye to Christ, and with the other to the law." Is there any thing in all their writings like this? Indeed the false apostles and ministers of Satan run after them, crying out Except ye be circumcised, and keep the law of Moses, ye cannot be saved: but then the apostles inform us that the Devil sent them, and they caution us against such. They tell us to affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works: these things are good, and profitable unto men; but to avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings, about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.

A man that is an heretic, after the first or second admonition, reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself Titus iii. 8, 9, 10.

Man was not made for the law, but the law was made for man: nor was it made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient; for the ungodly, and for sinners; for unholy and profane; for murderers of fathers, and murderers of mothers; for menslayers; for whoremongers; for them that defile themselves with mankind; for men-stealers, (such as deal in the African slave-trade;) for liars; for perjured persons; and if there be any other thing (which they hold) contrary to sound doctrine, 1 Tim. i. 9. If any of those gentlemen that condemn my doctrine to you, answer any of the above characters, the law is made for them; and they have no right to run from it, unless God should draw them to Christ. However, God has delivered me from the law; and I trust grace will ever keep me from such things as these. God purifies my heart, and enables me to live by faith; and I have shewed you my faith by my works. I believe that the law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it," Luke xvi. 16. And this kingdom stands not in the letter of the law, nor in word; but in power, in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; and if it consists of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, how can it be licentiousness? If they would have me act as some of them do talk of the holy law, and live in sin I am determined not to come into their secret. If they acknowledge that the grace of God teaches men to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and makes them zealous of good works I agree with them; and if they are for the performance of good works, I will vie with the best, "let me be weighed in an even balance." But to set Moses's law perpetually before the eyes of all ranks of believers, is neither preaching the gospel nor establishing the law: and, while they are enforcing legal obedience to Moses, they act in direct disobedience so Christ; whose

command is, "Go, preach the gospel to every creature." When thou teachest another, teachest thou not thyself also? Or dost thou teach against stealing, and live in sacrilege? make the law of Moses the only rule of life to others, while thou castest the gospel of the grace of God behind thy back? They who preach the law unlawfully, and charge the grace of the gospel with licentiousness, rob Christ of his honour in the church, and injure his followers, by slandering their loyalty, and abusing their liberty.

We know Christ was made of a woman, and made under the law; and under that yoke lived and served in the capacity of a servant, and the last act of his servitude was obedience unto death. But, when the sentence and curse of the law were executed on him as our surety, our debt was paid, and we were redeemed by him: "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself, of twain, one new man; so making peace," Ephes. ii. 19. Blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances, that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to the cross, Col. ii. 14. If it be objected, that the ceremonial law is mean; I answer, the ceremonial law was the Jews gospel; it was that which pointed the guilty to the great Atonement; but it is the moral law that contains the sentence, the other the sacrifice. Sin is the transgression of the moral law, and the law is the strength of sin. When Christ died, it was to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons, Gal. iv. 5. When Christ rose from the dead, he was under the law no more: for our justification he rose, that all those who are "led by the Spirit might not be under the law," Gal. v. 18.

How can such souls be without law to God, when he writes his law in their hearts, and puts it in their minds? They are of the law of faith, and are under that law to Christ, which is his easy yoke. They are new creatures, and love the law after

the inner man. Faith worketh by love; and love in the Spirit is the new commandment, and is a fulfilling of the old one; for the whole law is fulfilled in one word, namely, Love. Love is the great thing, and weighty matter of the law: it observes all, it inspires all, it fulfils all; it is the new commandment delivered unto us, in keeping which there is great reward. Many turned from this holy commandment in Peter's days; and Paul tells us that the end of the commandment is charity; from which some swerved, and made shipwreck of faith and conscience, in his days; and turned aside to vain jangling, desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor whereof they affirm. Unrenewed men cannot love the law, nor the lawgiver; and this is plain from their hating those who are good. I believe faith and conscience always go together: if a man nuts away concerning faith, his life and conversation soon become vain. Those who are vain in their imaginations have their foolish heart darkened; and, by professing themselves to be wise, they become fools. And they act the foolish part who send believers to the law of Moses for rules of action, when they cannot speak a good word, nor think a good thought, without the Spirit and grace of Christ.

Set the Lord always before thy face, and thou shalt find him at thy right hand, so that thou shalt not be greatly moved. The law is not of faith, but of works: and they who are of the works of the law are under the curse. Besides, pointing a believer to the law is turning his mind from the object of faith, by the faith of whom we are to live: and canst thou be exercising faith on the Son of God, while thou art looking to Moses's law? Faith must have her object in view while she acts, and that man is kept in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on the Lord. Habakkuk's faith led him first to the object of faith; and, when his faith was fixed, he was led to call upon him, Hab. i. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. And then expects his answer: "I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower; and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am

reproved," chap. ii. ver. 1. Faith and patience now keep their standing: Faith has sent her petition, and Hope expects an answer. Thus" we are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope, for what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it," as the prophet here doth. Thus Faith moves her suit, Hope expects the favour sued for, and Patience is exercised in waiting for it; and, if he waits quietly, it is a good thing: "It is good that a man should both wait, and quietly hop for the salvation of the Lord." "And the Lord answered me an, said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it." This vision contains the object and mystery of faith; and it was the eye of faith that saw this vision. the sum of which was to be written and made plain upon tables, that every one that sat down to a table to eat the sacrifices might have it before his eyes, and rise up and run the heavenly race set before him: he was to run in faith of the grand Sacrifice to come, namely, the Lord Jesus Christ, and wait in hope for his appearance; for it was the appearance of him, and the gospel to be preached by him, that was the vision, and the voice of it: "For the vision is yet for an appointed time; but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry," chap. ii. ver. 3. This is living by faith, and this is the way that all shall live who are saved. Some of the Jews said," Why should I wait for the Lord any longer?" And others contemptuously said, "Messiah has lost his legs, and will not come at all." To these God speaks: "Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord: to what end is it for you? The day of the Lord is darkness, and not light. As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into his house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him" Amos. v. 18, 19. But there were some who held fast "the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: unto which promise they, instantly serving God day and night hope to come," Acts xxvi. 6, 7. These were found "wasting for the consolation of Israel;"

and they did not wait in vain, for the Consolation and Hope of Israel found them, and saved them. But those who despised this life of faith found the day of the Lord to be darkness indeed. For judgment the vision appeared, and of judgment he spoke "that those who see not might see, and that those who see might be made blind." These were the proud doers who rejected grace. "Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him; but the just shall live by his faith," Hab. ii. 4.

Our life must be like theirs, if we would live to God here, and with him hereafter. The vision has appeared; "Christ hath been evidently set forth and crucified among us." The vision did not tarry: the vision has spoken, and not lied; and the substance of it hath been preached to you; you have heard the joyful sound, and felt the pleasing power; and could set to your seat that God is true. And what remains? Why, we are saved by hope; and are called to a patient waiting for the Lord from heaven, and for the hope of righteousness by faith; and in this patient waiting, accompanied with a patient continuance in well-doing, we are to seek for immortality; and the promise is eternal life, which is promised to confidence: cast not away your confidence, which hath a great recompence of reward. Now abide faith, by which we live; hope, by which we are saved, and by which the glory of God is expected; and charity, which beareth all things, endureth all things, and loves and longs for the Lord's appearing. And what is the end? Why, "he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe, (because our testimony among you was behaved) in that day," 2 Thess. i. 10. Thus we must eye the promise made of God unto Abraham; and serve God, in hope to come, or in hope of the glory of God: "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ," Titus, ii. 13.

The voice of the vision to us is the same as to the Jews of old: "Now the just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." By faith we are to live, not by the law; by faith we are to walk, not by sight; by faith we are to live, and by Faith Christ lives in us. Act faith on the Saviour, and the Saviour will act in you. This is the will of God concerning you; "by the which we are sanctified, through faith in him who offered himself once for all." This is a life that no hypocrite ever knew, and a doctrine that no hypocrite ever loved; nor shall the happy possessor of it ever find favour, either in the eyes of the world, or in the eyes or' carnal professors.

I once knew a man at Thames Ditton, who made a great profession of religion before I knew anything about it. There was something of a superficial persuasion on his mind, like those who "for a while believe, but in time of temptation fall away for want of root." In this superficial confidence he was wonderfully lifted up; and became a reprover of all, and at times a teacher of all; frequently suspecting the sincerity of others; and at times would contradict all that I have said in the pulpit. If you would sit and hear him talk, he was all life; but, if you contradicted him, though ever so wrong, you stripped him of all his fancied joys, and sunk him to the shades of death, till some with notion sprung up afresh in his brain, and then he was the same as ever. All this while he was a Sebellian in his heart, and at last opened his mouth, and displayed his talents against the doctrine of the ever-adorable Trinity; and began to deceive others, as himself had been deceived; which was no small grief of mind and trouble to my soul. However, I had a dispute with him before some friends, and confuted him. Soon after, God stopped his mouth in a way of judgment, by sweeping away his false hopes, and sinking him into despondency. This cut his pride, and exposed his nakedness before many whom he had often distressed and wounded. At this dispensation he began to spurn; and to tempt God, by

refusing to labour for his family. When I saw that he provided not for his own house, I took it for granted that he had "denied the faith, and was worse than an infidel; and therefore would have no more to do with him. He is now a warm advocate for the law of Moses; the works of the law are all in all to him: though it must be allowed that industry, honesty, and paying one's lawful debts, is a better way of preaching good works, than by words, which are things he pays little regard to; this I know by experience. A few days ago. he called on Mr. Rogers, shoemaker, at Paddington; and, after some conversation about his own good works, he predicted my fall; and said, "it was that cursed doctrine of looking out of one's self that hurt him; it led him to be careless." It is strange that looking to Christ for salvation, looking to the hills for help, running the race set before us, looking to Jesus till we are changed into the same image from glory to glory, should be attended with such dreadful consequences! Careless he is in every sense; but I think this ought to be ascribed to himself and the devil, rather than to the grace of God. But cannot men make the law their only rule of life, trust in the works of it, and proclaim their own merit, without cursing the doctrines of Christ? "Why should their good be evil spoken of?" This cannot be fulfilling the law of righteousness; for that says, "He that curseth his God, let him die the death:" and Mr. Butler aimed at the same object, when he dropped this sentence on the doctrine of God, "A bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall declare the matter," Eccl. x. 20. if the gospel of the grace of God doth not make a man meet for heaven, a dead letter, or an arm of flesh, is not likely to accomplish it: and if a man make the Saviour his enemy, it is not likely that Moses should be his friend, for he has already cursed those who blaspheme his master; and we know that he is noted for faithfulness, for he has ever accused those who have abused Christ. This man confirms what I have long observed, namely, that those who cleave to the law hate the Saviour; and such as trust in themselves are implacable

enemies to the grace, Spirit, and children of God. "They that are not with me are against me," says the Saviour; and "they that gather not with me, scatter abroad. "The ancient enemies of Christ cursed all his followers: "this people, that know not the law, are cursed;" and this man curses the things which they follow, I mean the things that make for their peace.

If I am an antinomian, only because I cannot find any text in God's book that calls the law of Moses the believer's only rule of life, what must this man be? And if enforcing the law by doing the work of an evangelist, he is the man, for he disputes for it, and the works of it, all the day long: therefore he cannot be said to make it void; and, as he is a blasphemer of the faith, of the merit and satisfaction of Christ, how can he be said to establish the law? He cannot establish it by faith, because he curses the doctrine that teaches looking to Jesus: nor can cursing and swearing, getting in debt, and living in idleness, be called establishing the law by works; for the law enforces labour, and sentences to death profane cursers and swearers.

I wish my sister would tell my accusers to take up their pen, and detect me: it would become a minister much better than puzzling and prejudicing the minds of weaker vessels. Women are not set in the front of the battle; and, if God honours them with faith, it is better to brace their minds with truth than drive them into disputings about the law, which are unprofitable and vain. However, it is plain to me that these contenders for the law of Moses are enemies to the law of truth: they never laid their sins to heart; nor do they give glory to God, by being strong in his grace, and valiant for the law of faith; therefore I will turn the tables against them. "And now, O ye priests, this commandment is for you: if ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the Lord of hosts. I will even send a curse upon you; and I will curse your blessings; yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do

not lay it to heart. And ye shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you, that my covenant might be with Levi, saith the Lord of hosts. My covenant of life and peace was with him; and I gave them to him, for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name. The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity. For the 'priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth, for he is the messenger of the 'Lord of hosts. But ye are departed out of the way; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the Lord of hosts," Mai. ii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

If all this be true, it is only those who know the plague of their own heart, and who are strong in faith, that give glory to God. He has cursed even the blessings of the priests who are strangers to this. The covenant of life and peace is here called the law of truth; and they who hold it are said to walk with God in peace and equity, and to turn many born iniquity; and the lips of the priests should keep this knowledge, and the people should seek this law of truth at their mouth for such, and only such, are the messengers of the Lord of hosts: for they who swerve from this are said to depart out of the way, and to cause many to stumble at the law, and to corrupt the covenant of Levi. This is the judgment of the Lord of hosts upon this matter: "Therefore have I made you contemptible and base (saith the Lord) before all people, according as ye have not kept my ways (which are the ways of life and peace) but have been partial in this law of truth," Mai. ii. 8, 9. If this be the case, Levi must have been an antinomian, as well as Mr. Huntington; and these priests, whose blessings are cursed of God, were of the same cast as those who now oppose me; and some of them begin to appear as base and contemptible as ever they did. However, I hope I shall be satisfied with holding and enforcing this law of truth, and seeking the glory of him by whom grace and truth came. And I had much rather

see my sister bedecked and furnished like Lemuel's virtuous woman, than find her contending for letter rules of action; and then I should hear something better from her than vain jangling, and something that never leads to licentiousness nor idleness. "Strength and honour are her clothing, and she shall rejoice in time to come. She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children rise up and all her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. Many daughters have done virtuously, but such excel them all," Prov. xxxi. This is God's characteristic of a virtuous woman and her actions; and it is the wisdom that is from above, and the law of kindness in Christ Jesus, that makes her act as she does. Yea, saith the Spirit; and so says the daily experience of

Thy humble servant to command,
WM. HUNTINGTON.

Winchester Row, Feb. 24, 1789.

TO MRS. R. S. AT B.N.D.

DEAR MADAM,

YOUR kind letter came to hand; and I am thankful that my attempt of mine should be either owned or honoured of God. You needed not have taken any pains in describing the perplexing workings of your mind. You never got out of the reach of my experience of law-terrors, rebellion, and legal pride: I know the road well; my eye pursued you through all the strange labyrinths which you have passed; and I know what cold entertainment you would meet with on that path. I know what it is to build towers to reach heaven without counting the cost: I have spent much time and toil in establishing my own righteousness, washing the Ethiopian white, and changing the leopard's spots; and I knew that your

profits would arise to the same amount that mine did, namely, shame and confusion of face.

I never said that the law was not a rule of life to the unbelieving bond children; I believe it is in every seine. Moses tells them, "That it shall be their righteousness if they observe to do all the things of this law." Paul says, "The doer of the law shall be justified." The prophets declare, "That if a man doth them, he shall live in them." And Christ says, "if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." And we know that all who are in the flesh to expect eternal life by the works of the law. These things cannot be spoken against; nor will any natural man ever oppose this way to heaven: nor does the devil himself; for he knows, as well as we do, that Moses never cast out devils; and he knows that the kingdom of God is not graven on tables of stone; these never make "Satan fall like lightning from heaven:" this way has ever seemed right to a man; nor is there one in ten thousand who will believe the end thereof to be the ways of death, till he is safely arrived in hell; and then, Christ says, he will lift up his eyes, being in torment. The offence of the cross does not attend the works of the law: the law is not of faith, but the man who does those things shall live in them.

Far be it from me to wrong either the elect or the reprobate: God tells me to "give a portion to seven, and also to eight." I ever said that unconverted ministers of the letter are under the law, for the impression of the type on paper is all they have to hope in; and we know that the letter killeth, but it is the Spirit that giveth life. And this appeases in their ministry; for they call "experience, that worketh hope," enthusiasm; and God's revealing his Son in his people, or, Christ manifesting himself to those whom God has given him out of the world, new revelations; and charge the grace of God with licentiousness. These cannot be partakers of grace; nor are they born again of the Spirit. Such as these should not meddle with the

gospel; God himself rebukes them for taking his covenant in their mouth.

The children of old Adam are right in contending for legal preachers; for the voice of the law is to them "We know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law." And as for sneering and mocking at the children of God, they act in character. God has put enmity between the seed of the serpent and that of the woman: "He that was after the flesh persecuted hi/n that was by promise;" and so it is now, and will be to the end.

I am fully persuaded, and my own conscience bears me witness, that all those who have sworn to, and subscribed the articles of the Church of England, and afterwards turn aside to vain jangling, and preach up the law, free-will, fleshly works, and abase the grace of God; that they are all under the law, as their only rule of life; and will undoubtedly be damned by it, unless they are perfect as the law is perfect: for the curse is as sure as the blessing, and has got the oath of God to secure it. He has sworn in his wrath that they shall not enter into his rest; and the law is made for all liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any thing [which they hold] contrary to sound doctrine, 1 Tim. i. 10. Let no person, therefore, charge me with a denial of these things, for I never did deny the law being the only rule of action for those who begin in the Spirit and end in the flesh; or, in plain words, who begin with the gospel, and end in the law; for God declares that such are fallen from grace (or their profession of it), and that Christ shall profit them nothing. These things none can gainsay or resist. All that I contend for is this, that the law and its curse cannot be separated. He who brings a professing man under the law, brings him into bondage, and under the sentence of God. Bring him under the yoke of the law, as his only rule of life and action; make him obedient to it, and make him act and work under it; and the scripture says, he is of the works of the

law; and, as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse. Such a man is for legal works; of works he speaks; and under the curse he is. Wrath works in him directly, and will work in him perpetually all the time he stays there. Grace works not in him; nor are his works the works of faith, nor labours of love, nor the fruits of the Spirit. The law is not of faith; under grace he doth not abide; nor does Christ profit him any thing while he sticks to that yoke.

If my sister cannot believe this, let her watch the confusion and deadness of many of the sermons that she hears; the covetousness that appears in such preachers; their implacable enmity against Christ, and them that preach him; and she will find that gossiping, tattling, tippling, backbiting, narrowness, bigotry, self-love, self-seeking, and railing at the power of religion, are the things that attend many of these unconverted ministers of the letter; and often at sixty, or seventy years of age, you will see them soft, cottish, effeminate, doating about wedlock, and crawling alive with wanton amours. And it cannot be otherwise; "for they that are in the flesh, the motions of sins, which are by the law, do work in their members to bring forth fruit unto death," Rom. vii. 5. "Sin takes occasion by the commandment, and works in them all manner of concupiscence," Rom. vii. 8. These are some of the good works that are to be found in these perjured hypocrites and moderate calvinists, and in all who are enemies to the grace of God. Nothing can purify the heart but living faith and atoning blood; nothing can subdue sin but grace; and, without Christ man can do nothing but sin. If God does not keep man, man cannot keep himself. The motions of sins are by the law: the strength of sin is the law; and the devil leads the sinner captive at his will.

"Practical holiness," is a term I do not understand. One half of the pompous phrases which now creep into pulpits will not bear the balance of common sense. Holiness can neither be

fetched from the law of Moses nor from a carnal heart; nor is it a thing to be put in practice by free-will, or an arm of flesh. There is none supremely holy but One; that is, God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Christ is the Holy One of his people; and they who are purged from sin by his blood, sanctified by his Spirit, in covenant, in favour, and in spiritual union with him, are complete in him, their head; who is made of God unto them righteousness and sanctification. Such are new creatures, created in righteousness and true holiness; and it is God, and none else, who humbles them, and sanctifies them. "He chastens us for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness." Such persons are holy people; they walk in union with Christ, as the only way; and under the influence of the Spirit they live: they receive a supply of the Spirit of Christ as they stand in need, live in the fear of God, walk humbly with him, and labour to keep a conscience void of offence toward him. All who are destitute of tins, and strangers to it, have no more real holiness than Satan himself: it is only an outward shew, which the scriptures call washing the platter, whiting the wall, or painting the sepulchre.

The law obeyed, and disarmed of its curse, is in the heart of the Mediator, who is Judge of quick and dead, and therefore keeps the keys of hell and of death. The believer is under the law to Christ; "and they that are his have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts:" such are delivered from the law; "and against such there is no law, and sin is not imputed where there is no law." I do insist upon it, that if a believer be brought to the law of Moses, to be under it, in any other sense, that sin stares him in the face, wrath works in his heart, his enmity is stirred up, bondage seizes him, and despondency and despair will 4nk him, unless the law of the Spirit of life make him bee from law of sin and death.

God hears all their contentions for the law of works; and is the best judge how their life, walk, and actions, agree with that

rule; and, no doubt, he will judge them by that rule for which they contend: and it will be well if, when God lays righteousness to the line, and judgment to the plummet, there be no refuges of lies for the hail to sweep away; if their hearts, lives, and actions, have been as pure as their words and pretences. And it is well for such as you and I that Christ came into this world to save sinners; and that he was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Blessed are they who are born again. Blessed are they who love God, and believe in his dear Son: "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in them who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

I shall conclude with counsel that never came from Sinai. Hearken, O daughter, and consider; incline your ear to what hath been said: forsake the fleshly family, and your old father Adam's house so shall the King of kings greatly desire thy beauty! "He is thy Lord, and worship thou him," saith the Father of mercies, who hath loved us with an everlasting love. In the bond of which, I subscribe myself your servant to command in this present state, and a joint partaker with you of the glory that shall be revealed.

W. HUNTINGTON, Winchester Row Paddington.

A Vision; A Riddle

"And Sampson said, I will now put forth a riddle unto you, if you can certainly declare it within the seven days of the feast: and they said, Put forth thy riddle, that we may hear it.

JUDGES xiv. 12, 13.

IN gloomy visions of the nigh,
I saw a formless form appear

Amazement seiz'd me at the sight,
Which fill'd me with tormenting lear.

Abash'd, I fled; but he pursu'd,
Yet neither ran, nor walk'd, nor fled:
His shapeless shape would still intrude.
Nor could I shun the monster's dread.

I saw his body act and move,
But form'd like no created race.
In darkest paths he loves to rove,
Yet never shuns to shew his face.

Long time I stood in fright, to gaze
And view this exhibition strange:
My mind was fill'd with great amaze,
To see the moving monster range.

Bow'd with old age, in hoary hairs,
Yet seeks the crown, and royal horn:
He liv'd and mov'd five thousand years
Before begot, conceiv'd, or born.

I fought and strove, with groans and tears,
To drive the rebel from my home;
And, though he brings a thousand fears,
I always love to see him come.

He's caus'd my mind the utmost smart,
And from his presence oft I flee;
And: though we live some miles apart,
He never was one mile from me.

I court his wrath, some court his smiles:
In every house he rinds his home:
He dwells throughout the British isles,
Yet only rents one single room.

The lion bold he dar'd oppose,
With warlike scorn defy'd his rage
From out his den in fury rose,
Although five thousand years of age.

And why surpris'd to hear the date?
He is not twice the age of me:
.And tho' his years appear so great,
There's women older now than be.

Long did this dreadful battle last.
But still the monster wav'd his paw
And, tho' of savage, brutal cast,
He yet observ'd the rules of law.

I saw the warlike hero yield;
I saw him taken, try'd, and slain;
I saw him bury'd on the field,
Yet he reviv'd, and liv'd again.

Disarm'd again, and put to flight,
The dawn of day he try'd to shun;
And, tho' confin'd in shades of night,
He rose again, and fought the Sun.

This foe hath won a thousand fields,
And been by millions put to flight:
To impotence he often yields,
And yet resists immortal might!

Yea, countless hosts have been employ'd,
Equipp'd and arm'd with might and skill.
From endless date he's been destroy'd,
And yet exists, and always will.

His body's void of form or shape,
Like monsters seen from fowl embrace:

Yet few there are his charms escape;
He still begets eternal race.

He's not a man, nor yet a brute;
He's neither reptile, fowl, nor fiend
Yet has a voice, tho' always mute;
And God doth oft his cries attend.

Defy'd he is by small and great,
Yet none, at times, retiree his call;
Detested with the utmost hate,
Yet lov'd and serv'd by one and all.

By high and low in great esteem:
The crowned head will condescend;
Both youth and age will mourn for him
And yet he always kills his friend.

Oppress'd, at times, by all at large,
And oft engag'd by num'rous host;
And those who give the warmest charge,
Are chiefly them that love him most.

The blushing damsel yields her charms;
Defenceless falls before his woo:
Yet nought but death attends his arms;
He slew his sire, and mother too.

His parentage 'tis hard to trace;
His ancient rise few understand:
He never had a senior race.
He's neither angel, brute, nor man.

A body void of flesh and blood;
Of joint or member, as we call;
And yet, so anxious after food,
He preys on friends, yea, foes, and all.

He wears the robe, the crown, and ring;
He sways the sceptre, fills the throne:
For him they mourn, of him they sing;
He makes their mirth, and makes their groan.

By thousands curs'd to endless woe,
While thousands love to hear his fame;
Yet, he's compris'd in number Two;
Yea, couch'd beneath a single name.

The pleasing tidings he hath told,
Hath fill'd my mind with heavenly glee:
I've wish'd his curse a thousand fold,
Yet he's a faithful friend to me.

Both friends and foes he puts to shame,
Yet knows no fear, nor yet dismay:
When heaven and earth shall shake their frame,
He'll dauntless stand the dreadful day.

'Tis near to me he loves to dwell,
And likes to hear of heavenly love.
Tho' only such are doom'd to hell,
We hope to see him crown'd above.

By whom descended, or from whence,
Is what no mortal can disclose:
A creature, too, in every sense;
But who his first creation knows?

Now, if my reader longs to know,
And have his mind reliev'd from doubt;
Then let him with my heifer plow,
And he may find my Riddle out.

A Key To The Riddle.

Incrow Nstre Etyo uma Yhav Eavi ewo,
Fh-imtow, homi No wre, ferhen;
Owre Side satnu mbert, wo, an,
D-byth, Ebro Adwaywes, Tmin, ster.

Goddi Dno tma keac Arna Lma Nwi,
The Arn Alme Nth, Ewor Ld isp Av'd 'ti.
Ssu Chast, hes Ethel Or dwil Laamnye;
Tunc Ama Lma ybes ay ,f.

If still my reader cries, "Tis hard,"
Yet longs to bring the truth to fight
The key will surely fit the ward,
If he can place the letters right.

The Second Riddle.

"Son of man, put forth a riddle: and speak a parable unto the house of Israel; and say, Thus saith the Lord God, a great eagle, with great wings, long winged, full of feathers, and of divers colours, came unto Lebanon, and took the highest branch of the Cedar." - EZE. 17:2,3.

"AND these ye shall have in abomination among the fowls; they shall not be eaten; they are an abomination: the eagle, the ossifrage, and the ospray, and the vulture, and the kite after his kind; every raven after his kind; and the owl, and the night hawk, and the cuckoo, and the little owl, and the cormorant, and the great owl, and the swan, and the pelican, and the gier-eagle, and the stork, the heron after her kind, and the lapwing, and the bat," Levit. xi. 13.

Are fowls, which are the work of God's hands, an abomination! So it seems; and therefore must not be eaten, being set aside as unclean. Then how comes it to pass that, "when the sheet was let down from heaven, (to Peter) knit at

the four corners, containing beasts of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things," and fowls of the air, he should be commanded to arise, kill, and eat? Acts, x. 11, 12, 13. Peter, knowing such were unclean by the law, says, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. But what God hath cleansed must not be called common; and what he hath not cleansed is still common and unclean. If so, then Moses's shoal of unclean fowls are now to be found in a certain cage called a great city. The spiritual whore of Babylon keeps them as carnal whores keep lap-dogs and parrots. This comment is published by an angel from heaven: "And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power, and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily, with a strong voice, saying, ' Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird,'" Rev. xviii. 1, 2. Thus Moses's collected aviary, and the angel's cage are now found together. "A sword upon the inhabitants of Babylon: the owls shall dwell there, Jer. 1. "It shall be an habitation for dragons, and a court [for owls: the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl and the raven shall dwell in it; the wild beast of the desert shall meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow; the screech-owl also shall rest there: there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with his mate. Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate; for my mouth it hath commanded, and his Spirit it hath gathered them," Isa. xxxiv. Surely this cage is Job's "congregation of desolate hypocrites," Job xv. 34; of whom he says, that "in heart they heap up wrath," Job xxxvi. 13. Then no Peter will ever be commanded to kill and eat these, whatever his pretended successor may do.

The ossifrage and ospray are all eagles, which shall not be eaten, says Moses. Why? Because he is the king of birds, and

yet a bird of prey. An unmerciful warrior, with superabounding strength, is terrible: ho is a representation of those "hypocrites who are said to eat up the Lord's people as they eat bread;" but the flock of Christ are not "to bite and devour one another."

Not a vulture, because he is too voracious, too greedy; he will eat any thing, and minds nothing but eating. We read of some whose god is their belly; but the real Christian must be choice in his food, and eat to the satisfying of his soul when he is hungry.

The kite shall not be eaten: no, for ho has robbed many a poor farmer's dame of her young poultry; and there are a sort of hypocrites who make it their business to seduce the feeble and unstable ones, whom "Christ gathers together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings.

Nor the raven, because he is not black and comely, but ad black; not as the tents of Kedar and curtains of Solomon, but as the tents of Kedar altogether. Besides, ho is a very foul feeder; nor was he contented within the ark: nor to be trusted; for, being sent forth by Noah, he returned no more; ho neither brought tidings to the rest, nor returned to see what became of them. We read of hypocrites whose "feet abide not in their house," and who "bring forth fruit to themselves," but are not "grieved for the affliction of Joseph. It is true, he was employed to feed the prophet Elijah, which may be viewed as a retrieval of his honour; but this is no more than a figure of" the earth's helping the woman" when she fled into the wilderness from the face of the Serpent, and from mystical Jezebel, as Elijah fled from the Devil and Jezebel the witch.

Nor the night-hawk: no, for he hates the light, nor will he come to it. He is a bird of the night, and of darkness; typical of those hypocrites who pin their faith upon the carnal wisdom of men, rage and are confident, and yet hate the doctrines of the

Bible. They who speak not according to that word, have no light in them; nor are their followers children of light, or of the day, but of the night, and of darkness.

Nor the cuckoo; for he never uses but one note; nor is he heard but in the pleasant part of the year. "When the winter is past, and the rain over and gone," then he comes forth with his vain repetitions, uttering nothing but his own name. He sucks the eggs of other birds, to clear his pipe, and leaves his own for them to hatch. Typical of those hypocrites whose religion lies all in prosperity, but disappears in adversity; whose sermons, hymns, conversation, and profession, are only one superficial round, learned by rote; who savour of nothing but themselves; seek nothing but their own applause; steal matter and words from the saints, only to exalt themselves, and deceive the simple; who live in sin, and call others antinomians. Such are strangers to God, and far from him by wicked works; seeking nothing but themselves, supposing that gain is godliness. The cuckoo is a foreigner, and but a hawk at best. Away with him! Our own *pe pe* bird will proclaim the spring come, as well and sooner than he.

Nor the cormorant; for he is a mere glutton, always paddling in dirty water, and hunting after fish. We read of some who are like the troubled sea, casting up mire and dirt; and followed Christ for loaves and fishes.

Nor the owl; for his head is too big. He hates the sun; looks big with a deal of plumage, but his body is as light as cork. And there are a sort of hypocrites whose religion lies all in the head; who never could look the Sun of Righteousness in the face; and who, notwithstanding their plumage of self-righteousness, are, in the balance of the sanctuary, altogether lighter than vanity.

Nor the swan; for he is too rough like them who are "clean in their own eyes, though never washed from their filthiness. He

is emblematical of the fleshly perfectionist, who makes clean the outside of the cup and platter, till he appears like the whited sepulchre. But, notwithstanding the yellow beak and white plumage of this bird, he is a pursuer of the fishes; his feet and legs are as black as Satan himself, and there is little within him but flags and rushes.

Nor the pelican, for he feeds on serpents and reptiles; an emblem of those who feed upon doctrines of devils: and, as this bird is said to feed her young with her own blood, they imitate her who embrace the lies of Satan, and damn their own souls by deceiving others.

Nor the stork, for he is a bird of passage; and, as the prophet says, very sagacious in knowing the times of going and coming. An emblem of time-servers, who follow that preacher of whom the world speaks highest; a lover of a rich and large congregation; and who loves to stick closest where there is most hanging on; and never to gird his harness so tight, but that he may throw it off, or wield about, as times change. Such are unstable in all their ways, never fixed, always upon the wing; while those who stay at home divide the spoil.

Nor the heron, for he is after the fishes; and a dreadful enemy to the eyes: if ever he strikes, it is at them. He is a lofty flier; loves to be alone by the water; is never seen upon rocks; and is remarkable for his long legs and long neck. He points out some who are oft in the miry clay, but never on the rock; who often strike at the discerning eye of the wise, yet fly loftily in their own legal performances: but their legs are too feeble to carry the cross; and their head, like that of the heron, is too far from their shoulders; they make "a fair shew of a voluntary humility, but never hold the head."

Nor the lapwing, for he is seldom or never found but upon the barren heath, and never uses more than one squeaking note. He resembles those who rebel against the gospel; and make

a perpetual cry about their own personal righteousness, while under the curse of the law and the wrath of God. These are left, like the lapwing, upon the barren heath. "Thus saith the Lord, Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm; and whose heart departeth from the Lord: for he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh," Jer. xvii. 5. God brings out those who are bound with chains, "but the rebellious dwell in a dry land."

Nor the bat, for he is neither beast nor bird: nor is he, in the strictest sense, amphibious, because he hates the water; yet he is ranked among, and does conclude, the shoal of fowls; and is a lively representation of every species of hypocrites, for they are, in some sense, amphibious: they are not all devil, because they have flesh; they are not all man, because so much of the devil; they are not saints, because destitute of grace; and yet not altogether sinners, because they have the sheep's cloathing. In short, they have the fleece of a sheep, the devotional form of a saint, the nature and figure of a man, the actions of a brute, and the spirit and malice of a devil.

Among all the fowls that were deemed unclean under the law, the Holy Ghost has chosen one tribe from all the rest, to set forth the elect of God; and this lot is fallen to the eagle. And it is to be observed, that the name of this bird stands first on the list of Moses, as an emblem of the saints; and the bat, typical of devils and hypocrites, stands last, Lev. xi. 13, 19. This act of divine sovereignty, this discriminating token of divine favour, is deemed partiality by all the rest of the plumed tribes. What should be attributed to uncontrollable sovereignty, good pleasure, and unmerited grace, is ascribed to partiality and injustice, if not to hypocrisy. On this ground the following contention arose. The lot is cast to the eagles, the whole disposal of which is or the Lord. On which account an eternal separation took place; and contention ceased among the eagles, but not on the side of the others. "The lot causeth

contention to cease, and parteth between the mighty," Prov. xviii. 18. The other tribes of the wood were greatly exasperated. First, At this unconditional election. Secondly, Because the eagles were mentioned by a divine oracle in honourable terms, while the others were slightly named. Thirdly, Because they were not made with an equal share of wing. Fourthly, Because they were not endued with strength of eye-sight, or favoured with the grant of looking at the sun. Fifthly, Because a sort of second sovereignty was granted to the eagle, he being called the king of birds; which was viewed as a total eclipse of their honour. This will ever set hard on those "who receive honour one of another, and not the honour that comes from God only." On these accounts the succeeding conspiracy was hatched; which broke out into open hostilities, as soon as the following voice of divine sovereignty was echoed through the woods.

"As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead Jacob, and there was no strange God with him." - DEU 32:11,12.

The Saint's Triumph.

As Eagles stir their own prolific nests,
To warm alike the eggs on which she rests;
And flutters o'er her young and tender brood,
To keep them warm, as well as give them food:

She spreads nor wings, and takes them up on high,
To teach her tender nestlings how to fly:
if found too weak the pinion to maintain,
She skims beneath, and bears them back again.

So did the Lord give favour'd Jacob rest,
A nd taught him where by faith to build his nest:

He stirr'd him up from off his native leas,
Nor let his soul compound with carnal ease.

The dove-like Spirit hover'd o'er his mind,
And rais'd his soul to live a life divine:
Still upward borne, as on the eagle's wing,
He found the Sun that makes eternal spring.

Long did he live by faith that works by love,
And fetch'd his consolations from above;
Taught by his God impending wrath to flee;
Nor did he know, or own, a God but he.

His constant Guide protects his pilgrimage,
And crowns with joys divine his latest stage
He tells the safety of his mystic race,
And clos'd his eyes to see Jehovah's face.

THE LAMENTATION OF BABEL, AND THE DESPERATE RAGE OF HER GAOL-BIRDS.

The owls and bats, in mournful note, complain'd,
The eagles had the higher region gain'd;
Propos'd a council, with intent to try
To pluck their pinions, lest they soar too high.

They lodg'd a charge against their peering eyes,
Winch pierce their mask, and ken their dark disguise:
Their warlike beak, its force too sharp &nd hard,
By which their candid breasts had oft been marr'd.

With rage they burn to hear Jehovah's voice
Pronounce the eagles objects of his choice.

"They stir their nest, and bear their young away,
As if none taught their young to fly but they."

With wild ferment these nightly tribes convene,
Against their peers, and how to curb their spleen:
An herald cried throughout the silent wood,
And all the summon'd tribes assembled stood.

"A Sword upon the Chaldeans, saith the Lord; and upon the
inhabitants of [mystical] Babylon," - Jer. 1.

"Thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in
her fortresses: and it shall be an habitation for dragons, and a
court for owls," - Isaiah 34:13.

THE DUTIFUL CHILD OF NATURE; OR, THE WATCHMAN'S PLEA.

FORTH came the owl, the first conspirator,
His looks reflecting majesty and war.
All clapp'd their wings, and spread them forth for flight,
As if resolved to shun the shades of night

"Assembled friends, .you know my care for you,
Merit I claim, for merit is my due.
From age to age have I unblemish'd stool,
The only watch, the guardian of the wood.

"When you at rest, and each was off his guard,
From Vale to vale my solemn call was heard.
Your creeping foes have felt my talon'd shaft,
Yet no expence for lanthorn, or for staff.

The dreary deserts I have ranged at large,
And never murmur'd, nor forsook my charge:
Wherein I'm call'd, therein to move is right
Unless disturb'd, I ever shunn'd the light.

It is not mine; it is a common cause,
Each in his sphere obeying Nature's laws.
The eagle's call'd to meet the rising sun,
While we are doom'd to dwell in Babylon."

So spake the owl, so ends the rural sage,
While all the synod stood enflamed with rage.
Each paramount with hostile scorn was fir'd,
Against the sovereigns of the wood conspir'd.

"They [saints] shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall
run, and not be weary; walk, and not faint," Isaiah, xl. 31.

"In that day a man shall cast me idols of silver, and his idols of
gels, which, they made for themselves to worship, to the
moles, and to the bats," - Isaiah, ii. 20.

The Staunch Churchman, And His Strong Reasons.

Forth came the bat; and, with sagastic all,
Silence was call'd, and all was mute, to hear
"I justify the father guardian's plea,
And now reveal the wrong sustain'd by me.

I need not urge before the noble court,
Religious fame can never want report.
I seldom leave the steeple, or the porch;
And may be styled the ranger of the church.

From tomb to tomb, unwearied, I parade;
Fearless, frequent the mansions of the dead:
When all forsake the consecrated spot,
Here I reside, and still maintain my lot.

"When thoughtless crowds their worldly cares pursue.
Alone I range the chancel or the pew:
Her lofts, her bells, her steeple, and her roof,
Have I admired when all have stood aloof.

The books, the cushion, cassock, and the gown,
Each I survey as I pursue my round:
From this my station seldom known to stray,
I watch by night, and here I rest by day.

Wild schismatics from her altars flee,
She's never been deserted once by me:
I merit more than all the eagle race,
Who make her stable walls my dwelling-place.

Are birds of prey by partial love preferr'd,
While constant churchmen lose their just reward?
Shall strolling guests a sovereign bounty share,
While I have paid my constant visits there?

Shall eagles rise, and thus in favour shine,
And wear a crown by right of merit mine?
I've long observed their slight, contemptuous throw
'Your idols to the moles and bats shall go.'

Nor do I claim to wear the crown alone.
'Tis due to you, and due to every one.
Shall foes, like them, be free from age to age,
While we are coop'd and perch'd in Babel's cage!

"Let each advise what method to pursue.
Or try, for once, what force of arms can do.

"So spake the bat; and clos'd with pensive mood,
While every sage in consternation stood.

"Your goodness is as the morning cloud; and, as the early
dew, it goeth away." - Hosea 6:4.

The Time-Server, And His Convenient Profession.

THE cuckoo to apologise began,
As being not a native of the land.
Not forward he in this rebellious stir,
But claim'd the priv'lege of a foreigner.

'Tis I, my friends, of all that use the wing,
Am made to bear the tidings of the spring;
And keep my time as punctual as the day:
I never err'd, nor miss'd the month of May.

I make the heart of man himself rejoice;
The sick, the lame, are glad to hear my voice.
Some watch the night; but I observe the year,
And bear the joyful tidings far and near.

I ever sound my own deserved fame,
Nor dare to boast of others' worth or name.
With care I feel the temper of the clime;
The softest season is my favour'd time.

While others choose to stand immoderate heal,
I count it then my wisdom to retreat.
Not made to bear the heat of summer's noon,
I come in time; nor do I go too soon.

With toil of wing I fly from north to south;
And never err, but always tell the truth.

Merit I claim, for merit is my due,
As all will own my yearly message true.

These isles I rang'd from May to Midsummer,
When Britain knew no wise astronomer.
I never kept my news or seasons back,
Nor was I led by Robin's Almanack.

By rules of law I take my rural flight,
And all have own'd my just predictions right.
Of winter past, of summer come, I sing,
Without consulting Moore, or Vincent Wing.

Intemp'rate climes and seasons I detest;
A moderate profession is the best:
I go my constant circuit once a year,
And scorn those airy flights that end in fear.

"Your transient friend construes your measures hard,
That men like you from honours are debarr'd.
Exert your skill, defend your common cause;
And make them soar by statutes, rules, and laws.

"If martial deeds throughout the world must ring,
How you have fought your peers on even wing;
Lest light confound, or pinion fail in air,
Let me advise to place a tower near."

"Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest
on high? She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag
of the rock, and the strong place. From thence she seeketh
the prey. Her eyes behold afar off. Her young ones also suck
up blood: and where the slain are, there is she." - Job 39:27,
28, 29, 30.

The Liberty, Safety, And Food Of The Saint.

WILT thou presume to hold Jehovah's hand,
And make the eagle mount at thy command?
Wilt thou prescribe her secret place of rest,
And fix the spot where she must build her nest?

She makes the stable rock her residence,
And always takes her distant views from thence.
Here she abides in safety night and day;
And 'tis from hence she's led to seek her prey.

Eternal day can hardly 'scape her eyes;
She often peers above the azure skies;
And feeds her young with rich and heav'nly food;
As taught in time to prize atoning blood.

She soars above the rattling of the spear;
No owl or bat the object of her fear.
From Satan's hold she's wisely taught to flee,
But find a slaughter'd Saviour there is thee.

THE REVENGEFUL LEGALIST,

FORTH came the bittern, brushing through the throne,
And learnedly debates of right and wrong.
His looks proclaim the warm conspirator,
And he will prove the justice of the war.

Shall eagles rise, and leave us in the lurch,
Who neither guard the wood nor range the church?
While others, faithful to their legal charge,
Proclaim their merit to the world at large?

Defy their talons, and their warlike beak;
With force of a 1253 rms a just revenge we seek.
Arise, ye pow'rs! revoke the fatal doom;
Nor rest contented to be cag'd at Rome.

In nervous strains, on measures deep concert;
Let each his wisest counsels now impart:
What arms to use, what harness to put on;
And how to fly the realms of Babylon."

"There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the
vulture's eve hath not seen. - Jos 28:7.

The Candid Professor; Or, The Hypocrite And His Charms.

AGAIN these restless tribes
assume their seat,
Where Fancy sets the
eagles at their feet.
The vulture shews, with
more than common air
The mystic path the eagles
fly in air. My friends,"

saith he, "my best advice is
this
We'll try them both, and
both will hardly miss:
Proclaim a statute, sign'd by
bats and owls,
And bound their lofty flight
by Candour's rules.

With veils and yokes
impede their airy way,
And these will soon obscure
the realms of
Prescribe their bounds, and
how their path to steer,
And line the track that they
shall go in air.

This my advice, this
method, I'd pursue;
And try, for once, what force
of law can do:
And, if submissive to the
legal yoke,
This Babel.cage is nothing
but a joke.

Attempt to prove their
lawless, random flight;
With shew of lenity we'll
blind their sight.
'Tis best to use the art of
Candour's charms'
If that's in vain, then try the
force of arms."

The eagles heard the
counsels of the court,
And made their fruitless
schemes their daily sport;
Maintain'd their freedom,
and their lofty flight,
And fled beyond the regions
of the night.

"These stubborn foes shall know our utmost skill,
An I feel the force of an immortal quill.
Let wisdom teach, and measure line and string,
To reach a bird so skill'd to steer the wing."

The Eagles And Their Rock Stormed With A Shower Of Pamphlets.

THEIR envied foes they needs must dispossess,
Who send such weighty metal from the press:
From two to four, from four to sixpence each;
But still their foes appear'd beyond their reach.

When, weary'd out with Satan's spells and charms,
They all equip with force of paper arms;
Their base rebellion, now maturely ripe,
Is all discharg'd from off the printer's type.

Women combine to deck with tail and wing,
And carnal priests unite to hold the string.
In vain they war, in vain they use the line;
An eagle flies beyond a skain of twine.

Up mount the peers, and quit the rural wood,
And steer a path no vulture understood:
On heavenly love, the pinions of the mind,
They face the rays which strike a rebel blind.

The Coalheaver's Confession

William Huntington

I BELIEVE, that every man who is enlightened to see the fellowship of the gospel mystery, enabled to receive it in the love of it, who is blessed with enlargement of heart, access to God, and freedom with him in prayer, is delivered from the yoke and bondage of Moses's law, in every sense of the words: he is free born, a son of the free woman and made free by the Son of God; is a free citizen of Mount Zion: has a granted right to all the privileges of it; and is an heir of God's eternal kingdom. God the Father appointed his Son to proclaim liberty to him: the Son has made him free: the Spirit of the Lord is in him, and there is liberty. The truth has made him free, and he is free indeed; and free he must remain, unless he abuse his liberty, or suffer blind guides to entangle him again with the yoke of bondage.

I believe, that every one that looketh into this perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, is a sanctified hearer of the gospel, and an evangelical doer of the work of faith, being blessed in his deed. And, whosoever sends this free man to the binding law of Moses, as his only rule of life, sends him to the only place to which he can send him, to have him cursed in his deed: for, "as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse."

I believe, that whatsoever is the saint's only rule of life, that the saint is under that rule; subject to that rule, he must be obedient to that rule; walk by that rule; work by that rule; and live by that rule. And, if the law of Moses be that rule, the saint is under the law; subject to the law: his obedience is the obedience of the law; he walks in the letter of the law; his

works are the works of the law; and he that does these things in the law, shall live in them. And, if this be true, the ministers of the letter are right: Moses's disciples, and all the ministers of circumcision who opposed the gospel, were the only orthodox men and, consequently, all the apostle's charges against them were groundless and unjust.

I believe, that the gospel furnishes the believer with every thing he wants; and with his only and all-sufficient rule of life also; or else, he could not, with propriety, be said to be under grace, subject to the gospel, obedient to the faith, a walker in newness of life, a worker of righteousness by faith, and one who lives by the faith of the Son of God.

I believe, that a true servant of the Lord, is called a minister of the Spirit, a minister of Christ, a preacher of the gospel, and an ambassador of peace; a steward of grace, and an evangelist; that every one who enforces the necessity and sufficiency of the Spirit, that makes Christ Jesus the Lord all in all, as Paul did, preaches the gospel in all its branches, and makes full proof of it; that enforces peace between God and conscience, by faith in a Saviour's blood; holds forth the word of life, as a good steward of the manifold grace of God; and who leads people unto Christ Jesus, enforces union with him, liberty in him by the Spirit, a close walk with him, heavenly mindedness, and joy and peace in believing, are the persons who have a right to the above titles, and none else.

I believe, that the reason of so many persons making shipwreck of their confession of faith, and apostatizing from their profession of it, is, because they had no other bond to hold them to it but the bondage of the law; nor any other rule to walk by but the commandments. Had the bond of everlasting love got hold of them, and Paul's gospel rule of eternal life been given them, I believe it would have been otherwise.

I believe, that love is the strongest cord of the law of the Spirit of life; and, that natural love is the strongest tie of the law of nature. The former keeps Christ and the church together; the latter keeps kings and subjects, fathers and families together. Where the former is wanting, apostasy is certain: where the latter is wanting, the kingdom and the house will soon be divided. I believe, these words, "To have, and to hold, from this day forward, for better for worse, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish till death us do part;" is as binding a law as letters can make; and is a rule to be observed by every married couple as long as they live; nor can the woman be loosed from that law, till her husband be dead; then, but not till then, is she free.

I believe, that no couple fulfil this covenant engagement, or live up to this rule, but those who, in heart, sincerely love one another: for, if love works no ill to a neighbour, it can work none to a wife or husband, who are the nearest, and ought to be the dearest, of all neighbours.

I believe, the only reason of so many divorces in the world, unfaithfulness, inconstancy, and treacherous elopements among married people, is, because they have no other yoke than the letter of their covenant: no binding ties to keep them within bounds, but that; no rule to live or walk by, but the law of marriage; which is too weak, through the lust of the flesh, to make some men constant; and too weak, through the same, to keep some wives either chaste or frugal.

I believe, that where there are the strong ties of mutual affection, my lady will never abandon her lord, nor yield to the intrigues or artifice of the worst of thieves; 'tis for the want of this, that his grace's eye is not satisfied with his duchess, and for the same reason my lady is as "rottenness in her lord's bones," Prov. 12:4.

I believe, that those who make the law of Moses their only rule of life, must stand or fall, live or die, by that law, when they appear before him to whom vengeance belongeth; and those who die violators of the law of marriage, shall have their share of that cup; for God is the avenger of all such.

I believe, that a congregation gathered by legal preaching, will soon be scattered by the same; for, if the kingdom of God stands not in word, which gives no life, it can never stand in the letter, which ministers death.

I believe, that a preacher of morality [as it is falsely called] to a lifeless people, is, in the strictest sense of the words, the dead burying the dead: or, as the burial service saith, it is committing body and soul both to the ground; 'tis adding ashes to ashes, and dust to dust; nor can any assurance or certain hope of a blessed resurrection rise from thence.

I believe, that the preacher who abandons the gospel will soon he abandoned by the elect of God; and those of his own cast who stick to him, will do but little to support him: the preacher begins in the Spirit, and ends in the flesh: the hearers begin in the letter, and end in the world.

I believe, there is no real morality to be found in any of the children of men, but in those who are quickened by the Holy Ghost, who is the Spirit of holiness of faith, of power, of love, and of a sound mind; for, if all the law and the prophets hang upon these two points "love to God and our neighbour," there can be none of this morality in a carnal mind, which is enmity against God and his law; unless it can be proved that purity springs from filth, holiness from sin, love from enmity, activity from death, or obedience from rebellion. Paul calls human righteousness dung and dross.

I believe, the reason why Paul loved the law of God after the inner man, was not owing to any act of kindness or favour received from the law, but because he was renewed in the spirit of his mind by the Holy Ghost, who put God's law in his heart and wrote it in his mind: which made his mind heavenly, and filled him with life and peace.

I believe, that those who yoke the believer with Moses's law as his only rule of life, neither handle the law lawfully, nor the gospel evangelically; they are neither faithful to Moses, nor faithful to Christ; neither to saints nor to sinners. - Not faithful to Moses, because they do not shew his accusations; not to Christ, because they do not make him all in all; not to the believer, because they send him from Mount Zion, where all his real friends are; nor to the bond children, because they do not shew them their state; but by applying Zion's privileges to them, make them stage-players in the city of God, till God discovers what they are; and then the hypocrites in Zion are afraid, and cry, Who among us shall dwell with devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?

I believe, that the liberty of the gospel is as great an opposite to the bondage of the law, as life is to death, light to darkness, love to hatred, mercy to wrath, or salvation to damnation.

I believe, that if the gospel of Christ be not a sufficient rule of life for men to believe in, be obedient to, and live and walk by, that men would never be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of God, and from the glory of his power, for want of a knowledge of him, and obedience to the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I believe, that when God said, "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him," it implied, that Christ is our God, our head, our law-fulfiller, king, and ruler; and that all the words of this king and ruler to his subjects are not killing letters; but that the words

which he speaks are spirit and they are life; and that the works of the law are the works of the flesh; and that, if the flesh profiteth nothing, the works of it profit less: that which is born of the flesh is flesh, which cannot inherit eternal life; but that which is born of the spirit is spirit, and is the earnest of our future inheritance.

I believe, the term used, "The law is the only rule of life," is the same in the mouths of some men as the word "influenza" is in the mouths of some gentlemen of the faculty; it implies everything, but fixes nothing. A persecutor is influenced by Satan, a covetous man by Mammon, an unclean man by Belial, an idolater by Moloch; the word "influenza" implies all these; yea, it reaches to everything which influences the bodies or souls of men, whether in heaven, earth, or hell, for they are all under some influence. The saints are under the law of the spirit of life and love in this world, and so they are in heaven, for eternal life and eternal love can never fail; and sinners are under the law of sin and death in this world, and they are under the guilt of sin and the second death in hell; and he that can fix these two laws upon one subject, is the most likely man to fix the disorder, called the influenza, upon some particular complaint.

I believe, that mingling the law with the gospel afforded the first twig for the whore of Babylon to build her nest on; since which she has made room for the whole superstructure of justification by works, works of supererogation, a superfluity of merits for others. Fleshly penance, human mediators, and carnal works, are all in all with them; Christ is only mimicked by antichrist, and his gospel serves only as a catch-penny, or as a snare to entangle and murder the saints of God, who dare to oppose the craft by which they get their wealth.

I believe, that enforcing the "law as the believer's only rule of life," is the only footing that arminianism stands upon. Human

righteousness can never be established upon the gospel of Christ, for "therein is the righteousness of God revealed," and his righteousness only. The doctrine of free-will can never stand upon the mystery of God's sovereign good-will to his elect; the doctrine of final apostasy can never be established on the doctrine of everlasting life and love; nor can the system of fleshly perfection find any footing on a "sea of glass that makes manifest the councils of the heart."

I believe, that the covenant of promise belongs to the heirs of promise; and that the ministration of the Spirit is sent with power to none but to the heirs of eternal life; and that the gospel reveals the righteousness of God to all those that are predestinated to be called, justified, and glorified. Therefore, to preach a pure gospel, that reveals God's righteousness, and no other, a gospel that sets forth the Saviour as the believer's all in all, and to enforce and maintain subjection to the gospel of Christ, and an experience of the life and power of it, obedience to it, a life, walk, and conversation in it, to insist on the fruits of the Spirit, the works of righteousness, the works of faith, and labours of love, is the only way to be useful to God's elect, and the only way to glorify Christ. This doctrine sets aside at once all arminianism, and all Arminians or bond children, and fixes them on their own covenant with the rest of the world, and under the commands and threatening of that law on which they build, and to which they look for righteousness and perfection.

I believe, that all national religion, all courts of inquisition, all the dignity and authority of spiritual lords over God's heritage, all trains of ceremonies and human forms of godliness, have no foundation in the unconditional promise of eternal life, nor in the Spirit's powerful influence on the souls of God's elect: all these things must stand on something like "the doctrine of the law being the only rule of life." Hence, we hear of a church, and of an holy religion, by law established, in

distinction from another, which is said "to be built not by might; nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

I believe, the doctrine of the law being the believer's only rule of life, has been of use to several sorts of men, though it has afforded neither life nor help to God's elect. The whole code of tithe laws must be fixed upon some law by which all tithes, revenues, offerings, fees, &c., are extracted, or rather exacted. There is no authority to get these things from carnal men by the gospel; but, by law they can get them, if not by fair means, they can by foul; for, like Eli's sons, they can take them by force.

I believe, the gospel never allows any true minister to take the charge of a whole parish; nor yet to take carnal things of carnal men, unless freely offered - an ambassador of peace is not to go from house to house: where he carries peace to a son of peace, there he is to abide, eating and drinking such things as are set before him; if he sows spiritual things, he is to reap carnal things.

When preachers bring men to the name of the Lord our God, the Holy One of Israel, agreeably to the prophecy, the suppliants are to come, bringing their gold and silver with them, Isaiah, lx. 9, as was fulfilled in the apostle's days, when they had converted souls to Christ by their ministry, the wealth of their converts was laid at their feet.

I believe, the doctrine of the law, as a rule of life, has been of use to many ministers, fitted, polished, sent out, and ordained by men; such being sensual, having not the Spirit, they have been obliged to enforce the law as the only rule of life, in order to keep people together; for, if a church be not in the preacher's heart to live and die with them, and if the preacher be not made manifest by God's Spirit in the conscience of the church, they will be renting and splitting; therefore, it is

needful that uninspired men enforce Moses's law to believers, or else dwell perpetually on the commands of Christ, or on the laws of his house; and when once they can blind a simple people, benumb their consciences, stifle their convictions, brace them with bigotry, arm them with malice against all others, fix a few gospel notions in their head, and fill them with a carnal rage (under the name of zeal) in behalf of the law as the only rule of life, telling them it is fulfilling all righteousness, the work is done, and the people are united, not by the girdle of truth, or bond of love, but by the yoke of priestcraft.

I believe, that by this yoke of priestcraft legions are shackled and bound to the preacher's pews, his table, his ministry, and his community; and by these means the subscriptions of the people are secured also, without the bond of eternal love, the bond of peace, or the unity of the faith.

I believe, that no preacher has any authority, or power, to confine me to his ministry, meeting, table, or community, any longer than he can shew himself approved unto God, a pastor after God's own heart, who feeds me with knowledge and understanding, and who goes before me both in judgment and experience; or can say, as Paul did, "Be ye followers of me."

I believe, that the yoke of priestcraft is as galling as the yoke of Moses; and keeps men under as gross bondage to the fear of man, which brings a snare, as Moses's law does to the fear of vengeance, which brings the fears and snares of death.

I believe, a poor alarmed sinner easily catches this kind of doctrine, being, as the wise man says, one of those simple ones who believe every word; but if ever the Spirit of God comes upon such, these yokes are like Sampson's cords, they fly like tow; and as soon as such a bird is escaped out of the snare of the fowler, the messengers and members of such churches will pursue him, perplex him, and hunt him, as bad

as ever Saul hunted David, or Moses's law hunted the awakened sinner when under the arrests of divine justice.

I believe nothing to be obedience to the faith, but that which is done in faith; nor any thing to be a fruit of the Spirit, but that which the Spirit leads a man to, and helps him in the performance or; nor any thing to be a work or fruit of righteousness, but that which is done by persons in a justified state, and under the influence of the faith of God's elect, by which the elect are justified.

I believe, that every man who appears in a pulpit among the saints of God, in the character of a servant of Christ, a minister of the Spirit, or a steward of the grace of God, while in an unconverted state, is one of the greatest and worst of all impostors, little inferior to Antichrist, Simon Magus, or Balaam.

I believe, that he is the greatest enthusiast in this world, who, in a public pulpit, lays claim to the Spirit and grace of God, and counterfeits his divine influence to beguile people into the belief of it, while he is altogether destitute of both; for he deceives sinners, he deceives himself, and tries to deceive even the elect of God also.

I believe, that a man who allows no claim to be made on Christ or his gospel, but on the footing of what he calls a good, meek, or quiet temper, would exclude Jeremiah, Jonah, and Elias, if not Moses, Paul, and Job, and all the elect of God.

I believe, that man to be of the most quiet temper, where the strong man armed keeps possession of the palace and his goods in peace - for they are at ease in Zion; but those who are at war with the world, the flesh, and the devil, or, like Jonah, three days and three nights in the deep, are such adversaries to Satan, that he will not let them be at peace in

the flesh - such must have tribulation in the world, and seek peace only in the Saviour

I believe, that every man who boasts of the excellency of his temper, or of any other branch of fleshly perfection, is a stranger to Christ, and destitute of all true holiness. When Job saw the Lord, he cried out, "I abhor myself in dust and ashes!" When Isaiah saw him, he said, "Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips!" When Daniel saw him, he said, "all his comeliness was turned to corruption, and he retained no strength." And if any man come to me, says Christ, and hate not his father and his mother, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

I believe, that the man who loves his sovereign in his heart, and sincerely prays for him in private, where no eye but God's sees him, is as loyal a subject in God's account, as he who rises early and never blesses him but with a loud voice; or any other who continues his circular motion under the sovereign influence of the Regis Donum.

I believe, that all persons who put out their money to build or fit up chapels for the gospel, in hope or expectation of making eight, ten, fifteen, or twenty per cent of their money, are the worst of usurers, and are trading with a commodity that will one day sink them in eternal insolvency: for, if a usurer is excluded from the citizens of Zion, Psalm 15, what must his state be who waters the root of all evil with unlawful interest, by making merchandise of the bounties of heaven?

I believe, there never were but two ways to heaven and glory; the one is by works, the other by faith. The first is, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." The second is, "We that believe, do enter into rest." These are the only two ways that ever God opened; the man therefore that attempts a

middle way, walks in "a way not cast up," Jer. 18:15, or wanders in a wilderness where there is no way.

I believe, telling country tales and old wives' fables in a pulpit, is not feeding people with knowledge and understanding, nor bringing things from God's treasures, new and old, but has a tendency to make people more like Athenians than Christians, seeing they are trained up to hear and tell some new thing.

I believe, that all spouting clubs, alias disputing societies, kept by graceless men for the sake of sixpence per head, can never be vindicated by the account we have of Paul's disputing in the school or one Tyrannus; it is casting pearls before swine; it is calling for the judgment of this world upon those mysteries which God has hid from the wise and prudent: no good man dares thus to tempt God; and a fool of no understanding is forbidden to take God's covenant in his mouth: it is making sport, clapping hands, and causing clamorous shouts, where faith and reverence should act, which, it is to be feared, will one day end in weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

I believe, that it is one thing for a man to begin in the Spirit, and another thing for the Spirit to begin in the man.

I believe, that every man who begins in the Spirit, or with the gospel, will certainly end in the flesh, and under the law; man makes nothing perfect, and the law makes nothing perfect: the law will ever vail the carnal man, and the carnal man will ever vail the gospel: the gospel is a lamp that burneth, and they must be children of the light that bear it. There were but three hundred in Gideon's days, out of thirty thousand, that were allowed to bear the lamps and pitchers, and cry, "The sword of the Lord and Gideon;" and these were the men that would not bow their knees for a draft of water, much less to Baal or Mammon.

I believe, that wherever the Spirit of God begins a work of grace, he carries it on. What God doth, it is done for ever, all his work is perfect; the Spirit is a well of living water in the believer, that springs up into everlasting life; the Comforter abides for ever, he shall never depart from the chosen seed, world without end.

I believe, that real morality, according to Paul's doctrine, is charity, the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned; and though to have pity on the poor and relieve their distresses, are the best performances that the children of nature are capable of, yet a man may give all his goods to feed the poor, and his body to be burnt, and be destitute of charity, consequently destitute of real morality.

I believe, that Paul could boast of human performances as much, if not more than any man living; he was an Hebrew of the Hebrews, one of the strictest sect of the Pharisees; touching the law, blameless; concerning zeal, persecuted the church, and these things he counted gain; but when grace reached his heart, he counted these things as loss, yea, dung and dross, and palms them upon his ignorance and unbelief; but neither ignorance nor unbelief is the root of real morality.

I believe, that it is one thing for the holy commandment to be delivered unto a man, 2 Peter 2:21, and another thing for God to put the holy commandment in his mind, and write it on his heart: the former stands by his own faithfulness, to what is delivered to him; the latter stands on the faithfulness of God to Christ and his seed, being within the bond of the everlasting covenant: the former must keep the holy commandment delivered unto him; the latter is "kept by the mighty power of God through faith unto salvation."

I believe, that Herod heard the preaching of John gladly, and did many things; but those make a better end than Herod who hear the gospel with sadness, and are convinced that they can do nothing; seeing the God of truth declares, without him we can do nothing, but through him Paul could do all things.

I believe, that the man who preaches up the redemption of all the world, is a stranger to the application of redemption. If he were to preach particular redemption, or the redemption of Zion only, he would exclude himself; but universal redemption takes in all the human race, consequently the preacher among the rest; but it is but a tottering foundation after all, because we read of some being in hell already, and not one there but what gives the doctrine of universal redemption the lie.

I believe, that our present forgers of the restoration of devils, are a kind of mediators that require very extraordinary qualifications; the Jewish mediators, such as Moses, the high priests, the judges, prophets, &c., were Jews; they were of the Jewish religion, and stood not between God and the world, but between God and Israel only. God appointed them to the office and qualified them by his Spirit to "stand in the gap."

I believe, that Christ took on him the seed of Abraham; the children of promise being flesh and blood, Jesus himself took part of the same; he was made sin for us, and made perfect through sufferings, and became a most blessed and suitable mediator between God and his elect Israel, not between God and the world, for his mediatorial kingdom is not of this world; he prayed not for the world; he has not revealed his mysteries to the world; he redeemed his sheep (not the world); nor does he intercede for the world.

I believe, that all the mediators whom the papists have made, were of their own faith and profession, and that none of them

were ever empowered by the Pope to stand between God and heretics; their intercession or mediation is confined to the whore of Babylon only.

I believe, therefore, that the forger and defender of the restoration of devils, must be qualified for his mediatorial office by being partaker of the nature of devils; he must be of the profession of devils; he must have fellowship not only with the unfruitful works of darkness, but with the workers also; he must have fellowship with devils, 1 Cor. 10:20, if he becomes a mediator and a minister of a "congregation that is in the depths of hell," Prov. 9:18; without the above qualifications he is not fit for his office; for he cannot be touched with a feeling of the devil's infirmities; nor can he have universal charity enough to sympathize and condole with them; all the earthly mediators that God appointed, were compassed with infirmities as well as the people.

I believe, it will be a hard task to find one text in the Bible which allows a man to take upon himself that office, and equally as hard to apply one text for the restoration of devils; seeing the Almighty says, "Unto you, O men! I call, and my voice is to the sons of men;" they must therefore say, with Saul the king, I forced myself into this office.

I believe, that these advocates for devils do not allow Satan that share of serpentine wisdom which the Scriptures apply to him; for if Christ is to restore all things, both devils and damned souls, to the favour of God, the devil must be a mere fool to tempt so many saints to blaspheme the Saviour; and a bigger fool still, to wish to destroy him from the pinnacle of the temple; for if Satan could have destroyed the Great Restorer, what would become of his restoration? This doctrine, contrary to the doctrine of Christ, represents Satan as divided against himself; and if so, either his kingdom or his restoration must fall: Satan must be divided against himself, or else be ignorant

of this mystery of his restoration; and if the devil be ignorant of it, 'tis a mystery to me where these advocates for the devil got it.

I believe, that man must be a master of arts, who can fix any time, either in the purpose of heaven, or in his own brain, when the devil's everlasting chains under darkness are to be broken; when the punishment with everlasting destruction from the presence of God is to have a period; when those who shall awake to everlasting shame and contempt are to be glorified; when the eternal law is to be repealed; when the jots and tittles of it are to fail, and the Saviour's words pass away; when the irrevocable decree of reprobation is to be displaced; when the eternal damnation that Christ speaks of is to cease; the sentence which is passed be recalled; the gulf fixed be removed; the smoke which ascends for ever and ever blow over; and when those to whom Christ says, "Where I am ye cannot come," are to come where he is; and when "this device and knowledge that is fetched from the grave" and hell is to take place.

I believe, that he had need be a master of languages, and a master of arts too, who dreams of times and periods after the destruction of the world, seeing all beyond is vast eternity.

I believe, that the forger and defender of this doctrine of the devil's restoration, and the power which authorizes and influences this sort of intercessors, is the father of lies himself, who keeps possession of these his advocates and his goods in peace; but should grace reach their hearts, and the hour of temptation follow that, after they have been winnowed in Satan's sieve, as Peter was, "buffeted by the devil," as Paul was, or have their "goods, family, body, and soul smitten by him," as Job had, they would soon quit, if they did not curse, their office; for they would find work enough to make their own calling and election sure; and, consequently, would leave the

devil to plead his own cause, and say, with Paul, "We are not ignorant of Satan's devices;" and counsel others to have no fellowship with devils.

I believe, that the Pope, who is the founder and upholder of purgatory, received (agreeably to Scripture) his seat, power, authority, and doctrine, from the devil himself; and I believe, those that are trading with the doctrine of devils' restoration, received their lies from the same father.

I believe, that the apostles' doctrine is daily fulfilling, which saith, "In the latter days many shall depart from the faith." And I believe, that our modern hypocrites are awfully fallen from the honest confession of their ancestors: The ancient hypocrites were afraid, and said, Who among us shall dwell with devouring fire? who shall dwell with everlasting burning? But out stage-players intimate, that they were in great fear where no fear was; for there is no such thing as everlasting burning.

I believe, that the confession of the ancient hypocrites in Zion contained the words of truth and sound doctrine; that there really are such things as devouring fire and everlasting burnings; where the wicked shall go, as the Saviour saith, "Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire," Matt. 25:41, that is, into hell; into the fire that never shall be quenched; where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched, Mark. 9:43, 44.

I believe, that those who ascertain the death of this never dying worm, and the going out of this unquenchable fire, have not properly considered either the fire or the fuel. "Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; he hath made it deep and large; the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it," Isa. 30:33. When all the withered branches of fallen Adam are cast into this Tophet, all the vessels of wood and of earth,

which Paul calls vessels to dishonour, together with every corrupt tree, and every fruitless fig tree, made to be taken and destroyed, and the breath of Almighty God "kindling in these thickets of briars and thorns," we may well say, with the prophet, this funeral pile consisteth of fire and much wood; and that man had need be a master of languages who resolves the Saviour's question about this subject, "If they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" Luke 23:31.

I believe, that if the words "everlasting destruction, tormented for ever and ever, eternal damnation, &c." have no other meaning than a limited time, that "eternal life, everlasting love, everlasting salvation, and shining in the glory of God's kingdom for ever and ever," must have a limited time also; and the everlasting God, the eternal God, who lives for ever and ever, may cease to exist at some certain period too. The words which aver the eternal existence of God, fix the eternal salvation of the elect, and the everlasting doom of the damned; therefore, If this goal delivery for devils could be proved, there is nothing certain; for the very kingdom of heaven might be moved. - A ground of hope in the depths of hell would make the pillars of heaven tremble.

I believe, that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God; and that suffering under the curse of the law in hell, can by no means be called obedience to the precepts of the law, any more than condemned sinners "cursing their king and their God," can be said to be fulfilling all righteousness.

I believe, that no men are so proper to carry on the public business of spouting, and disputing about the glorious mysteries of God in the ass 5b2 emblems of the wicked, as those who have had their enmity stirred up, their rage inflamed, their consciences seared, and who have received a savour of death onto death, by sitting under the gospel. These

men move in their proper element; "for they were of old ordained to this condemnation;" but for men that have any reverence of God, conscience towards him, knowledge of the truth, or love to it, to tempt God, and grieve his Spirit, by attending upon the scorner's chair, and frequenting the assemblies of hypocritical mockers, act quite out of character, and will make a deal of hard work for conscience another day: God tells us to let the potsherds strive with the potsherds of the earth; these pitchers that have been broken at the fountain, and are to be sunk in the pit, can never be of any use to God's elect. Men whom Christ in a way of judgment has blinded, from whom God has hid the mysteries of his kingdom, can be no better judges of the doctrines of the gospel than a drove of Lapland witches.

I believe, that the wise man had some meaning, when he said, "The lips of a fool swallow up himself;" for some men, by disputing against "God's making any man to be damned," are ripening themselves for damnation, by disputing against it.

Thus ends the Coal-Heaver's Confession, written, signed, and published by W. HUNTINGTON, S. S

Letters on Ministerial Qualifications

LETTER I

William Huntington(1745-1813)

Winchester Row.

Dear Brother and Fellow Labourer,

GRACE and peace be multiplied unto you, and to the winnowed flock at B., whom I love in the truth, and for the truth's sake. Having received no answer to my last letter, I suspected something was the matter: howbeit, I shall pray for them, for they need my prayers more than I need an answer to my letter. Your letter has grieved me in part, and caused my soul to weep in secret before God, in behalf of those few sheep left in that part of the wilderness.

Mr. N. is a man that I love in the bowels of Christ, but he is unstable as water; in judgment he shall not excel. I had a very hot contention with him during my stay the last time I was there, about a very capital error. He is a simple man, and such generally fall a prey to those who lie in wait to deceive. He only dropped a word, which I caught hold of, and closely withstood him, and foiled him, till he could not get out with truth on his side; and by that word I suspected there was a troop in ambush, but he would not marshal them before me; and to engage on suspicion, is to beat the air.

But, though I love him as my own soul, I will withstand him in his error, if he comes to contend; I hope never to sacrifice a grain of truth to his delusion, nor give ground to the devil. I must tell you that I think this man is sent as a scourge to you; I saw many little failings in you which I was sorry for. Your little ones seemed very disorderly, and you make yourself too cheap to bring any honour to your other; you also seemed at ease, and not studious enough. A man who preaches in our day should have his head, eyes, and heart in the Bible day and night: it is while men sleep the enemy sows tares, and goes his way. I had some room also to suspect you had not been faithful among them; and, indeed, a man who makes himself too cheap, and is in the least uncircumspect, cannot

be faithful, without condemning himself; but he had better condemn himself, than deal deceitfully in the covenant; because it is injurious to the honour of God and to the souls of men.

But this false cry of fire, I hope, will alarm the watchman, and awake him out of his lethargy. You must ascend your watchtower now, and stand in your ward whole nights; I hope God will work by you yet; when the branch is purged, it brings forth fruit; the flock will now see truth from error; the heart of the wise is a wellspring of life, and those of understanding will draw it out. I thought your ministry was too much straitened; but now you will sound an alarm, and declare the whole counsel of God. God often reveals the true faith in the midst of contention, and rides upon the storm, in order to stay the rough wind, in the day of the east wind. This is a wind from the high place of spin ritual wickedness; and, I hope, under grace, both to fan and cleanse. A vessel of mercy may be blown to and fro, but eternal election will not allow him to shoot the gulf.

While many are blown to and fro with this wind of doctrine, you must prophesy to the wind also, and pray for a gale from the everlasting hills; pray for supporting grace, divine fortitude, and a discerning eye; wait patiently, watch the hand of God, and you shall see his wonders in the deep. As for the chapel, the flock, the deceiver, and the deceived, are the Lord's. Truth will cut her way and defend you; therefore stand in the truth, and truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Does he preach up faith? Then you must preach up the spirit of it, 2 Cor. iv. 13. Does he tell them what faith is? Then you must tell them what faith does. Examine all its feats in the eleventh chapter of the Hebrews; such as the rise of faith, the progress of faith, the difficult work of faith, the fight of faith, the victory of faith, its holy triumph and its purifying efficacy. Shew the discerning eye of faith, the promises it obtains, the union it brings about,

the answers it gets to prayer, I John, v. 14; and the sweet love it works by.

Does he enforce an assent to the truth in the judgment? Then you must insist on faith in the heart unto righteousness, or to the justification of the soul before God. Does he preach up reliance on the written word? Then you must preach up the necessity of the word dwelling in the heart richly, and being written there by the Spirit of the living God; "The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." I charge you to demand of him a reason of the hope that is in him; and remember it is experience that worketh hope. But here let me caution thee, for many have been deceived in this point by rotten hypocrites: it is not the experience of law terrors, mark me, I mean if they work alone, such as Cain, Esau, Saul, Judas, Ahab, and Pharaoh had, for their experience wrought despair: nor is it the experience of church trials, such as opposition, persecution, slander, and abuse: I mean such as Alexander, who was once stoned for preaching, yet afterwards withstood the truth; this experience is common to rotten-hearted preachers as well as sound; and it often worketh apostasy instead of hope. This is not being persecuted for the sake of righteousness, already obtained by faith, but rather to obtain one; as you see by Alexander's revolt.

Nor is it the experience of providential blessings on the body such as feeding the Israelites with manna, the multitude with loaves and fishes, who followed Christ for nothing else; and such as the two lepers in the famine of Samaria had: these experiences in graceless souls often work excess and ingratitude, instead of gospel hope. Nor is it the experience of bodily afflictions, or family trials, such as those had who never ate with pleasure, Job, xxi. 25; these, in graceless souls, often work rebellion, instead of hope. All the above trials are curses to ungodly sinners; but blessings, when sanctified, to the righteous. Hope springs from the application of the promises; "

Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience, and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope." Hence hope is joined with comfort, you read of "everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace," 2 Thess. ii. 16. This brings about a deliverance from darkness to light, from guilt to peace, from a sense of wrath to the enjoyment of love; from bondage to liberty; from the dreadful sinking curse of God, to the blessing of eternal life. It is the experience of this change that worketh a joyful and lively hope of the glory of God. The Spirit testifying of Christ to us, and enabling us by faith to receive him, with pardon, righteousness, peace, love, life, and liberty, is Christ formed in the heart the hope of glory.

By faith's applying the revealed word, we are begotten of God; and by the operation of the Holy Ghost, Christ is formed in us, as surely as he was in the Virgin's womb. All other hopes are as dead as the sinner, and will give up the ghost when he dies; but this hope has to do with the general resurrection, and anchors in God within the vail of Christ's flesh, and holds every vessel of mercy fast, in all the storms of life: such souls expect the glory that is to be revealed at the appearing of the great God and our Saviour, whom Paul calls that blessed hope.

Some hope in the law; others in a set of principles in the head, without any change of heart; others hope in an external form, or show of religion; others in a reformation brought about under a preacher who deals more in the letter than in the spirit; but Christ revealed in the word is the saint's ground of hope; and the spirit of faith revealing and applying Christ to the soul, as his only atonement and righteousness, is a most sure and blessed hope.

When our own name or character is reproached, we may act the part of a Dove; but when any false preacher, mounted on

the spirit of error, comes among us, to invade God's honour, we must be Dons, serpents in their way, and adders in their path, and bite their horses' heels, till their riders fall backward. Such preachers had better fall alone, than take legions with them; but most of them send their errors in many souls beforehand to judgment, and leave some to propagate, and bring their bane after them; but whether before or behind their iniquity cannot be hid from God.

In preaching, preach as contrary to him as God's word will allow you; and as far as you discover his error, set truth against it; and every text you handle, observe minutely every blessing or threatening that it contains; describe the sinner and the saint, and divide the word between them; if it be a new covenant blessing, trace it in its freeness from the fountain, I mean the purpose of God, founded on the sovereignty of that all-wise and absolute disposer of all men and things. Follow it from that fountain through the meritorious life and death of our blessed Saviour, and insist upon an application to the heart by God the Holy Ghost; yea, insist upon the experience of it, the enjoyment of it, and the practice of it in life; and by these means the flock will soon see whose lamp burns the brightest; and search out the feelings of the flock, and appeal to scripture and to conscience, in God's sight, and let every sentence come forth from him: and if they laugh at feelings, they never were quickened at all; they have only a name to live, while they are dead.

If you set the Sun of Righteousness against that wandering star, your flock will soon see the true light from the false; "The light of the righteous rejoiceth, but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out," Prov. xiii. 9; Job, xviii. 6; Matt. xxv. 8; but your lamp shall burn brighter and brighter, Ps. xviii. 28 ; Prov. iv. 18. The light that shines in false preachers, is but darkness at best, Luke, xi. 35: it is a lamp that comes out of the mouth of Satan, yea, every spark that a sinner kindles comes from

the same quarter, Job, xli. 19; Isa. 1. 11. But remember it is God that sends the deluder, though Satan furnisheth him with light, 2 Thess. ii. 11. "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." No man dares to vend any infernal wares in God's market, till he has license from God, I Kings, xxii. 22. But, though God sends them, you must bear witness against them, to clear yourself of their blood, and to leave them to God's judgment without excuse; and likewise you must feed the flock also, that they may have strength to perfect praise, to the glory of God, and to stop the mouths of these enemies and avengers of Satan's quarrel.

Does he preach up the full assurance of faith? It is a most blessed and comfortable grace; the choicest piece of silver of the ten, except love; but it may for a time be lost, I mean in a dark night; but the soul that has ever enjoyed it, will sweep the house, and seek diligently till he find it again; and we often bear of the joy of such. But as there is a counterfeit assurance, we must learn to know the image and superscription of the real. It is stamped on the soul by the Holy Ghost; and is the preveiling hand of the new man, and brings much comfort, peace, and love with it: it is attended with diligence and hope, Heb. vi. 11; it is attended with a true heart and a purged conscience, Heb. x. 22; and is attended with peace and quietness; this is to be its effects for ever, Isa. xxxii. 17

If his assurance is not productive of these effects, it is the carnal confidence of a prating fool; and this confidence may be found in a man void of faith, and is no better than a broken tooth, or a foot out of joint, Prov. xxv. 19; yea, false confidence may lift him up to heaven in appearance, and his head may touch the clouds, yet all shall give up the ghost when he bows his head to the King of Terrors; and many simple souls, who have heard him on earth, shall say, when

they miss him at the general doom, where is he? If the assurance that he preaches destroys peace, unity, and love; if it divides and scatters the flock; if it condemns the broken and contrite heart, it is not the assurance of faith; it is presumption, and the preacher "is earthly, sensual, and devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work."

Remember the private and public warnings I gave you, and the flock also, at my departure: and if you flinch from God's truth, let me never see your face again. N. is a man whom I love and judged favourably of; and, indeed, he has been a friend to me in many respects; but, I hope, by God's grace, to sacrifice his friendships rather than give up one grain of truth to his error. We must pity and pray for their souls, but give no ground to the devil. If he calls on me, you may depend upon it, by God's grace, I will withstand him to the last.

Thy Father tells thee to be wise, and make his heart glad, that he may know how to answer them that reproach him, Prov. xxvii. 11. That sweet word has often melted my soul; the Lord is good indeed to unworthy me, bless his holy name; and thou shalt be more than conqueror through his love in Christ Jesus. If thou wield his sword valiantly, my prayer shall be in thy calamity; but it is our spiritual Aaron alone must stay thy hand if Amalek be defeated. However, fight boldly, and be sure to guard the rear rank; he began the battle at the feeblest of the host at first, and ever since has lain hottest at the heel; but God hath sworn that he will have war with him for ever. I hope to shout for the battle, but never to bear that the ark is taken. Fare thee well; faith and patience be with thee, while I remain

Affectionately thine.

W.H. William Huntington

LETTER II

William Huntington(1745-1813)

Winchester row.

Dear Brother and Fellow Labourer,

LOVING KINDNESS crown thee both in thy study, and in the pulpit. Yours I gladly received, but shall return no thanks for the encomiums you have made on my experience, judgment, or penetration. If we experience life, it is the breath of the second Adam: if we have the light of knowledge, it is the gift of God, in which we discern and embrace his revealed mind and will concerning us; therefore to him be all the glory from everlasting, to everlasting.

Let them feed on applause, and sing, of merit, who are perfect in the flesh; but, for my part, I hope to live and die a believing sinner, and must remain a debtor to free grace and mercy to all eternity; and as such, can never join the chorus with any who sing that ancient God-dethroning, self-exalting, and soul-damning, ditty of free-agency. This will be harped upon by many at the day of doom, Matt. xxv. 44; but will be condemned by the Judge of quick and dead. Sovereign mercy will erase it from the mind and memory of every songster in heaven; and retributive Justice will make conscience cry it down in hell: therefore, let us sing the song in time that grace will allow in eternity, we will sing of mercy and of judgment: my mind, my understanding, and my memory received this song under the twofold impression of the Holy Ghost; and I believe it will never be erased from my soul in this world, nor be prohibited to be sung in the next.

Indeed, 15see my brother, I know not how to resolve your question you have set me a hard task: to give you a true portrait of a refined Antinomian requires a more ingenious limner than I am; nor are you the first believer this character has puzzled. You say. "he is circumspect in his walk." True; Satan is often entombed in a painted sepulchre, and has deceived many an innocent sheep, by wearing a skin. You say, "he has a great gift." This he may have also, and speak with the tongue of men and of angels: God sometimes gives a tinkling cymbal, to please a bastard child. Be not deceived by his running; he is not always on the winning side who runs the fastest; but he is a winner who runs sure; the first are last in the Christian race, and the last first: the prey is not always taken by the swift of foot, but by the cripple in spirit: "the lame take the prey."

Law terrors he may have had also, and yet be a stranger to justification: salvation lies not in Moses's rod, but in Christ's balm; it is Moses that gives the wound, and Christ the cure. Many have said I am wounded, who never could say I am healed; therefore inquire after his health; ask how the atonement operated on his conscience when he began to amend; what views and thoughts he had of the great physician; and whether he received joy only, Matt. xiii. 20; or the oil of joy, Isa. lxi. 3. This nice distinction is very necessary in examination; joy may lift a man up, but the oil of joy works upwards and downwards; it softens the heart, and lays it composed in deep humility; but raises the mind and affections heavenward: he will know something, of this, if ever he was made whole. If you feel his pulse, you will soon find it beat high with anger; and indeed, you must not wonder if he should call you a quack, or a physician of no value.

"By their fruits you shall know them." True; but Christian fruits are twofold: there are fruits of the Spirit within, and the fruits of faith without. Paul asks this question, "Have ye received the

Holy Ghost?" Now, says he, the fruits of the Spirit are these, love, joy, peace, &c. Gal. v. 22: "Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" If ye have not the Spirit of Christ ye are none of his, Rom. viii. 9. A sinner's heart under the curse of the law is like the earth under the curse of God; it brings forth nothing but briars and thorns; and who can gather grapes of thorns? Indeed, you need not wonder at the apostacy of so many of them. What is an Antinomian? In short, a superfine Antinomian is one who is an Evangelist in the head, a Pharisee in the foot, a Believer in the tongue, but an Infidel in heart: he is one of Satan's bellmen; he cries up the letter but cries down the spirit; his business is to condemn the meek, but justify the presumptuous. The operation of the Holy Ghost is laughed at, and called inward tickling; to have a single doubt of final victory in the fight of faith is certain damnation, but to harden one's conscience, and cast off all fear, is to be more than a conqueror.

These noble Bereans take us to the law and to the testimony, and when we come to that bar with them, their main business is to dispute us out of the law written in our hearts, and out of the testimony of a good conscience: and thus the kingdom stands only in word, and that is to be exalted above the power, This turning things upside down God esteems as potter's clay, Isaiah, xxix. 16; and toes part of iron and part of clay, is a kingdom partly strong, and partly broken, Dan. ii. 42; and they are too strong, in the head, but not broken enough in the heart. The first step these gentlemen take in their apostacy is, to cavil against the power of godliness: it is a rare thing to find one of those foxes in the Lord's corn-field, without a coal of contention at his tail. The business of a contentious man is to kindle strife; and Solomon says, we must spit upon it; but when we shall put it out, I know not. Let not their fiery zeal deceive you; if a man gets a notion into his head, he will defend it with something; and if he has not got spiritual

weapons. we may expect him to defend it with the fist of wickedness, or with the tongue of the crafty.

A Christian who enjoys communion with Christ is compared to a dove, and his lonely moments are often the sweetest; but an Antinomian is like a seagull, the busiest in a storm. However, God allows us to contend with them until they are seated in the scorners chair, and then to leave them as irreclaimable: "He that reproveth a scorner, getteth himself a blot." Look back, my brother, on all in D. who ran so well in appearance, but are now stumbling at the divinity of our Lord, that Rock of offence; look, I say, was there one of them all, who could give an account of the pardon of sin, of a godly sorrow, and of the witness of God's Spirit? A broken heart, and a daily cross were wanting.

On a proper reflection you may say with the Psalmist, when he looked back upon the profession of Ahithopbel, he had no changes, therefore he feared not God. I need make no apology, knowing that your regard for me will oblige you to spread your skirt over every fault. I will send you an account how we go on in London in my next. Oh, my brother, the sweetest religion is Christ crucified in a broken heart! Be this thy lot and mine.

I remain affectionately

Your's in gospel ties,

W. H. S. S.

William Huntington

LETTER III

William Huntington(1745-1813)

Winchester Row.

My dear Brother and Fellow-labourer,

YOURS I received, but cannot agree with your sentiments in this particular. I never can be brought to believe, that a man of eminent learning, and natural abilities, while he remains destitute of the sovereign grace of God, can be of any use to the household of faith. Christ's kingdom is spiritual, his Gospel is a mystery, and his household is faithful; and how can a carnal earthly infidel be of any real service to such a hidden mystical spiritual body?

I believe every creature can only beget its like: an Arian may beget an Arian, an Antinomian may beget an Antinomian, a bigot may beset a bigot, and a legalist may beget a legalist; but I never will believe that a serpent can beget a dove, or that a goat can beget a lamb. A divine offspring, from a carnal conception, must be a child of confusion; and all such, instead of being the salt of the earth, are but the fuel of it; as the gigantic race of antediluvian professors witness. They are called mighty men, monsters in mind, avid monsters in practice, or sinners against the Holy Ghost, whom the Spirit disdained to take possession of, or always to strive with: though their fathers were sons of God by profession, yet their mothers were the offspring of him who was of that wicker one, the devil, and slew his brother, only because he was righteous. It is impossible for the spirit of Mammon and the spirit of Christ to be co-partners in the work of God: God says of them, the wickedness was great. And although it be said, that many will say, in that day, "We have cast out devils, and done many wonderful works," yet casting out devils is not conversion: the devil must not only be cast out, but Christ must be brought in, and Satan kept out of a soul truly

converted: God says of them that run unsent, "they shall not profit the people at all."

A man brought up at an academy, if he is studious, of quick wit, and has a natural genius, may with these human abilities blaze for a time, and appear in the atmosphere of the Christian world, as a comet does in the starry heavens; but, if grace prevent not, he will, sooner or later, drop into some flood of ungodliness; and we often see the false zeal of such soon quenched; and such are too frequently seen afterwards to appear under the direction of the prince of the power of the air, as wandering, stars, only to guide the vessels of wrath, that are laden with error, and bound for destruction, Rev. viii. 10. I have known the awful apostacy of such almost ready to electrify the building of mercy, Acts, v. 10, 11; poor, humble souls, who have trembled at the sound of their fall, have shewn me several persons, who they affirmed were converted by the instrumentality of such men. I thought it at that time prudent to conceal my private opinion; and to watch this wonderful progeny; and when I have got into company with them, have been more confirmed in my sentiments than ever; for not one of them all appeared to me to be a proper child: They seemed with big heads, Prov. x. 8; rickety joints, 1 Kings, xviii. 21; wild, unscriptural notions, 1 Pet. i. 18; confused ideas; and a language half Hebrew, and half Ashdod: I thought if Nehemiah had been present, he would have plucked off their hair, and cursed them in the name of the Lord, Neh. xiii. 24, 25. However, I fear all such children of Zion will instead of well set hair, appear in baldness, Isaiah, iii. 24.

This last letter of yours has called upon me to explain my secret thoughts upon a subject which I have never mentioned to any soul; I therefore hope you will excuse me if I do not fall in with your judgment, in the passages which I intend to comment on; they appear to me full to the purpose, and sufficient to clear the point in hand, Leviticus, xxi. 16. "And the

Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Aaron, saying, whosoever he be of thy seed in their generations, that hath any blemish, let him not approach to offer the bread of his God."

Blemish signifies a foul spot, a stain, a thing corrupted, or a defection; and such preachers we read of, 2 Peter, ii. 10: who are said to walk after the flesh, in the lusts of uncleanness; to despise the mild government of the King of kings; and to presume on the mercy of God, though they walk in the flesh; such are free-will mongers, who can speak against the dignity and sovereignty of the incomprehensible Trinity, and that without fear. They speak evil of the things of the Spirit, which they understand not; their eyes are filled with adultery; they beguile unstable souls; they are called the followers of Balaam; wells without water; clouds carried away with a tempest; and yet preach great swelling words of vanity: yea, they preach liberty to others while they are the servants of corruption, Satan leading them captive at his will. These are spots and blemishes, says Peter; they dishonour the blessed gospel; they pollute the church of Christ, and sully the glory of God in his righteous cause.

A blind man, or a lame, or he that hath a flat nose, or any thing superfluous." Not a blind man shall offer the bread of his God; that is, he shall not preach Christ, the bread of life. A blind man seeth not the depth of his corrupt heart, nor feels the plague of it; and such will deny the dreadful fall of man. A blind man seeth not the spirituality of God's law, and therefore can never handle the law lawfully; for he understands not what he says, or whereof he affirms. A blind man sees not the holiness, justice, and unchangeableness of God, in his law; and as he is a stranger to the terrors of God, he is not a fit person to persuade men, 2 Cor. v. 11. How can a blind man see the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ? 2 Cor. iii. 18. And if he has not seen Christ for himself, how shall he see

him for another? He must be looking to Jesus, before he can point him out. All that a blind man can say is only, lo, here! and lo, there! and all the establishment flocks can get under such shepherds, is only to halt between two opinions.

"Not a lame man!" It doth not mean a broken spirit; no: for God blesseth him who goeth forth weeping, bearing precious seed, and says, he shall doubtless return with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him, Psalm cx xvi. 6: but it means a man broken in judgment, Hos. v. 11. What can a crippled judgment do with a divine parable? "The legs of the lame are not equal, so is a parable in the mouth of fools," Proverbs, xxvi. 7. A minister of Christ is to strengthen the weak hands, and to confirm the feeble knees, Isaiah, xxxv. 3; but how shall he do it, who, like Mephibosheth, is lame in both his feet? If he has not made straight paths for his own feet, he can only turn others out of the way of healing, Heb. xii. 12, 13. Christ sends his servants to bring in the halt, the lame, and the blind, Luke, xiv. 21; but we are not to set about this work with our carnal crutches; the Holy Ghost makes us sing like a Philomel, and leap as a hart, Isa. xxxv. 6.

"Or he that hath a flat nose." A man with a stoppage in his nostrils cannot distinguish an odour from a stench. Zion's garments smell of myrrh; but if Christ never breathed the breath of eternal life in his nostrils, he will not distinguish the odoriferous grace of God from the infernal perfumes of erroneous hypocrites, Prov. vii. 17. He must have a nose in the body mystical; "If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?" This I know, if he cannot smell out the gracious, the gracious will soon smell out him, Isaiah, iii. 24.

Not a man who hath any thing superfluous, verse the eighteenth. Not one in Popish principles, who has got works of supererogation; that is, more works than the law of God requires. Not a man perfect in the flesh, for he has more

perfection than the gospel gives or requires, Galatians, iii. 3. Not a man wise in his own conceit, for he is wise above what is written, 1 Cor. iv. 6. Not a man that holds universal redemption; because he has got more redemption than the Bible, and will apply that to the goats which belongs to the sheep only, John, x. 15. Not a Pharisee, for he is self-righteous overmuch, Eccles. vii. 16. Not a free-thinker; because a preacher of the gospel is to bring in every thought to the obedience of Christ, 2 Cor. x. 5. Not a free agent; because he is to preach free, sovereign grace, and its reigning power, Isaiah ii, 11, 17. Not a self-sufficient man; for he will cry down the sovereignty of God, Luke, xix. 14; and justify the wicked, which is an abomination, Prov. xvii. 15. Not a man swimming away only with a flood of natural affections; for he will think God is just like himself, Psalm 1. 21; and will preach the eternal love of the Godhead as universally fixed on all the human race: this is denying the Bible, which tells us thousands are in hell already, Ezekiel, xxxi. 16, 17; xxxii. 21, 22; and not one there but the object of his hatred. All these principles we bring into the world with us, and they are a superfluity of naughtiness: these old things must be done away, before we can be new creatures. A man in the old Adam is but a very poor divine at best, and will be a bad instrument to proclaim the necessity of a new heart, a new spirit, and self-denial.

"Or a man that is broken footed, or broken handed." A man broken handed cannot work, and he that is broken footed cannot walk. A priest under the law was to receive and kill the sacrifice, and to wave it before the Lord; and if it was offered for himself, he must lay his hands upon the head of it, and confess his sins over it to God; he was to go to God to inquire for the people, and then to come out and lift up his hands, and bless them in the name of the Lord; therefore a ceremonial priest needed both feet and hands; and a gospel minister must be both a wayfaring man and a labourer, 2 Tim. ii. 6; he

must walk by faith, 2 Cor. v. 7; and by faith lay hold on eternal life: Free-will is a withered arm, Isaiah, lxiv. 7; and fleshly confidence is a foot out of joint, Prov. xxv. 19.

Not a man crooked-backed, verse the twentieth. Surely it is not a deformed body that is meant in this passage; God is no respecter of persons, neither does he delight in any man's leg's. Paul the apostle was a deformed man, and the devil tempted him enough about it, Gal. iv. 14; and fools often despised him for it, 2 Cor. x. 10. Every unrenewed man is one of Adam's crooked generation; and his ways are as crooked as himself, Prov. ii. 15. The worst crook in man is his serpentine, froward, stubborn, and perverse will; if his will be resigned to the will of God, he is an upright man; but if he is self-willed, he is a cursed child, therefore a very improper channel to convey blessings to others, If the self-willed are to be scattered in Israel, and divided in Jacob, Gen. xlix. 5-7, they are not very fit persons to call the elect to the unity of faith. Shew me a free-will person, and I will show you a rebel; yea, a rebel against the sovereignty of the King, the laws of his kingdom, and every loyal subject of it. He must not be crook-backed, nor bowed down with a legal yoke; if he is a minister of Christ, he must go upright, Lev. xxvi. 13 ; 2 Chron. xxix. 34.

Not a dwarf shall offer the bread of his God, Lev. xxi. 20. Surely it doth not mean one of low stature in a gospel sense; if it did, Paul would have been excluded, for he was very small, or else they would not have been able to have got him out at a window, or let him down in a basket, Acts, ix. 25. A dwarf is one stunted by illness; or rickety, for want of good nursing. I have seen poor infants crawling on their knees at three years old, when, if they had been properly nursed, they would have been on their feet at fifteen months. We have many bad mothers in our days, who, like the ostrich, are hardened against their young, and leave them for the sun and sand to

hatch; forgetting that, if they lose the use of their limbs, every foot may crush them, Job, xxxix. 15. Many such dwarfs we have in Zion's family, and it is much owing to bad nursing. Some nurses live on milk themselves, and use nothing but milk for others; these are unskillful in the word of righteousness; they are babes; and a family nursed by babes must be kept all their years in infancy. Hence the complaint "As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them."

Some there are who are afraid to reprove, or rebuke, for fear of distressing the weak; though God has commanded it, in order to make them sound in the faith, Titus, i. 13. Others are afraid to preach up the doctrine of God's election, lest their followers should grow licentious; as if the predestination of God, which is for our eternal welfare, were nothing but a trap. I know some who seldom mention the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, for fear of crying down inherent righteousness, and making them slothful with regard to the works of righteousness; but if all self-righteousness be no better than filthy rags, the less we have of it the better: rags are not worth speaking of, therefore we ought to make mention of the Lord's righteousness, and of his only, Psalm lxxi. 16. And with respect to good works, God has promised to direct their work in truth, and to work in them both to will and to do. Some do not choose to preach up too much of the final perseverance of the saint, lest it should stop them from striving; but fleshly strivings for mastery will not be crowned, because such do not strive lawfully. Nothing on earth is so bad for seeking sinners as a legal ministry; it keeps poor souls in perpetual bondage. Legal travail is attended with no growth; for how should a soul grow till it is born again? Legal fear makes a soul stick in the womb, Hos. xiii. 13; but "perfect love casteth out fear."

I once was in company with a woman, who sits under a very legal preacher, and her husband is in the same spirit; she was sorely wounded in her conscience with the terrors of God, and in her greatest distress she took herself to private prayer, and earnestly besieged the throne of grace; the kingdom suffered violence, and she took it by force, Matthew, xi. 12. Being filled with light, love, and liberty, she broke forth in raptures to her husband, and told him what she felt: this burning lamp so dazzled his eyes, that he suspected the flame to come from the infernal regions, and told her she was deluded; but she continued still to blaze. He went and fetched other members of the society, and they declared the same; then the minister was desired to examine her; he also declared she was deluded. So she pinned her faith to the priest's judgment, and resisted the Holy Ghost, taking his influences for false comfort; and very soon she lost all her joy and peace in believing; and to this day, for aught I know, sits in the shadow of death. Job calls this rebelling against the light, for such know not the way thereof, Job, xxiv. 13. Milton calls it forcing the Spirit of grace itself, and binding his comfort, Liberty; and I think none but a fool will call this preaching up the new birth. That man who crushes the very vitals of godliness, or knocks the new creature at head as soon as it appears, is but a poor preacher of the kingdom of God. I told her if she ever recovered her comforts again, she must smuggle them.

These elder sons, who never transgressed at any time, cannot bear such music and dancing; they want a kid, as a reward for their labour; but they may cry "my leanness, my leanness," long enough before they shall get it. The shackles of a slave, and the wings of a dove, are two contrary things that will no more unite together than iron and clay. I know several souls at this time, who have long sat under these dwarfs, till their distress of soul has driven them elsewhere for food; and when God has set them at liberty, many arrows have been discharged at them from the pulpit, and many bitter

words from the legal flock, only because Christ had made them free indeed. But I hope they will stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free, and not be again entangled with the yoke of bondage. A dwarf shall not approach to offer the bread of his God.

No man with a blemish in his eyes, Lev. xxi. 20, shall be a priest, because he cannot see afar off, therefore can never be a proper person for a seer, while his own understanding is hood-winked, Matt. xv. 14. Not a man with the scurvy, no, if his own blood be foul, he is liable to infect others; he must be purged with hyssop himself, and then he may speak as God's mouth, from his own experience: "I will cleanse their blood, that I have not cleansed, for the Lord dwelleth in Zion." Not a man scabbed, Lev. xxi. 20. No, one scabbed sheep will spoil the whole flock, as say those who speak in proverbs; and a scabby shepherd is a reproach to the flock. God knows we have all too many spots; but this teacheth humility; and God keeping them from breaking out, shews us where our strength lies. The worst running sores are errors propagated, and the worst dry scabs are errors fixed. We may pronounce such utterly unclean, for the plague is in their head, Lev. xiii. 44.

A man that hath big stones broken, Lev. xxi. 20, 21, shall not be a priest. Be not offended at my quoting the passage; "Every word of God is pure," Proverbs, xxx. 5. In a gospel sense, this cannot mean a person bodily deficient. No; the eunuch is not to call himself a dry tree, Isa. lvi. 3. Some have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake, Matt. xix. 12; and he was one of this sort, to whom 1d70 God sent a personal message, Acts, viii. 34. Secret members are in scripture called uncomely parts, 1 Cor. xii. 23; yet where they are instrumental in bringing forth a numerous progeny, there is put on them more abundant honour. A barren womb was a dreadful reproach among men, though God is displeased with them who evil intreat the barren that bears

not, Job, xxiv. 21. Sometimes God has denounced a man childless, in a way of judgment, and sometimes not, Jer. xxii. 30: there must be spiritual secrets in the body mystical, in order to increase the spiritual Israel of God, I Cor. xii. 22-26. I read of the secret of God's eternal election being with the righteous, Psalm xxv. 14; Prov. iii. 32; Jer. xxiii. 18; and I read also of the incorruptible seed of God being in the souls of real believers, 1 Peter, i. 23; 1 John, iii. 9. I likewise read of God's irrevocable decrees being pregnant, and bringing forth, Zeph. ii. 2; therefore that man who denies the irrevocable decrees of God, denies Zion's fruitful womb, whose offspring is to be as the dew of heaven, Ps. cx. 3; and that man who calls himself a father in Christ, and yet is without the election of God in his heart, is no more than a spiritual eunuch and shall be dealt with as a dry tree. When poor Zion has no better instrumental fathers than these, she may be said to grind under a millstone, Job, xxxi. 10; but shall never be said to bring forth three measures of meal with true leaven in it, or a body, soul and spirit, with the grace of the Trinity in them, Luke, xiii. 21.

Errors occasion a miscarrying womb, and mock the babes of Christ with a dry breast. I have been in company with many of these strange daughters of Jerusalem, some of whom groaned, like souls in real spiritual travail, but it was only a false conception; and if they seemed to bring forth any thing, all the divines in the world could not tell what it was; for there was neither feature, gender, nor member; and who can call it a new creature, without applying the phrase to a snail? Psalm lviii. 8. I believe a man with an alarm in his conscience, may sound an alarm till many find themselves at Sinai; but if God send not a freeman to sound a jubilee trump, they will compass that mount long enough, Deut. i. 6. A man with the fire of wrath in his heart may cry, fire, till many be awakened; but if salvation by grace be not preached, they will, like Lot's sons, lie down in the flames. It is true, many unbelievers will say, "We have cast out devils in thy name;" and though they

have, yet it is never said that they have begotten souls to Christ, in the bonds of the gospel: no; the golden oil goes in a golden pipe, Zech. iv. 12. A real spiritual convert is God's seal; but he sets not his seal of approbation to the work of a liar, however Satan may plead this; for I read he has gone out of his own head: it is true, the Spirit spake by Balaam, but he only used his tongue; he let Satan rein in his heart, but made him lie still till he had done with him; his heart was at the high place, while the Holy Ghost used his organs of speech; and, if he had pleased, he could have done all this by the mouth of the ass; for the ass was more honest and reverend than her rider.

Believe me, I do not speak against the learning of any spiritual labourer in Christ's vineyard: no; I love them dearly, and can see eye to eye with them in a measure; and often hear them own that God is a free agent, and can raise up an instrument to be a spiritual preacher of the gospel, who can proclaim light, life, pardon, peace, love, and liberty, without being, a master of arts: and I know astronomy, geography, philosophy, anatomy, botany, c., have little to do with the conscience of a day-labouring man.

God hath chosen the poor of this world rich in faith;" therefore he that preaches the wisdom this world teaches, makes the cross of Christ of none effect to such, and can be no better to them than a barbarian; and that man who presumes to make human learning an essential in the ministry, condemns the greatest part of the prophets and apostles; yea, and even Christ himself, John, vii. 15; and such may be ashamed, for they cast a reflection on the wisdom of the Holy Ghost, who makes use of the foolish to confound the wise.

About twelve months ago, a young man offered himself to preach at Margaret-street chapel for me: he came with a deal of pomposity, and in robes, as if he belonged to the

establishment; and knowing me to be an illiterate man, he chose a text for the purpose, and entertained my hearers about Moses being instructed in all the wisdom of Egypt, Acts, vii. 22. So the wisdom of Egypt was set against apostolic ignorance, Acts, iv. 13; and what success he could expect I shall leave to your judgment. As the word of God has not commanded Egyptian wisdom as an essential to the sacerdotal function, I think he might as well have spent his trifling artillery at the devil, as at my ignorance of school learning.

If Moses was forty years old before it came into his mind to visit his brethren, Acts, vii. 23; and he had been all that time a pupil in Egypt, it is evident his tuition kept him from the church of Christ. I know not who was the chief tutor in Egypt; but it is certain God was not; for he says, when he went out into the land of Egypt he heard a language that he understood not, Psalm lxxxi. 5; therefore he brought his chosen out from among that people of a strange language, Psalm cxiv. 1. If my congregation had been as blind as the preacher, they might have gone away persuaded that none could preach the mystery of the cross, unless they were qualified by magic art; but they saw through him; so he had his work, and they and they had theirs. He cried up the wisdom of Egypt, and they cried down the vanity of him.

God called Amos, the herdsman, to prophesy in the king's chapel, Amos, vii. 13; and Peter from the fishing-boat to confound the Jewish doctor: and I was called from the coal-barge, to tell sinners that Jesus is risen indeed, and hath appeared to me. And this advocate for gypsies wisdom was called, or ran from the apothecary's shop; but why he should use his pestle against my coal-sack, I know not; however, if men of supposed learning lift up their heels, and kick against God in the choice of his instruments, they may expect to be checked; for whosoever cries up the wisdom of this world in a

pulpit, only exalteth folly; and God will visit it with a rod. He keeps "a whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back." I deny not but a man of gifts and learning may be of use to inform a person's judgment, or to explain the meaning of a text in the original language; but I never will believe a well without water, a cloud without rain, an instrument without life, or a lamp without oil, can convey what they have not got themselves. God uses not such instruments to convey the precious gifts of the Holy Ghost; the golden oil flows through the golden pipes, Zech. iv. 12. Our faith must not stand in man's wisdom; for God will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and make their understanding foolishness. And if the foundation be destroyed, we all know the superstructure must fall.

I did not think to have sent you so long a letter, but I know you will bear with me. Tender my respects to your wife and family, while I remain

Affectionately thine in the Lord,
W. H.

LETTER IV

William Huntington(1745-1813)

TO N. MY OWN SON IN THE FAITH.

Winchester Row.

GRACE, mercy, and peace be with thee, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who is our hope. Yours I received, and must confess I have long had a secret thought of God's sending thee forth into his vineyard; yea, I have at times indulged this thought for these three or four years past,

but thought it prudent to conceal it from you, lest, by spending my breath, I should puff you up.

However, I watched you narrowly, and the hand of God with you; and I soon discovered a sound judgment, light to see and life to feel the difference between the killing letter, and the quickening word; the bondage of the law, and the liberty of the gospel: may the Lord increase thy life, and knowledge, more and more. I also discovered the severe discipline which our divine tutor used with thee; and I believe he has for some years instructed thee with a strong hand; which I trust you have, and ever will find to be for your soul's good, because it keeps us from saying a confederacy to every rotten preacher who says a confederacy; it likewise empties from vessel to vessel, so that we settle not upon our lees, or drop into fleshly ease in Zion. It keeps us in jeopardy every hour; makes us leave those things which are behind, and mind and walk in what we have obtained, and yet be pressing forward after those things that are before. It keeps our eyes fixed on the prize, and makes us daily seek after every characteristic mark of a high, holy, and heavenly calling; in short, by these trials we live; and in all these things is the life of our spirits: so God is pleased to revive us, and cause us to live by the faith of his dear Son,

And now, my son, what shall I say in answer to your request? You know I am no great judge of ministerial abilities, as to that part of them which pleases the world in general; I have never been at an academy myself; and indeed I should think it would be even tempting God if I were to attempt it. God can, and often doth, make a very unlikely tongue to be like the pen of a ready writer, without sending the quill to be cut at a college. I by no means approve of your going to the academy in Wales; if Jehovah the Spirit, called a cloven tongue of fire, abide on thee, thou hast no call to go so far to have thy tongue cleft. I have very narrowly watched several who have gone thither;

and, as far as I could discern, I saw some of them who went there, apparently with some degree of simplicity, humility, tenderness, watchfulness, and self-diffidence, have not returned till they had got rid of the greatest part of what they seemed to have. They have in general come back men of considerable consequence in their own esteem, and have expected more homage by far than ever Paul did. It is true they have appeared with better language, but less power; and you know the kingdom stands not in word but in power. I speak to this of all; no, their are some whose ministry, usefulness, and life, are known and read of all men; but several whom I know, at their return, have appeared in the element of the Christian world, as clouds without water, just to please those who are weather-wise, who can look no father than the face of the sky; but without any sanctuary showers for the parched around, Jude, 12. Yea, I have often observed, while they have been mimicking the scholar, the Spirit hath evidently withheld that assistance from them which he hath bountifully bestowed on the experimental, unaffected, honest illiterate blunderer. I stand not alone in my judgment; many who are blessed with a spiritual palate, will own with me, that much of the wine broached by many of them is too much tainted with the old bottle.

I could earnestly wish my son to tread in the steps of his unpolished father, without wanting to appear what he is not. If God calls a fool to preach, it is to display his own wisdom in that fool. If he sends a very weak instrument, it is that his strength may the more perfectly appear in his weakness. If he sends one, who has long appeared base in the eyes of the world, it is to display his sovereign, renewing, miraculous grace, to the confusion of the honourable. I believe I was made the father of near thirty souls before I could distinctly read any one chapter in the Bible. You are a living witness of this truth; the whole congregation to which you belong are all, two or three excepted, the seals of my ministry; therefore it is

evident my want of human learning has been no impediment in the way of usefulness. Natural and acquired abilities have a tendency to lift such as you and me up; and wherever self is concerned in the building of mercy, it is at the expence of Christ's honour.

If we are deficient in the excellency of speech, it is that the cross of Christ may appear the more effectual, and to convince our hearers that their faith is not to stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. An experimental preacher is no more than a golden pipe through which the divine olive tree conveys the golden oil; or an instrument by which men believe, but have no dominion over their faith; because planting and watering are all in vain unless God gives the increase: therefore the Holy Ghost tells us, Paul and Apollos are nothing; then surely we must be double diminutives, less than the least of all saints.

Our journey from D. to H. was a very pleasant one, and our conversation was sweet together until you mentioned your thoughts of a college. I told you my thoughts in a measure; but the next day, as I went from H. to Richmond, I pondered it over in my mind: Alas! said I, how shall I endure to see my son, whom I love in the truth, who is by occupation no more than a poor S. or master C. up in a pulpit, with robes and bands? How shall I with any degree of patience, look on my son, without being disgusted? I can love and revere thy grace, but not thy pride; and if pride should obscure thy grace, how shall I find a feature of Christ to fix my affections on? Gospel love can never fix but on some feature of the Saviour; humbling grace is the image of him, pride the image of the devil.

Thou knowest at this time that I am as good, if not a better scholar, than any of my flock at G. and if my pride has at any time prompted me to express a great swelling word, hast thou

not seen how they have looked up at me? As much as to say, What doth our barbarian pastor mean by that? But my son's humour may object, and say, suppose I should be called to preach in London, as you are? Well, suppose you should; thou needest not become a collegian on that account; because the Lord's army, in London, is marshalled in three ranks. There are some professing nobility and gentry; these being learned, God sends gentlemen, of eminent learning to preach to them. The second rank consists chiefly of mechanics, of good education; and God sends such mechanics to preach to them. The third battalion consists of servants, journeymen, a great number of old char-women, together with some scavengers, lamp-lighters, and hod-men. Now you and I must be standard-bearers to this battalion of light infantry; and we are protected by the same laws, fight under the same banner, and no less beloved of the King than the others. You will say, that our temporal pay is less; true, but our spiritual pay is more. Thou wilt say, country people are not so bitter against a gowns-man. Neither shun the cross, nor court it. But carnal wisdom may plead the usefulness of the gown to draw people; to which I answer, all nets manufactured by human wisdom are too weak to hold a sinner. Cast the Lord's net with the hand of faith, and pray for the wind to blow, and doubtless you will have a draught. Strive not to please a few light, bigoted Pharisees, with a gown and band; their applause will puff thee up, and pride may blind thine eyes, until thou mayest appear in thine own sight almost a master of arts; but every discerning Christian will see thee in another light. Go on as thou art; bring no carnal props to support the ark of God; an unpolished preacher is less capable of deceiving. Many appear in gowns and bands, with refined language, which are no more than mere instruments, without spiritual life, deceiving the people with an empty sound; and, although they are called gospel ministers, yet it is to be feared they neither know Christ, nor themselves: better judges than I say the same.

Not long ago I went to hear one of these gentlemen, in his robes, who had no more right to them than I have; he preached a very sound-worded discourse. I admired his speech, ingenuity, and fluency; in short, there was nothing wanting but unction. Soon after this, a gentleman lent me a book, which I had never seen before, called Benjamin Keach's Metaphors. I had not read in it long, before I saw, word for word, all the ingenious discourse which I had lately heard; and how that divine appeared in my eyes afterwards I shall leave you to guess. I told a friend who went with me, that if these gentlemen were kept from hearing gospel ministers, and without money to buy commentators, they would be forced to act the part of a journeyman shoemaker when he has spent all his cash on St. Monday; I mean, stand still for the want of stuff.

I know some learned gospel ministers in London, who have come down in their style of speech to the weakest capacity; while others, some of whom were as low and mean as myself, are climbing up in pride to that pinnacle from which the others descended. Do not mistake me, I am not against any servant of Christ consulting the judgment of a 710 sound author, or quoting from him; but I say, all who run unsent of God, let them get their matter and manner from Benjamin Keach, or elsewhere, God has quartered them at the sign of the den of thieves; and, sooner or later, they will turn back in the day of battle; for God is against them that steal his word, every one of his neighbour, Jer. xxiii. 30-32.

It is better, my son, to feel and enjoy what we cannot find language to express, than to express what we never felt or enjoyed: therefore aim more at life than language. If we must be grammarians, let us get it by the dint of hard study and observation; and let us preach as much scripture as possible, for the Bible is excellent language. Learned ministers, if under the influence of grace, will not despise us in our proper

sphere; a nobleman's butler does not despise an under-groom in his stable; but, if he will be meddling with the sideboard, he cannot be said to abide in the place wherein he was called: you know how to apply it.

However, if you are determined to appear in the character of a dignified clergyman, I hope you will go to some place where thou art not known; and be sure never to drop a hint that thou wast once a professor of the craft of St. Crispin. Take what I have written in good part, as it is intended for thy good. You shall have my opinion of ministerial abilities in the next. Remember I have long styled thee my own son in the faith, and hope thou wilt be likeminded with me. Neglect not the gift that is in thee; let not every wind of error, nor the north wind of the law, deter thee: "He that observeth the winds shall not sow;" and those zealously affected by false clouds shall not reap much, Eccl. xi. 4.

Ever thine in gospel love,

W H

LETTER V

William Huntington(1745-1813)

TO N. MY BELOVED SON.

Winchester Row.

I wish thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth; and that in this, and in every thing, thou mayest commit thy ways unto the Lord, and he shall direct thy steps; leave it with him, and he shall establish thy thoughts: wait, look, and expect, and he shall bring it to pass.

But now to comply with my son's request, in giving him my thoughts of ministerial qualifications. In doing this, I do not intend to arraign thee at my bar, but shew thee how I have arraigned myself at God's bar. There are some who run to this work without being sent of God; and they may seem to outstep him that is, because they, like Ahimaaz, run by the way of the plain; but whether Cush's road be rough or smooth, he has got the tidings in his mouth, 2 Sam. xviii. 23. These forward men are, like Noah's raven, the first that go out, and the last that come back; for they often end with the world: but we must imitate the dove; go to the everlasting and evergreen olive-tree, and take one of those leaves which are for the healing of the nations; and if we carry the medicines, we shall be found out by those who have need of healing. But a man who runs unsent of God, cannot expect God to screen his head in the day of battle; he is likely to get no better answer from God in time of trial than the prophet did when he fled from Jezebel to Horeb; "What dost thou here, Elijah?"

A gospel minister has some of the same trying work, to make his calling to the ministry clear, as he had to make his effectual calling and eternal election sure; and when a man has done this, he has full liberty to appeal, both to God and man, as Moses did, when rebels invaded his office, and rebelled against his authority, "I have not done them of mine own mind." God sent an awful judgment to convince all Israel that Moses was no impostor.

A minister must not be a novice, 1 Timothy, iii.6. It doth not mean an ignorant man in natural things; for God chose an illiterate Peter to confound a wise Sanhedrin; an ignorant man made wise unto salvation, is often God's instrument to confound the wise in their own conceit, but it means, he must not be a novice in grace, in experience, or in spiritual things; he must have humbling grace to counterbalance his spiritual pride, or else he will be lifted up as the devil was, and fall into

condemnation for pride as the devil did. He must be "the husband of one wife," no polygamist, 1 Tim. iii. 2. What shall a soldier of Christ do with a troop of wives? Moses had but one wife, and she was trouble enough; but when she stood in the way of God's command, he got rid of her; for if she would not be an help-meet, she ought not to be an hinderance, Exodus, iv. 25, 26; and xviii. 2. He must be one "given to hospitality;" given to it by grace; he must put on, as the beloved of God, bowels of mercy, as the bowels of God have sounded toward him; and feed Christ in his members, if he be hungry; and give him drink, if he be thirsty; and take him in, if he be a stranger: this hospitality convinceth the world that we do not make a gain of godliness, nor trust in uncertain riches. "Not greedy of filthy lu cre." No; for how can he be a preacher of the true God, who is an idolater himself? "Not given to wine." One who is not drunken with wine, or applause; one who thinks soberly and lives soberly.

No chapter in the Bible is so full to the purpose in hand, as the eighth chapter of Leviticus. The consecration of Aaron has been the bar at which I have often arraigned myself. And here observe what God says: "And he [Aaron] shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God;" and now I will shew you how Moses, in God's stead, consecrated Aaron, who, as a minister, was to be a mouth for God. "Take Aaron," Lev. viii. 2; here is his call. "No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." Moses washed him, Lev. viii. 6. If Christ wash us not, we have no part with him. But, says Paul, he saved us from our guilt, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing us by the Holy Ghost.

He put on his coat, Lev. viii. 7. We must be clad with zeal, and with the whole armour of God, before we can be called priests clothed with salvation, Psalm cxxxii. 16. Gird him with a girdle,

Lev. viii. 7. This girdle was typical of truth, which is to swaddle our minds, that we give not a loose to vanity; to be carnally minded is to be dead; to be earthly minded, or covetous, is to be brutal and idolatrous. A mind corrupted with error is a mind in conjunction with Satan; such carnal minds conceive sin, bring forth iniquity, and increase transgressors among men. We must ever draw the sword of God at such, for we must not suffer a witch to live, Exod. xxii. 18. The Lord preserve my son from these things, and from a loose profession? To be spiritually minded is life and peace; "Wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end."

Clothed him with a robe, Lev. viii. 7. We must be clothed with a robe of imputed righteousness: all our righteousness are as filthy rags, and no ambassador of the King of kings must appear at court in rags; no, nor yet take the Saviour's new cloth to patch his old fig-leaved garment: this is to make the rent worse than before, and to be guilty of spiritual theft. God clothes his ministers as he did Isaiah, with the robe of his righteousness; and we must bring forth this robe to every returning prodigal. This righteousness shall justify us, and all them that believe in it. "God saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness." The spirit of Christ in Noah preached imputed righteousness to the antediluvians a hundred and twenty years, whose souls are now in prison, and under the sentence of condemnation, I Pet. iii. 18, 20. A carnal mind is like the spider, turning every mystery into bane; and has no covering but her own web, Isaiah, lix. 5, 6; but we know the leprosy is both in the warp and the woof; therefore wear no garments of linen and woollen together, Lev. xix. 19.

Put an ephod upon him, Lev. viii. 7. The ephod being the outer garment holds forth a holy, innocent life and walk, under the influence of God's Spirit: "Woe to them," says God, "who cover with a covering, but not of my Spirit, that they may add sin to sin." In this ephod God was consulted: we must lift up

holy hands at the throne of grace. The ephod was bound to him by the girdle. If truth braces our minds, our feet, tongue and hands will be kept within bounds. All external shew of sanctity, without the spirit and word of truth, is only the varnish of a painted sepulchre.

Put the breastplate on him, Lev. viii. 8. The breastplate of faith and love, and the breastplate of righteousness, are recommended by Paul. We must in this world be judged by the law, and be justified by the faith of the gospel, before we can be said to pass from death to life, and have a right to the promise of never coming into condemnation; which we have when we are justified by grace in the court of our own conscience. When we are arraigned by a just God, at the bar of the law written in our hearts, we soon see our sins, and feel the sentence of death due to us on that account; and are brought at length to own it just. Then we begin to hear a still, small voice, found behind us in an act of sovereign grace; God turns our face towards it, and the Holy Ghost enlightens our understandings to see Christ crucified, the end of the law for righteousness, clearly revealed, and freely held forth in an unconditional promise. We see a suitableness in him, and feel our need of him; but the Spirit convinceth us of unbelief; therefore we eagerly catch at him, but cannot bring him in. We see what a lovely, sweet, blessed friend of sinners he is to those who are interested in him; we fix our longing eyes on him, woo him, but he appears coy, and stands at a distance; then the thoughts of our having sinned against him, and fear of missing him, lays our souls on the rack, and we perpetually keep sinking, until the Spirit of God influences the mind with divine confidence. Then again we attempt to feel after him; and finding strength in the hand of faith, catch fast hold of him, crying out, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." The hand of faith holds this Jew by the skirt, and the eye of faith peeps up at his face; and there we see a reconciled God glorified and appeased in the marred visage of a crucified

Saviour. But he seeming to hang back, the Spirit of God helps our infirmities, and dictates a petition: "O Lord, forsake me not utterly." At last he yields, saying, "Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me;" and into the heart we bring him, with all that he has and is, crying out, "I had utterly fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." And from that moment we are as sure never to be damned, as we are that there is a God in heaven. And now our eyes prevent the night watches, that we may converse with him in his word, fearing to sleep, lest he steal away unawares; and if at any time we chance to sleep, and in the morning find him gone, we are like Samson when he shook himself, and found that his God was departed, because the tempter comes in his room. This sets us to search the scripture 14ba s for armour and artillery; and imputed righteousness we soon find is a breastplate sufficient to repel the force of every condemning sentence. A little of this experience makes a man a sound preacher of imputed righteousness and gospel faith.

"Put in the breastplate urim and thummim," Levit. viii. 8 light and perfection. To consult God by urim, is to go, by the light of the Spirit, to the Father of lights, and fountain of light; and so to pray to him by the Spirit, and with the understanding also. A preacher of the gospel must be turned from darkness to light, before his light can shine before men, or he be called, with any propriety, a burning and a shining light; and thou must have thy candle lighted by a coal from Christ the true altar; no strange fire, no; nor any flame kindled by the devil, who sears the sinner's conscience as with a hot iron; this, and a stony heart, under his influence, cast the sparks of pride into a fleshly mind; vainly blowing it up like a will-o'th'-wisp. Such are the Arminians, wandering stars, now shining here, now there; how is a vessel of mercy to make her port under such wavering planets? However, this I clearly see, the farther they go the darker they get. I know several who are sunk so deep

in despondency, that neither sun, moon, nor stars have appeared on their souls for many years together; and no small tempest lies on them; but it is meet that such, who keep hacking the cable of truth, should feel the need of an anchor of hope; and those that wilfully depart from realities, should end in a fable. "But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

Thummim signifies perfection. To consult God by thummim is to go to him in a perfect Saviour; viewing one's self complete in Christ, and stripped of all confidence in the flesh: to be like Noah, perfect in his Generation, is to be of the spiritual fraternity of God by regeneration. To be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect, is to be changed and renewed by the Holy Ghost, and to bear the spiritual image of God the Son; our heavenly Father being spirit only, and not flesh and blood as we are. All perfection in the flesh, which we daily hear of, is an absolute denial of the dreadful fall of man; a giving God the lie in his wory of truth, and a contradiction of the whole cloud of witnesses, It leads us, first, to self-admiration; secondly, to independency of God; thirdly, to self-confidence; and, fourthly, to self-deification. These were the leading steps that Satan took when he left his own habitation; and when truth detected him for trusting in a lie he rebelled, and aimed at divine sovereignty; adding this rebellion to his sin, all holiness and happiness left him; he was arraigned, and charged with folly, Job, iv. 18; cast out of heaven into the bottomless pit; bound with the chains of his sin; and reserved to take a final judgment, with all his angelic associates; and with all that part of the human race, who should credit his suggestions, tread in his steps, and believe and die in his lie, Jude, verse 6; Isaiah, xiv. 12; Job, iv. 18; Heb. ii. 5-8; Prov. v. 22.

By what I have said, we may see who is the author of this wonderful doctrine of sinless perfection Howbeit, let us walk in

the Spirit; and mind the things of the Spirit; and he shall change our vile bodies, and fashion them like the glorious body of Christ: then all mortality shall be swallowed up, when he who only hath immortality shall appear; all that die in gospel faith leave their flesh to rest in hope, Psalm xvi. 9. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God;" therefore all who are made perfect in the flesh, all who trust in the flesh, glory in the flesh, walk in the flesh, and die in the flesh, shall awake in the image of Satan, Psalm lxxiii. 20; and that to everlasting shame and contempt, Dan. xii. 2. Such doctrines are dishonourable to the divine sanctifying unction from above, who alone anoints, sanctifies, and makes souls meet for heaven. However, if these dead flies, by self-holiness, endeavour to render the Divine Physician's unction unsavoury, it is just in God to let them fly into the devil's web, Eccles. x. 1. But you, my son, have not so learned Christ.

I will send thee the rest of my thoughts in the next letter; fare thee well: may the God of Abraham, before whom I have walked, bless thee with "the precious things of heaven;" even "the precious fruits brought forth by the Sun," of Righteousness; "and for the precious things put forth by the moon," the church; "and for the chief things of the ancient mountains," of eternal election; "and for the precious things of the lasting hills," of glorification; "and for the precious things of the earth, and fullness thereof;" together with the breasts of divine consolation, and the blessings of Zion's fruitful womb; and may "the good will of him that dwelt in the bush" be on the top of the head of him who, by grace, is separated from his fleshly brethren, Deut. xxxiii. 13-16; while I remain thy joyful and affectionate father in Christ Jesus.

W. H. William Huntington

LETTER VI

William Huntington(1745-1813)

Winchester Row

My Dear Son,

YOURS I received with great delight I approve much of your letter; you seem therein to put away childish things, and appear quite a man in divinity. I shall not answer that letter yet, as I intend to continue my comment on this chapter, which I hope You will not be displeased at. You know we have many ministers, who appear in the pulpit scripture-corrupters; therefore, do not marvel if God turns coalheavers into commentators.

Thummim and Urim, or light and perfection, we proved to be Christ, the true light, and that Saviour who is perfect; so let the Thummim and Urim be with the Father's Holy One, whom he hath proved at Massah, or with temptation; and with whose unparalleled love to sinners. Justice strove at the waters of Meribah, or with whom he disputed and quarrelled, Deut. xxxi. 8, until vindictive Justice had spent his shafts in the Saviour, and retributive Justice appeared in the behalf of sinners. "And he put the mitre on his head," Lev. viii. 9. This mitre was ornamental. The best ornament for a minister is a head stored with instructions from God, Prov. i. 8, 9. That minister, who cordially embraces Christ, our wisdom, in his affections, and extols him with his tongue, shall never know the want of an ornament of grace to his head, Prov. iv. 8, 9. " Even upon his forefront did he put the golden plate." Saving, purifying, and tried faith, which is more precious than gold which perisheth, will case over our foreheads with divine fortitude against every opposition; even as the adamant is harder than a flint, so doth God make his servants' foreheads against the foreheads of the wicked; without this plate we shall be awed by the fear of man, Ezek. iii. 9.

"The Holy Crown." A crown is a head ornament of state worn by sovereign princes. Christ hath made us kings and priests unto God, Rev. i. 6: and as kings we must reign over the flesh, and keep it in subjection; lest, after we have preached reigning grace to others, sin reign over us, 1 Cor. ix. 27. It is requisite also that devils should be subject to us, through Christ's name, Luke, x. 17. It must be soul-distressing work to preach salvation from the tyranny of Satan, while the preacher is led captive by him at his will; but we have some such living contradictions. If Satan reign in us, we must not pretend to pull this cockatrice out of his den; if we put our hand there, he will ask us that old, taunting, insolent question, though coupled with an honest confession, Jesus I know, but who are ye?" Acts, xix, 14, 15. That soul must be weaned from the love of sin, and refreshed with the breasts of divine consolation, that plays on the hole of the asp, Isaiah, xi. 8. A preacher who reigns over the world by faith, can with comfort preach that faith which overcometh it: this world is like fire and water, excellent subjects, but terrible sovereigns. If the Lord crown my son with lovingkindness and tender mercy he will be able to preach sovereign mercy to others; and the love of Christ will constrain him to it; and the seal of God communicated to souls by our preaching faith, is a crown put on our labours, and a soul-satisfying proof of our being ministers of the Spirit; and we may call such sealed souls our joy and crown in the Lord, Phil. iv. 1.

"And Moses took the anointing oil." A type of the Holy Ghost; which is the promise of the Father, received by Jesus without measure, and shed abroad, in a measure, in every believing heart. "And anointed the tabernacle, and all that was therein." This anointing was typical of the oil of gladness, that first anointed Christ to his kingly and priestly office; and all believers who are in him, the true temple of God, and in which God dwells, are anointed with the same oil; yea, every vessel

of mercy, from the bowls to the flagons, to sanctify them, Isaiah, xxii. 24.

"And he sprinkled the altar seven times," Lev. viii. 11. This altar was a type of the divinity of Christ, which sanctified the humanity, and stamped infinite dignity on all he did; though he was born of a woman, and born under the law, yet he thought it no robbery to be equal with God the Father, Phil. ii. 6. The humanity being united to the Godhead of Christ, made his obedience sufficient to honour the law, and to be a divine and everlasting righteousness to justify us poor sinners. It was through the eternal Spirit he offered himself to God; and his humanity being offered on the altar of his divinity, his blood was sufficient to appease the wrath of God, and purge us from sin, Heb. ix. 14. The altar was sprinkled seven times with oil, to shew that the seven Spirits of God, or all the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Ghost, were upon Christ, Rev. i. 4; Isaiah, xi. 2. This blessed Jesus was sanctified and sent into the world by God the Father, who anointed God the Son with God the Holy Ghost; and by his own blood Christ sanctified himself, and that for our sakes, that we might be sanctified through the truth: and we must, as ministers, sanctify this Lord God of hosts in our hearts, and let him be our fear, and let him be our dread, Isaiah, viii. 13. We are said to sanctify him, when we preach him as the Holy One of Israel, by the Holy Ghost, and judge him holy in all his ways. We are said to justify him, when we preach him as the only righteousness of every true believer, and judge him righteous in all his sovereign acts of mercy and judgment. And we are said to glorify him by the Spirit when we worship him, acknowledge ourselves indebted to his grace and providence for all that we have and are; as also when we fear him as a sovereign, honour him as the everlasting Father, and love him as a friend; and give all the glory of our salvation to him.

"And he poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head." Before the apostles were to go forth to teach all nations, they were to be endued with power from on high; they were to wait for the promise of the Father; and on the day of Pentecost our divine mediator poured that sacred unction on them all. "Ye have an unction," says John. "Now he that hath anointed us is God," says Paul; and has the Lord anointed thee, my son? Thou mayest burn with a false zeal, and shine with a false light, but wilt never burn with love to Christ, until this oil burn in thee. Begin not to build till thou hast got materials from heaven; all daubers with untempered mortar, however high imagination may carry the building, will surely leave it ridiculous, as the Babel-builders did, and cause many to mock, saying, "This man began to build, and was not able to finish;" and the reason is, because he began at his own expense. Thou mayest sound an alarm from Sinai, and apparently alarm many by crying fire, and then trump them all to sleep again, as Lot did his sons. "Up, up, get you out, is not sufficient; Lot was led out by the arm of Omnipotence, and we must preach the arm of the Lord. No man can preach the law lawfully till he is made a partaker of the Holy Ghost. The law is spiritual, and what does a carnal man know of a spiritual law? I know it is common among Arminians to say, "Up, and be doing; arise, and shake yourselves from the dust;" as if they were the resurrection and the life, and could command the dead. However, Peter went another way to work; he told sinners, such as he had, he gave them; he lent them his hand of faith, and told them Jesus made them whole; he declared the faith of Jesus gave them their soundness. To cry, "Up, and be doing," to souls twice dead, is setting people to work without victuals or tools; and how such will perform their task every true believer knoweth, because he hath tried his strength, but never found the strength of God's grace made perfect in him till he had spent his own strength, and become nothing but weakness, Deut. xxxii. 36. These gentlemen, when they get into Moses' chair, are little better than

Pharaoh's task masters, bind grievous burdens on others, but will not lend a finger to help them up with the load; and I know some of those burden-bearers are ready to cry out with Cain, it is too heavy for me to bear. If the Spirit of God doth not lead a man into truth, he must err; and every time an erroneous man takes a passage from God's book, he is guilty of a breach of God's command; "thou shalt not steal," Jer. xxiii. 30. False preachers multiply curses to themselves; every such preacher, who wilfully perverts any plain text of Scripture, or doctrine in it, to support an error, is cursed for removing his neighbours landmark; and he that makes not Christ the door of entrance, the way also, and the end, brings another curse on his own head, for causing the blind to go out of his way; and all these curses shall come on him who takes away the plain meaning of God's word, if grace prevent not, yea, all the plagues in the book, Rev. xxii. 19.

If my son be anointed with the unction of God the Holy Ghost, he will leave a sweet savour of Christ behind him in every place; therefore be ye filled with the Spirit, and, as the scripture hath said, out of thy belly shall flow rivers of living water. All divinity got by study and kept up by reading commentators, without the Spirit, is a well without water; but, if the Spirit be in thee, he shall be a well of water springing up into eternal life. Thou mayest wade in these holy waters until thy ankle bones receive strength; then thou wilt be able to walk by faith: it makes the lame man leap as an hart, Isaiah, xxxv. 6, 7. It will spring up until it comes to thy knees; then thou wilt not stagger at the promise through unbelief; for it strengthens the weak hands, and confirms the feeble knees. It will spring up to thy loins: when the loins of our mind are strengthened by the Spirit's might, and we are renewed in the spirit of our minds by him, then Christ becomes our meditation day and night; our minds are in heaven, and we are strengthened to bear the cross: and it will spring up into eternity, and carry us into the fountain of living waters from

whence it came; and there we may swim in the river of pleasure; but eternity is a river that we can never swim over, Ezek. xlvi. 1-6. And thus the Holy Ghost is called water, because he purifies and refreshes; oil, because he supple, heals, and burns; may God wash and anoint my son more and more, Ezek. xvi. 9.

If this water be in thee, then men of understanding will draw it out, Prov. xviii. 4. If thy heart be established with grace, thou wilt be a good steward of the manifold grace of God, I Pet. iv. 10. If this anointing be upon thee, thou wilt anoint others in the name of the Lord, James, v. 14. If the quickening word and Spirit rest on thy soul, thou wilt hold forth to others the word of life, Phil. ii. 16. If thou art satisfied with the breasts of consolation, thou wilt be a son of consolation, and comfort others with that comfort with which thou art comforted of God, 2 Cor. i. 4. If the Holy Ghost hath made thee free, thou mayest preach liberty to others without being a servant of corruption, 2 Peter, ii. 19. A man must be born again, before he can be a minister of the Spirit; he must have the hidden treasure in his earthen vessel, before he can bring good treasure out of the heart; he must feel the motions of the Spirit, before he can be said to speak as he is moved by the Holy Ghost, 2 Peter, i. 21; he must be a partaker of the fruits, before he can be a keeper of the vineyard, 2 Tim. ii. 6: "Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things."

Pardon my honest dealing with thee; it is an awful thing to be an instrument without spiritual life, giving uncertain sound. A lamp without oil is the law of Moses; and this, attended with a blind zeal and pharisaic pride, makes a false preacher like him who is transformed into an angel of light. A false dauber, without establishing, cementing grace, will sink the deepest under the greatest of ruins, Luke, vi. 49. A mystical cloud, without rain, only obscures the Sun of Righteousness. A well without water only aggravates the soul's thirst. Believe me,

there is a false zeal, Rom. x. 2; a false gift, Prov. xxv. 14; a false light, Luke, xi. 35; a false spirit, Micah, ii. 11 a false minister, 2 Cor. xi. 13; a false flock of professors, 2 Cor. xi. 26; a false Christ, Matt. xxiv. 24; and a false God, 2 Thess. ii. 4. Let not what I have said discourage my son: no; I have complied with thy request as far as I have gone; I have written it just as it came flowing on my mind; it may shake thy confidence, but thou wilt only root the deeper; I know Christ will heal thine ear again, if I have cut it. The sword of the Spirit never gives a mortal or a deadly wound to a living soul.

Thou mayest perhaps see in these letters, as in a glass, many false preachers, when I am dead and gone; but I am persuaded better things of you, though I thus write; and things that accompany salvation. I have never been permitted from the first to entertain a single doubt of thy interest in Christ Jesus; I am exceeding glad to think God has given me a hope of seeing, two of my own sons in the faith appearing in the vineyard of Christ, before I go hence and be no more seen. O! tread in the steps of thy father, my son; go forth in a plain unaffected way. It has vexed my very soul when I have seen poor men, of low rank, in powdered hair, silk breeches, popish robes, long bands, cramp words, affected actions, wanton eyes, and borrowed matter: attended by a company of light, frothy, dressy professors, as void of humbling grace as the devil is of hope. It is such who creep into houses, and lead captive silly women; "led away with divers lusts; ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."

I desire thee to go once a week to those poor souls at G. and I will pay thee for thy time when I come down; deny not this my request, and look for no instruction to be effectual but the teaching of the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. ii. 13. Gospel ministers, fitted by carnal inventions, are just as useful as the prophet's sons we read of, 2 Kings ii. 16; fifty of whom had got strength enough at the schools to catch the prophet Elijah, if the Holy

Ghost should let him slip, or the flaming equipage break down on the airy road. Surely a chariot paved with everlasting love, covered with atoning blood, axletreed with Omnipotence, and conveyed on the wheels of eternal election, is strong enough to carry a soul to Abraham's bosom, without the pliable spring of an arm of flesh. Elisha, the poor ploughman, who was but a few days old in grace, blushed at their carnal offer; and if he were here, we should make him blush again, for we have many strong men. Some are for steadying the ark with pharisaical conformity, lest the rough paths of tribulation shake it too much; and others are holding out the arm of free-will, as if it were omnipotent, to catch it those, who by riding too high in the chariot of unconditional and eternal salvation, are in danger of getting overthrown; howbeit, no such passengers have ever yet been beholden to any of these proud helpers; and I am sure they never will.

And now may the ever-blessed Spirit of all holy unity unite our souls to Christ, and to each other; that he may be to us as the precious ointment on the head, even Aaron's head, which ran down to his beard, and went even to the skirts of his clotting, as the blessed dew of Hermon, which fell on the chosen mountain of Zion; where God commanded the best of blessings, even the spirit of life for evermore, Psalm cxxxii. Amen, and amen, says thy affectionate father in the unalterable bond of everlasting love,

W.H.

William Huntington

LETTER VII

William Huntington(1745-1813)

Winchester Row.

Dear Brother in Christ,

YOURS I received, and am glad the fan has been among you; the floor is now purged, and the hypocrites are gone. Let them go; he that has the most chaff, has got the worst heap. That man who sweeps God's house, and runs away with the uncircumcised and the unclean, gives great room to suspect that he is a minister after the order of Satan; because God uses him as a fan, and his errors as a wind, to purge his floor, and blow away the chaff. If God is with thee, they that are of God will hear thee; but they that are of the world, will hear no doctrines but the commandments of men. If your flock is pure, they will know the shepherd's voice; and the purer the doctrine is, the better they will feed upon it. There is no such thing as keeping a herd of hypocrites together, without dealing deceitfully in God's covenant; they must have smooth things prophesied to them: Prophecy deceits, was the command of their forefathers, and posterity approve their sayings, and love to have it so, Jer. v. 31. Therefore, that preacher who feeds them, must do it at the peril of his soul; for a false witness that speaketh lies, is one of the abominations that God hates, Prov. vi. 19.

I am sorry to find you nettled, because the giddy youth, at the head of a party, triumphs in your affliction; you must commit him, by prayer, to the mercy of that God who has promised, "He that is glad at calamities shall not go unpunished." A man in search after his own glory, or any other branch of self-seeking, who wants to raise a party by a false zeal and bigoted spirit; who will, in behalf of any non-essential point, divide and scatter a flock, and break the bond of peace, and the more perfect bond of gospel love, which binds all the body mystical to the head, and to each other, notwithstanding all his talk about gospel order, is the author of confusion, and

appears the opposer of him who is the author of peace. "He that gathereth not with me, scattereth."

I have narrowly watched the hand of God that has visibly gone out against several, who ran away at the head of a party; and soon saw many of those, who first cried out "Hosanna" to their leader, appeared the first also who cried "away with him." But be sure of this, that as he measures to others, so shall it be measured to him; and as he gave the first offence, he shall have the greatest measure of contempt; let him reproach, it shall return upon his own head; pressed down, shaken together, and running over, shall men measure to him: for the Lord God of recompences shall surely requite. I have watched the hand of God in this matter, and seen it in the most minute circumstances; yea in more than a thousand instances. If Jacob will appear to be Esau, Leah shall appear to be Rachel; and if he takes the advantage of his fathers blindness, the sore-eyed wife shall deceive him in the dark. But you will say that Jacob had a right to the blessing; true: but Jacob had no command from God to tell lies to get it. It was a rod from God upon Isaac, to permit him to be deceived by Jacob, because he was partial to Esau. David lay with Uriah's wife in secret; and Absalom shall lie with his wives upon the house top, in the open face of the sun. David cut off the life of Uriah, and Joab shall cut off Absalom, David's favourite; and though the father gives a charge concerning the young man, yet a living gallows shall receive him; and his fine head of hair, too much admired, shall serve instead of a halter to hang him in the oak. Mercy shall be sure to David's soul, and the rod as sure to David's sin. "I will chastise him with the rod of men." Whosoever he be that appears a rod to others, is sure to make one for himself; and if God does not pay him double in this world, he will pay him triple in the next. To pray for such, is the way to get an answer in our own bosom, and to heap coals on their head; therefore pray for him in private, and withstand him in public, for his way is perverse before the

Lord. But be sure never to rejoice when evil finds him, nor suffer thy lips to sin, by wishing a curse to his soul, Job, xxxi. 30.

Thou must never expect to stand on the tongue of hypocrites, nor take a false flight on the wings of fame; if we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater. That matter we get from God, in answer to the humble prayer of faith, put up under a sense of our ignorance, and inability for the important work, we may, if scripture bear us out, venture to deliver: God will never give us a stone for bread, a serpent for a fish, nor a scorpion for an egg. "If any lack wisdom, let him ask it of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not." The matter I obtain this way I am bold to preach, though it differ from the judgment of commentators. Paul owns he knew but in part, an prophesied in part; and those who have undertaken to explain the whole Bible were not infallible; nor did wisdom die with them. Give heed to the more sure word of prophecy, until the daystar arise in your heart, and then follow that; it will lead you to every mystery where the Saviour lies; and when you have found him, hold him forth to poor sinners, without money and without price, as a good steward of the manifold grace of God, which is treasured up in Christ Jesus.

A sermon borrowed from commentators is but a dry breast; it is neither wet with dew, nor warm with love. All that a man learns by rote is too weak to hold his soul in a storm; but one single promise, brought home with power to the soul by the Holy Ghost, fixes the heart for ever. If you know the pardon of your sin, the liberty of God's Spirit, and enjoy union and communion with Christ, you are wise to salvation, though you never read any book but the Bible; and he that is a stranger to heart-work is but a novice, though his head be stored with ten thousand comments. Grace be with thee.

Ever thine,

W.H. William Huntington

LETTER VIII

William Huntington(1745-1813)

Winchester Row.

Dear Brother, in Christ,

I wish thee abundant success in thy labours; and approve much of thy proceedings. It was the holy resolution of the apostle Paul, not to build on another man's foundation, or rejoice, as some in our days do, in another man's line of things, made ready to their hands. Paul's holy ambition led him to strive to preach where Christ Jesus had not been named, that he might see the Spirit communicated, and truth established by his own instrumentality. He was for ploughing as well as sowing; and as a wise master builder, he was fond of laying the foundation; and others were as fond of building hay, straw, and stubble thereon; but that work was done at their peril. Aim more at being a father, than a nurse; Paul says, "though you have ten thousand instructors in Christ, Yet have ye not many fathers; I have begotten you.

I have observed some who are very fond of breaking through all bounds into another man's labours; and with a party spirit, and a fiery zeal, will draw a wonderful train after them, both bad and good; and if they can chain them up in a bigoted spirit, and get them to hate the poor pastor that at first begat them, then they say, we have established a church. This Paul calls zealously affecting them, but not well, Gal. iv. 17; and if the father of this runaway flock exclaims against those thievish measures, as Paul did, when he called them deceitful

workers, then these scattering gentlemen call it, being persecuted for righteousness' sake. However, Peter is of another way of thinking: he calls it, being buffeted for their faults; and tells them to take it patiently; hinting thereby, that they justly deserve it. I have often thought, that if such ministers were to go into a barren soil, and cultivate their own land, they would cut a very poor figure in the ministry. However, they rather choose to get amongst a simple flock with warm hearts, as they think such are easily deceived by a false zeal; and he that is fond of warming his hands at another man's fire, gives one room to suspect he is one of Solomon's sluggards, who will not plough up a barren soil, by reason of the cold; therefore he shall beg in harvest, and have nothing: nothing but other men's labours to boast of. I have watched some poor simple souls, who have been thus led away; and all their work appeared to be condemning those as disorderly who were more righteous than themselves; boasting of their order, prejudiced against others, bitter against those who stood fast in liberty, and enjoyed the love of Christ, yea, some whom God hath called by me, who were as dear to me as my own life, I have beheld with many tears, being grieved to see the Saviour's blessed image so defaced on them; indeed they seemed to have no more features than an oyster. This taught me to understand Paul's meaning by the following passage: "But I fear lest by any means, [mark any means] as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." Indeed poor souls, thus led into prejudice, stripped of simplicity, taught the art of scorning, and prohibited hearing and communing with the warm-hearted sound ministers of Christ, are as much priestridden as a deluded Papist going pilgrimage, or walking bare-footed, doing penance. Christ's yoke is easy, and his burden light; but all other yokes are made of iron: however, the yoke of priestcraft, as well as others, will be destroyed by such as enjoy God's anointing. If God's grace reign and rule in the heart, there will be good

order in the affections, and such cannot walk disorderly before men; but if the heart be not changed by grace, let them appear in as much order as they will, or talk ever so much about it, they are but refined pharisees at best; and such are said to dwell nigher the gates of hell than either publicans or harlots.

As to their doubting of your being sent of God, it is nothing; if God has sent thee, he will bless thee; and let his hand be known toward thee, and his indignation toward them that hate thee for his sake. Dissenting churches have sent out many into God's vineyard, whom God never owned, but hath discovered them, and sent them back into the world again from whence they came.

If God gives you clearly to see your interest in the everlasting covenant, and gives you a door of utterance to speak soundly and boldly, and goes before you in providence to open a door for you, sends many sinners to hear you, and opens their heart to receive the glad tidings, and you can see sinners renewed in mind, and performed in life by your ministry, these are full proofs of your being sent of God; and you may say, as Paul did, I am a Preacher not of man, nor by man. I have chosen you, and ordained you, says the Saviour; and as a free agent, he often shews his absolute prerogative now a days, in the same way: but such as God sends are often stigmatized with the name of irregulars, as if the God of all order dealt in nothing but irregularities. However, it is better to be a minister of the Spirit under that name, than to be a regular minister, destitute of grace and divine commission. Do nothing without consulting Christ; wear no yoke but his; have no master but him; covet earnestly his approbation, rejoice in no testimony but his, watch his hand all the day long; if God appears on thy side, thou hast no cause to fear; what can flesh and blood do unto thee? Stand fast in Christ Jesus, and you will be as an iron pillar, and a brazen wall; but if you are

looking for a man's testimony only, you will be nothing but a reed shaken with the wind. I can truly sympathize with you; for I have had enough of this false fire cast amongst my sheaves, which I sowed in tears, and reaped in joy, Psalm cxxvi. 5. But this be sure of, that all those persons who communicate a narrow contracted spirit to a flock, or fix prejudice on the minds of simple souls, who divide the affections of a society, and scatter discord among them, are seedsmen of Satan; for God hates that man, and holds him in abomination, "that soweth discord among brethren." If you watch those dividers and scatterers, you will see their joy counterfeited, their love feigned, their matter borrowed, and their way in God's fold to be by hypocrisy, craftiness, and the cunning art of the devil. It is not coming in by the door, but climbing up like a thief or robber. If God giveth thee a discerning eye, thou wilt see a fallen countenance, which is a certain indication of a guilty conscience, through all the mask of their feigned love; but if you stand fast in Christ Jesus, your face will shine, and God will appear the health of your countenance, Psalm xlii. 11 ; and that with the power which attends the word will establish you as a minister of Christ in the consciences of those discerning Christians who hear you, 2 Cor. iv. 2. The light troop that followeth him shews what spirit the leader is of it has been a grief to my very soul when I have seen a person, whom I had great reason to believe was a hypocrite, fond of me; alas, said I, surely I am of the world; for this worldling loves me! but soon God has turned his heart to hate me and to deal subtilely with my soul. I bless God for the world's hatred, and I bless God for a saint's love. Be not astonished at his gifts; a musician can play at any time, if he has but the use of his hands; and a minister, with a gift only, is compared to an instrument without life giving sound; he can play when he pleases, if he has but the use of his tongue. However, Paul knew what it was to want a door of utterance; yea, and what it was to go bound in the Spirit; and Ezekiel knew what it was to be dumb before a whole audience, and what it was to have

his mouth open to him that escaped; and if this man is never burdened with the cross, if never bound in spirit, if never on the mount, if always alike, he has no chances; therefore he fears not God: he only stands in the testimony of men, feeds on human applause, and is furnished for the pulpit by commentators I have nothing to say against the sound writings of good men, but you must get your divinity from Christ, as those good men did; or else you must confess at last, with the prophet's son, "Alas, master, it was borrowed!" I have heard some preach sound discourses, which I have admired; and when I have been in conversation with them, it appeared plain that they never had experienced any thing they said: "the kingdom of God is not in word but in power." Leave off that way of gadding from house to house; you will get as dry as a stick; be in prayer and in study day and night: he savours most of Christ in the pulpit who lives the nearest to him in private. If the love of the Father, the grace of the Saviour, and the testimony of the Spirit be in you, you will be sound in the Trinity, without puzzling your head with school notions, some of which are not sound: if you err in the fountain, every stream will run corrupt. What God reveals in his word, stand in; and where God has fixed you, there stand fast, and give place to none; and see that you do not disgrace in life, what you recommend in word: and when you see sheepstealers, for erroneous men are called wolves in sheep's clothing, breaking over God's hedges, do not act the part of a dumb dog, Isaiah, lvi. 10; but bark, and bite too; for God makes as sharp-threshing instruments, having teeth, Isaiah, xli. 15: as flails, we must keep beating; and as we have teeth we must use them; but only with the wolves and the foxes, who come to steal the lambs. Grace be with thee.

Ever thine,

W.H.

William Huntington

LETTER IX

William Huntington (1745-1813)

TO MR. C. G., PILGRIM-STREET, NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE.

Dear Sir,

I received yours, and am glad to hear of the mercy of God revealed in you, through Christ Jesus. For my part, I wish there were more preachers of Jesus than there are: and as God has given you the knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of your sins, you are far beyond one half of the preachers that are sent out in our days, who seem to be entire strangers to it; therefore very improper persons to sympathize with burdened sinners, describe the pardon of sin, with the peace that attends it, or enforce it either with consistency or authority. Such are ministers sent of men; and where God sends one, these send a dozen. If a man be pardoned, like Isaiah, he can preach forgiveness. The pardoned sinner has received the atonement; God has revealed his Son in him; and if a door be opened in a way of providence, he may bear his name among the Gentiles; and let him watch the hand of God, to see if he makes known the savour of his name in any place by his instrumentality. Pardon is always attended with peace; they go together. If the Saviour says, "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee," he adds, "Go in peace:" and what is a minister of Jesus, but an Ambassador of Peace? Where the Lord applies a pardon, he reveals an everlasting righteousness: pardon and justification always attend each other; and the preacher that is a justified man, like Noab, like him he is a preacher of righteousness. Pardon is followed with

the comforts of the Holy Ghost, which you seem to have the experience of; and if you endeavour to comfort others with the same comfort with which you are comforted of God, you are a minister of the Spirit, not of the letter. With respect to the approbation or disapprobation of men, it is not always to be depended upon. The omniscient God has reserved infallibility to himself; to him you must stand or fall. Study to shew yourself approved of God. It is his testimony and approbation that must both fortify you and fix you. Churches have sent out hundreds that God never sent, nor owned. But a man pardoned and justified of God is a true witness for God, whether men approve or disapprove. It is not enough to be chosen and approved of by a church; a man must make his own calling and election sure to salvation and to the ministry: and it is God's choice and approbation of the man, that shall establish him and keep him standing, when his friends may change their voice, and cry, "Away with him." The majority of a church often look more at gifts than grace; and speak as they are affected or disaffected to the person, without having respect to his acquaintance with the power of godliness; which alone can qualify a man to preach the kingdom of God; which is not in word, but in power, in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. The minority part of a church have often the most of Christ, and are the most discerning and experimental members; yet are frequently styled troublers and opposers of the majority. Therefore I advise thee to commit thy way to the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established. God is infinitely wise, and gives wisdom to those that ask; nor is there any partiality with him.

If the discerning Christians among you can find no fault of your experience or doctrine, God has made you manifest in their conscience. Let them, therefore, neither puff thee up, nor drive thee back. I know not what Christians you have got about Newcastle with respect to discernment; but we have flying troops of professors in London consisting of some

thousands; who look no father than "lo here, or lo there;" and as soon as this "lo" is heard, they are all waved and moved as the trees of the wood are moved, Isaiah, vii. 2, with every wind of doctrine.

Trying them that say they are apostles, and proving them liars if they are not, is much out of fashion in our days. Insomuch, that mimics, apes, and mere impostors are often cried up in public pulpits, as wonders from the Lord of Hosts. If a man will but assume the robe, read the prayers, cry up human learning, call experimental Christians enthusiasts, and the doctrines of the gospel Antinomianism; he is the man, and is as sure of a pulpit, and of an audience, as the Pope himself would be. Not long since one of this stamp, who was minded to have stroke at a certain coalheaver, observed "There are some who, say, God has no need of human learning; and I answer," said the mimic, "God has no need of their ignorance." But as God hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound such wise men as he, and bring their wisdom to nothing, he certainly has need of those foolish things, in order to do it. If God reveals Zion's King, coming on an ass to Jerusalem, the Saviour hath need of that ass for that purpose. But he stands in no need of liars to preach his truth, nor of hypocrites to handle his covenant; nor of that wisdom that is from beneath, to preach his wisdom in a mystery. These are said to run unsent of him; it is the devil that gives them their authority, and none but his children would receive it at such hands. Hence God calls them ministers of Satan, 2 Cor. xi. 14, 15. "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of." "Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide." It is good for thee to draw near to God. The closer thou livest to him in private, the more savoury wilt thou be in public; he that walks with God, knows much of his secrets; and will find the Lord stand with him, and strengthen him in times of trouble. But if private communion be neglected, if things get out of course between

God and you, you may prate away in a pulpit, but you will be as dewless, lifeless, and unsavoury, as a lecturer upon anatomy. The power of religion is all of the Lord; and thy faith must have to do with him, if thou get virtue out of him: it is sweet preaching when we are favoured with times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. You will make your call to the work clear by the success that attends it, and by the trials that you will meet with.

When you meet with oppositions on every hand, temptations to leave the work, darkness, bound up in spirit, every thought scattered, the Bible sealed, unbelief prevalent, ashamed of Christ and the cross, wishing you had never meddled with the ministry, determined never more to interfere, if God will but pardon your presumption, then it will be known who sent you. When a man goes forward in such a storm as this, it is plain a divine power holds him up, and leads him on: he does not preach to please himself, nor to gain applause; for the more he labours the more he is tried: this is the Lord's instructing a man with a strong hand: and it serves to give him a deep sight into his own heart, and the hearts of others; it weans him from an arm of flesh, hides pride from his eyes, and makes him sick of applause; he shuns company, and loves privacy, esteeming his lonely hours the best, where he can wait upon his God, and make his complaints to him. When trials come upon preachers because of the word, many are offended, and in time of temptation fall away, because they have no root in themselves; they were not rooted in Christ or united to him by the Spirit of love in themselves; they stood and were upheld by the approbation and applause of men; and being carried on by their applause instead of the Spirit's testimony, they find neither defence nor support in times of trouble; and therefore must fall. If the devil, worldlings, and hypocrites serve thee as they have served me, ever since I have been in the ministry, thou mayest wish thou never wast born; but thou wilt find but little to lift thee up. A few of these trials will be sufficient to

make manifest whether God hath sent thee, or whether thou hast run of thine own head. When I came first to London, I had great numbers of these human props, who would drag me through fire and water, which was no small mortification and grief to me. I always walked safest when I had no hand to watch, no hand to feel for, nor to lean on, but that of God: I liked best to follow him, and move as he led the way; then I knew that I walked surely; but those that have no eye there will be like the sons of Zeruiah, too hard for the believer, 2 Sam. iii. 28; at least I found it so. However, when God led me to cut at the form of godliness, without the power; to insist upon the pardon of sin, regeneration by the Holy Ghost, justification by faith in an imputed righteousness, prayer, and all other parts of devotion in the Spirit, and in the truth of the gospel; and to enforce and insist upon an application of the doctrine of eternal election; my friends were like skittles, they fell off five or six at a time; which served to discover to me the various foundations that they built their hopes upon; and their withdrawing made room for their betters to approach; for, after their departure, I perceived that publicans and sinners drew near to hear me; and as many of these as God drove into the net stuck close to the fisher. And God soon discovered to me the difference between the life of these and the life of my former pillars, which encouraged me to be steadfast in the doctrines that God had applied to my soul, as I not only heard an account of their experience, but saw it manifested in their life and conduct; and such as these I found to be my bosom friends: they encouraged me in faithfulness, were ornaments of my ministry, felt for me in the work, and were able to judge when their visits were seasonable, and to take a hint without affront, when they were not. I call these the excellent of the earth, my best friends, and in whom, except Christ, is all my delight. Blessed be God, I have not a few of these, and with these I hope to live and die, to spend and be spent. As for many of my former columns, they could not keep their outward garments clean, much less keep up communion with

God, and be of service to me. I have ever found that inexperienced, unenlightened, uninformed people, have soon got sick of my ministry; they know nothing of the power, therefore can never know the worth of my doctrine, nor of me as a preacher; and when such have cleaved to me, their affection and kindness have rather been a stumbling block and a grief to me, than a matter of comfort. And I would ever wish for wisdom to deal with such, as the Saviour did with some, who are said to believe; "but Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, and knew what was in man." I have dropped these hints as a caution: if you get any instruction or comfort from the same, you know where to ascribe the glory. I shall add no more, only subscribe myself,

Your affectionate friend and servant,

In the Lord Jesus Christ,

W. H. William Huntington

The Lawyers Complaint

and

The Preachers Caustic;

or

A Seasonable Reply To A Restless Attorney And Co.

And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him,...
Luke x. 25.

..they that spoil thee shall be a spoil, and all that prey upon thee will I give for a prey. Jer. xxx. 16.

..Woe unto you also, ye lawyers!.. Luke XI. 46.

The produce of a twelvemonth's study, according to report, is at last fallen into my hands: but it is not voluminous, though it has been elaborate; which serves to convince me that the pen of the author, like the wheels of Pharaoh's chariots, dragged heavily; and no wonder when a Lawyer is willing to justify himself, Luke x. 29.

You need not have told me that you was an Attorney; your title-page proves that. It is a common saying, that a Lawyer will tell a lie for a crown; and you have not only confirmed the proverb, but have fallen the price, for you give us to know that you will tell one for a groat.

Your excellent piece is entitled, 'A Dialogue between Mr. Latitat and Mr. Huntington.' But, to tell the world that you carried on a dialogue with me, when you know that I never saw nor heard of you, is an absolute falsity. Besides every one who knows me knows that I would have no more fellowship or correspondence with an un-renewed lawyer, than I would with the devil, or Balaam the wizard.

'You sometimes amuse yourself with the study of anatomical subjects.' I have no doubt but you speak the truth, sir: I believe anatomy is your chief, if not your only, study. Gentlemen of your profession have ever been noted for that;

and many a poor widow, orphan, idiot, lunatic, and inheritance, has been pillaged, plundered, dissected, swallowed up and devoured, by them. Hence we read of their eating up a man and his heritage; of their devouring widows' houses; and, for a pretence, making long prayers, for which they have received a singular promise.

My 'Arminian Skeleton' is in the world; nor have I any objection to its being viewed or criticised by Mr. Latitat; for it is cognoscible, if you have cognoscence. A wise man will never set himself against it; and, as for the fool, he can neither overthrow nor understand it.

I do not suppose you pay any regard to conciseness when you enter an action at the pocket: you are more laconical, I take it, when you demand the fee; then it is *multum in parvo*, much in a little; much money, little disputing to get it, and less work for it.

What you call learning has been called ignorance and foolishness ever since the wisdom of God in a mystery has been published. Real learning consists in a saving experimental knowledge of God, and of an interest in his favour. Unlearned men are empty professors, who are ignorant of God, and wrest his word to their own destruction.

Far be it from me ever to expect either truth or satire from you: not truth, for want of grace; nor satire, for want of wit. The Scriptures say nothing about the charity either of Arians or Lawyers. The former rob Christ of his glory, and his church of the dignity of an everlasting righteousness: and the Saviour hints that some of the latter will be employed to sue his disciples out of their cloke; and, knowing that a cloke will hardly suffice, he tells them to give the coat also.

It is not subscribing to a creed that will make a man a Christian, any more than a scrap of Latin will make a man a

lawyer. There is but one faith; that comes from God, and leads to him: and if you could prove your own faith, you would not disapprove of mine.

It is a truth, the Bible is very scanty of honest lawyers, though they are to be found in almost every body's mouth in our days. The scriptures give us an account of the church of God for upwards of four thousand years; and there is an account of one Zenas the lawyer walking with Apollos, who was to be brought on his journey and be supplied by Titus; but what he was, or where he was going, I know not; there is nothing said about his grace or his honesty.

I once spent an evening with one of the best lawyers that ever I met with; and he gave me a humorous reproof for my throw at honest lawyers; and told me that he believed there were such things in being, and that himself was one. 'For instance,' said he, 'a man of property came to me, to make his will; and having but one child, a daughter, who had married against his will, and without his consent, he was determined to disinherit her. I reprov'd him, and refused to make his will; and is not that a proof of an honest Lawyer? I asked him if the human laws that he handled would allow a man thus to cut off a child, and him to make such a will? He replied 'Yes;' but he could not in conscience do it. I then told him he must not palm his honesty upon law, but upon equity: he was not a lawyer, but an honest equitarian; for conscience prohibited what the law allowed.

I am intimate with another of the profession, who served an apprenticeship in the country, finished his studies in town, and began to practise his profession; but, as soon as convicting grace reached his heart, he left it, declaring that he could not keep a conscience for God and get his bread by that: he therefore cast it off; and exposed himself to numberless

difficulties, rather than have anything to do with it; nor has he to this day.

As to conscience, there is as much difference between people's consciences as there is between their principles. Some consciences are as tough as a bull's hide, and some are as tender as an oyster. We read of some being seared with a hot iron; and some, like David's, will smite for the least offence, as his smote him when he only cut off the skirt of a murderer who sought his life. If you had a conscience like the former, you could swallow an oath, a bribe, or a lie, with more ease than another could make a will.

Government itself seems to have had an eye to the account that the scriptures give of lawyers, by appointing an universal guardian for widows, orphans, and lunatics; besides a high court of equity, and an inferior court of conscience: these, like the ancient cities of refuge, are to shelter widows, orphans, and property, from the endless suits of lawyers, as those did the manslayer from the pursuits of the avenger of blood.

To expect Christian patience to be acted where no Christian principles are implanted, is as great a paradox as to expect honesty from a dishonest lawyer.

Why you should call yourself a rogue and an impostor, and palm it upon me, in your dialogue, I know not. And how can you dream of being inevitably damned, and at the same time intimate the practicability of keeping a good conscience towards God in the pursuit of your profession? Damnation and a good conscience can never go together. Indeed, sir, you give me room to suspect that conscience does not subscribe to all you write. Let a man be a lawyer, a quack doctor, or what he may; without repentance he will inevitably perish. But if God should give repentance even to a lawyer, he would save his soul; for the scripture intimates that he would then despise the gain of oppressions, shake his hands from

holding of bribes, stop his ears from hearing of blood; and shut his eyes from seeing of evil, Isai, xxxiii. 15; which are things that accompany salvation.

I never murmur, sir, against paying either dues, customs, or taxes. God has given us one of the most fruitful and best countries in the world; and if it be involved in a war, every one that has sinned has had a hand in it; and therefore ought to do his utmost against an invading enemy, who would rob us of the inheritance which God gave to our fathers. And for my own part, I would sooner pay ten pounds in taxes towards the support of a defensive war, than two mites for the name of a client, knowing there is so little law for a farthing.

You do me wrong, sir, you make your fancied antagonist speak what you please, and then palm it upon Mr. Huntington. I never said the Lord was your Saviour; nor did I ever entertain such a thought. I always endeavour to bring my matter wholly from the Bible; and God forbid that I should pervert scripture to justify you! I never read that an honest or a converted lawyer was once named in all the book of God, nor you neither; and, therefore, what could I bring from thence to prove your justification?

I think your dialogue has been carried on between Mr. Latitat and Conscience, instead of Mr. Huntington; and it appears to me that conscience has given you a good flogging. No doubt but you are guided by reason and religion; reason first, and religion afterwards; that is, you will follow that religion that you have reason to think will produce you the most clients. Yours is a reasonable obedience, sir: it is not like Abraham's, who left the homestall behind, and obeyed in going out, not knowing whither he went.

The Saviour's wo to the lawyers seems to hang heavy upon your mind, as you bring it in upon every occasion. If your conscience is as good as you would have us believe, and if

you have never laden men with burdens grievous to be borne, that wo will have no more weight upon your conscience than a sinner's causeless curse has upon mine.

I never once thought that a gentleman of your profession spun out an argument for the sake of prolixity; or any such worthless thing. I am inclined to think you have better things in view, and that it is done entirely for money.

Your antagonist has handled you very faithfully; "Wo unto you lawyers," &c. &c. and has left you to make the application, like an honest divine. And he is justifiable in calling you, as you have made him, a serpent and a viper; because lies are palmed, by the Saviour, upon the old serpent, the father of lies; whose trade you follow, by asserting that between twenty and thirty pounds were paid for my son, when full thirty were paid: and, had a lawyer been employed, no doubt sixty would have been paid, but nothing left for my son. The lawyer got but thirty pounds ten shillings for the Sunbury suit, instead of near forty.

It is pity any man should be sued for making improvements, while others can get such ample fees for making inroads; but some may steal a horse sooner than another look over a hedge. There is utterly a fault in going to law; but I was on the defensive. Nor is the fault in the law, but in them that handle it. The law calls for justice, but lawyers for money. And so they wrap it up.

Far be it from me to call the man knavish; I think he acted wisely: he made a good job of it, and got his money; and, what is still more, the person who employed him as his agent, being in his debt, he could not trust, but made me pay him. He paid himself, and left his employer to strike the balance: which shews that lawyers agree with me in judgment concerning honesty. I never said that I had suffered by lawyers; far from it: what they demanded Providence sent in, and it was paid

willingly; and I confessed that God gave, and that he took away.

You should leave divine charity and the Saviour's meekness out of your jargon. Uttering falsehood and slander, and upbraiding a pardoned sinner for the sin of his youth; jumbling these things with the love of God and the compassion of the Saviour will sound no better, in the ears of a judicious Christian, than the liberal pretensions of Judas, who reprov'd waste in Mary only to get the price of the funeral ointment into his own bag.

"Charity suffereth long." True, sir, rather than give up the religion of Jesus, faithfulness in his cause, or the truths of his word. It is kind to all that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth, and to one's fellow-creature; but never kind to slander, oppression, opposition, nor scurrility. It believeth all things that God hath said, and hopeth for all things that he has promised. Is not easily provok'd at any thing but sin; at which God himself was provok'd, in rebellious Israel, for forty years together. Thinketh no evil in God's word, works, or ways; nor evil in a good man; nor ever plotteth evil against the wicked: but thinketh no good in devils; nor in a scorning lawyer, as appears by the fountain of charity; *"Wo unto you, Lawyers! How can ye, being evil, speak good things?"*

'None so meek and lowly as the Saviour.' And to those whom he came to save he always sheaved it, unless when reproof was necessary; then he sometimes chewed divine displeasure. But, when he had a taunting lawyer to deal with, he appear'd the lion of the tribe of Judah, and spake like an angry judge: for after he had reprov'd the religious order with a - *"Wo unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye are as graves which appear not;"* one of your profession was offend'd. *"Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto him, Master, thus saying, thou reproachest us also. And he*

said, *Wo unto you also, ye lawyers; for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be born, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers. Wo unto you, lawyers, for ye have taken away the key of knowledge. And, as he said these things unto them, they began to urge him vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things.*" Thus the fountain of charity has been provoked by a lawyer.

When the Saviour said "*Wo unto you, lawyers,*" it was without restriction; conscience was left to second the motion, and make application. And, when the proverb says, "*Who can find a virtuous woman?*" every one who has got such a blessing may stand forth, and say, 'I can.'

The Saviour's wo is to whom it may concern. He once told a lawyer that he was not far from the kingdom of God; but we do not read of his getting into it. He had told the Lord that to love God with all the heart, soul, mind, and strength, was more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices: which was a true confession; but faith in the heart, and faith in Christ, were wanting. With the heart man believeth, and with the tongue confession is made.

There may be such characters as honest lawyers in the world, though the bible doth not give us express account of any. And, if I was to ask 'Who can find one?' I should put no more contempt upon the cloth than the proverb that says, "Who can find a virtuous woman?" casts upon the female sex, which is a larger body corporate than that of the lawyers: or else wo be to us, and to all the world. And the proverb; "Every one," like you, sir, "will proclaim his own goodness, but a faithful man who can find?" you might say is a contempt of all the human race, which are not all lawyers, for there are some who are partakers of grace; and yet the proverbial challenge has a meaning, all being concluded in unbelief.

For my own part, I would as soon undertake to find a faithful man, or a virtuous woman, as an honest lawyer; and, if compelled to undertake an endless search after the latter, I would not choose to begin with you; for, though you have got the word love in your confession, as the lawyer in the gospel had in his, which is the greatest thing in the kingdom of God; yet your heart may be as far from it as his was. Your great outcry gives room for suspicion. The lawyer who first cried out in behalf of the fraternity, in the gospel, was the first that received the denunciation. "Thus saying, thou reproachest us also. And he [Jesus] said, Wo unto you, lawyers."

Your counsel, like that of Ahithophel, is not good. You seem to be a stranger to the root of the matter. Besides, a man who will give me counsel must not upbraid me with the sins of my youth, after repentance obtained, and a public and private confession made. This is not acting like God, who giveth liberally, and upbraideth not; but like the devil, who accuses for what is past and pardoned. If I was to be stoned tomorrow by a lawyer that is innocent in thought, word, and deed, I should expect no great danger from you. Those who accused the adulterous woman all fled when the Saviour described the executioner. "*He that is without sin, let him first cast a stone at her,*" was sufficient. There were many accusers, but not one to execute the sentence; conscience flogged them all out of court as soon as the Judge bid them do their office. And, if I was to be brought forth, he would serve you the same, and I should be, as she was, left alone with Jesus; for neither devils nor lawyers can prevail against a sinner at the feet of the wonderful Counsellor, and the Judge of all the earth.

You seem to take offence at a single word or two, in my writings, without understanding my scope. I seldom or ever mention or interfere with the world. "What have I to do with them that are without?" My business is chiefly with those who are within. It is professors that I have to do with. Lawyers and

counsellors, who mind only their own employments, and let religion and the gospel of Jesus alone; who never come within reach of the gospel sound; keep without the pale of the church, and come not under the notice or cognizance of the gospel ministry; I have nothing to do with: it is professing lawyers that Christ pronounced his wo against, who were professors of the Jewish church. My book of the Skeleton is written to professors of whatever calling or denomination, whom it may concern; and to grace-less professors in particular, to shew them their errors, and to caution others against such as lie in wait only to deceive.

I shall obey your voice; if they sue me for my coat or cloak, they will most surely have it. I shall bear the cross with all the patience I can, exhort the unruly, pray for my enemies, and give such seasonable admonition as the Lord shall furnish me with; and if even a professing lawyer should stand in the way of my ministry, I shall use sharpness, according to the power given me. An attorney who minds nothing but law, and lets the gospel alone, acts in character; but the man who carries on the following things, which you mention, under a cloak of religion, is no more like the former character than Simon Magus was like Nicodemus.

'Are there not many particulars, such as fictitious pleading and statement of facts, to be observed, which you are aware do not exist?' You puzzle me, sir, with your learning. If your statements and pleas be nothing but fictions, how can they be facts? If you state things against a person which have no existence, then you lay things to his charge that he knows not; and instead of pleading against a man his own reproach, you either bear, or countenance, a false witness against your neighbour. And can you do these things under a profession of religion?

If you undertake causes for your clients which you know you cannot possibly succeed in, as you say, then it is clear that, for the sake of mammon, you set yourself against God, against truth, law, justice, and equity; and would reduce a family to poverty for a little ill-gotten wealth. "*He that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool.*" If your conscience be clear of these things, you needed not have brought them forth; and, if guilty, your conscience will make a faltering answer at the great tribunal.

'You still persist to include the whole profession in the bondage of iniquity.' I deny the charge. My book is written against the Arminians; and if it contains any thing against your profession, it is delivered in the Saviour's way, without restriction. "*Wo unto you, lawyers.*" He cloth not say, *Wo unto some*; nor, *Wo unto all*; those words are left out: but, "*Wo unto you, lawyers;*" wo unto them whom the wo may concern.

'I shall experience the satisfaction that arises from an upright heart.' This is a great thing for a lawyer to say; and, for my part, I am slow of heart to believe. Besides, telling your readers that you have had a dialogue with me is a falsity; and ripping up the sins of my youth, and speaking falsely about them, is slander. Lying and slandering do not proceed from the good treasure of an upright heart.

'That unlawful advantages are not peculiar to professors of law, any more than to those of the gospel,' will not be easily credited; though a mere profession of the gospel will never change the heart or practice of one that is given to extortion, but a real possession of the grace of the gospel will.

'The law is founded on reason.' I always thought that law was founded on truth; but, as for reason, she sometimes calls evil good, and good evil; and puts darkness for light, and light for darkness, Isa. v. 20; and often contradicts truth. I am inclined

to think that your code of reason's laws, and yourself too, will be arraigned and tried by laws founded on truth; and by the God of truth, whose judgment is according to truth: which are things that few carnal reasoners care to hear of, and which, with great violence, they often reason against.

'There is an etiquette to be observed, which,' to such an one as myself, 'may seem absurd and ridiculous, and a violation of reason and truth; and yet perfectly consistent with both, and with justice too: for, from the vicissitudes of the times, and occurrences of new circumstances, fictions have for a long time been thought necessary, and allowed of in many cases.' This is a strange paragraph! but I understand it; and have no doubt that at times you find these things necessary in some occurrences of new circumstances; such as, when a villainous plaintiff aims at the reputation or property of his neighbour, and the injured defendant produces a number of stubborn facts to vindicate his right and expose the villain; then it becomes necessary to have recourse to etiquette and fiction, in order to puzzle, perplex, and involve the subject; to furnish an advocate with a thousand arguments, which serve to baffle a simple and honest witness; enrage the defendant, that he may hastily utter something to be caught at, which may serve to confound the jury, weary the judge, and multiply extra fees; which is the attorney's end and the client's wo.

The Saviour's similitudes and lawyers' fictions, in your opinion, are nearly synonymous. No; in my opinion, they widely differ. The Saviour's similitudes have, or have had, existence, but lawyers' fictions never had. The Lord's similitudes convey truth; lawyers' fictions convey lies. The Saviour's similitudes instructed the people; lawyers' fictions blind and confound them. Christ conveyed spiritual treasure to the heart; the lawyer draws treasure from the pocket. Christ fed the mind; the lawyer pinches the belly. Jesus saves the soul; the other often starves the body. Therefore the Lord's similitudes and

your fictions are no more synonymous than Pharaoh's fat and lean kine: one class fed on their common food, and looked well; the other devoured their fellow kine, but never looked the better. The one fed on grass, and thrived; the other on flesh, and starved.

But do, sir, explain the ambiguous phrase, etiquette; for you are a barbarian unto me. It is like speaking into the air: you may speak well, but I am not edified; and is it not better to speak one word to edification, than ten thousand in an unknown tongue?

You tell me 'there is an etiquette to be observed, which, to a man unversed therein,' as you presume me to be, 'may seem absurd and ridiculous, and a violation of reason and truth, and yet consistent with both.' If it be any thing that lies within the compass of natural reason and truth, why should I be so unversed therein? And, if consistent with the principles of reason and truth, why should it appear to me absurd, ridiculous, and a violation of both? Either I must be destitute of common sense and reason, or else etiquette must be something that goes beyond the common abilities given by the God of nature. I always thought that human learning sprung from the abilities which God gives to men; but according to you, it is otherwise; for there is something in etiquette consistent with reason and truth, that to a man of truth and reason may seem absurd, ridiculous, and a violation of both. You should let such words alone, unless you understand them. It exposes a man's ignorance to bring in a word that in its genuine original signification means simply a note or ticket on a bag, as Boyer's French Dictionary informs every schoolboy, and then to couple it with fictions. A ticket is one thing, a lie is another; however, the tickets in the lawyer's bag are generally contrived to take the notes out of his client's money-bag; and so far the allusion is more applicable than the writer himself seems to have been aware of.

However, though I understand not the mystery of fiction, it is plain from this piece of yours, that it has been exploded by some who have understood it: for you tell me that Fictions were formerly termed an abuse of law; but, from the vicissitudes of the times, and occurrences of new circumstances, they have been a long time thought necessary, and allowed.' Times are changed indeed, if abusive fictions are become necessary! Either the ancients had more conscience, and less duplicity; or else modern wisdom has made them fools, by consecrating their abuse to a necessary good. To be plain: the term fiction, in opposition to fact, means a lie; and fact, in opposition to fiction, means the truth. I am inclined to think this is a jargon peculiar to yourself, Gipsies have their own gibberish; and every juggler has his own dialect, which serves to puzzle the wise, confound the ignorant, and blind the judicious. A fiction may be necessary to muddle a man's brains, and plunder his purse; but there is no call for it to bring iniquity to light, condemn the wicked, or justify the righteous. Therefore the ancients in terming it an abuse of law, shew their honesty; its being now allowed of, shews the corruption of the present times; and they who use it are no better than time-servers: so that you may with justice adopt the motto of the poet; *Tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur in illis*; As the times change, so change we.

As a minister of the gospel, I have a right to use my liberty, and to drop a word against a dishonest lawyer or any other dishonest man, and leave conscience to apply it. And, however censorious you may think me to be, this is no new opinion. One who probably knew more of law, and lawyers too, than ever I did, or perhaps ever shall, has gone beyond me, and left his judgment of the profession in general in a very singular epitaph, which I heartily recommend to your perusal, leaving you to make your own application. The epitaph

alluded to may be seen in the burying-ground of St. Pancras, to the following effect:

This stone is inscribed to the memory of Mr. Thomas Abbot, of Swaffham, in the county of Norfolk, Attorney at Law; who died lamented by his friends, (enemies he had none) after a painful and tedious illness, which he bore with the patience, resignation, and fortitude of a dying man. He departed this life August 16, Anno Domini 1762. Aged 48.

Here lieth one, (believe it if you can;)
Who, though a Lawyer, was an honest Man.
The gates of Heaven to him will open wide,
But will be slant to all the Tribe beside.

I think it is a pity that you introduce the scriptures into your empty harangue. You might have shot your bolts at me, and let the word of God alone; for it is but a parable in the mouth of a fool at best. "*Jonathan, David's uncle, was a counsellor, a wise man, and a scribe.*" He might belong to David's privy-council, be a wise politician, and a secretary of state, and yet be destitute of that wisdom which makes a man wise to salvation. We read of God's taking the wise in their own craftiness, and carrying the counsel of the froward headlong. Graceless counsellors, however wise, instead of inheriting Solomon's better portion, are entitled to the worst: "*The wise [in Christ] shall inherit glory, but shame shall be the promotion of fools.*" Ahithophel was one of David's counsellors, 1 Chron. xxvii. 33; "*and the counsel which he counselled was as if a man had inquired at the oracle of God,*" 2 Sam. xvi. 23. He was David's equal, his guide, and his acquaintance; with whom he took sweet counsel, and walked to the house of God: yet all this did not entitle him to glory; nor was his end like that of the perfect and the upright, which is peace.

There were scribes who were writers and expounders of the law of God; such as Ezra, who stood in a pulpit, and read, gave the sense, and caused his audience to understand the reading, Neh. viii. 4, 8. These were spiritual lawyers, who handled the weighty matters of the law, and carried on a holy suit between God and conscience. And there are such still, who are spiritual scribes, instructed unto the kingdom of God; who bring forth things out of their treasures, new and old. These are scribes and wise men that the wisdom of God sends; who are to be persecuted by the wicked, that they may fill up the measure of their wickedness by doing it. These spiritual scribes handle the law of God lawfully, and the law of faith evangelically; and, by their life and doctrine, plunder the devil's kingdom, and are useful to souls, and of more value to Christ than many sparrows. But there are another sort of lawyers, who handle the laws pertaining to civil justice, and to personal right and property; such as Samuel's sons, who perverted justice and took bribes. These are men who sue at law, not to rescue souls from Satan, but to strip the bodies of men of their cloaks and coats; who judge for hire, and look for gain every one from his quarter; that prey upon the widow, and rob the fatherless; who cast truth down in the street, and forbid equity to shew her face; who turn judgment into wormwood, and the fruit of righteousness into hemlock. These sit at times in the gates of the city, watching for the prey as the spider in the web; who catch at every mite as she does at the fly; who fill their tables with spoil, and their bellies with plunder; who say, "Let us fill ourselves with strong drink; and to-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant." These are the lawyers at whom the Saviour's wo is levelled; who judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked; who abuse their godlike office, as devils did their dignity and habitation; who are compared to a bowing wall and a tottering fence: therefore it is no wonder if they die like men, and fall like one of Satan's princes.

If you make a second appearance, do not come forth like Sanballat, an enemy in the bush; nor like Mr. Latitat; he lies hid. Shooting in secret may become you as a lawyer, but not as a hearer at the Lock. I am for plain dealing, but no friend to a cunning hunter. Mr. Latitat is not hid: I know where he lives, and his friend too; but wish no acquaintance with either.

The Bond Child Brought to the Test; and His Use of the Letter Considered.

"Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" II Cor. 3:6

William Huntington (1745-1813)

To Mr. Wake, Minister Of The Letter, At Smarden, In Kent.

SIR,

THE great apostle of the Gentiles tells us to beware of dogs, evil workers; and of the concision, or cutters, who, like poor Peter, take a carnal weapon, instead of a spiritual one, and cut at the high-priest's servant's ear, instead of the traitor's heart. You have been sent for, by Mr. Stonehouse, to Cranbrook, I find, the place of my nativity; and you have attempted, by a few of your own chimeras palmed upon the holy law of God, to ridicule and bring into contempt, what I believe to be the truths of the everlasting gospel. Mr.

Stonehouse, it seems, was too much taken up in business; he wanted time: and, perhaps, he wants truth, and the power and experience of it, as much as time. Be that as it may, You would go home, as you expressed yourself, and rummage up all your lumber for the expedition, though you was advised to the contrary. Surely, if you had been armed and equipped from heaven, you would have been fit for the field, without riding so many miles to plunder the arguments of the dead.

You report that you formerly attended Mr. C. to hear depths of doctrine; Mr. R. to have your graces stirred up; and Mr. Huntington, to hear oddities: and I believe they are oddities, and ever will remain so, to novices: "*for the preaching of the cross of Christ, is to them that perish, foolishness.*" But did not all these depths, stirrings, and oddities, furnish you for the attack? Have you no truth, nor arguments, but what lay on the shelves of your study? If the Spirit and word of God had dwelt in you, and if God had sent you on this warfare, he would have furnished you both with armour and weapons. A good soldier of Jesus Christ is never without his armour, nor his artillery; nor does he go a warfare at his own expense. Fetching lumber from Smarden, plainly proves that God had no hand in the expedition: besides, arguments borrowed from authors by graceless men are never forcible, for want of a divine edge. If God be the sword of a man's excellency, the excellency and power of God will attend the man. Without this, however fine the reasonings, however nice the distinctions, however eloquent the language, the man can do no more than carnalise, legalize, or philosophize, the dispensation of the Spirit; and the soul-beggar)' of the man, whether he preach or write, will discover itself, in all he says or writes, to one who lives and walks in the Spirit of God. Many of our authors are not aware of this; they write and speak to display their abilities, and exalt themselves in the eyes of others; and, when they have done all, it can only be called the speech of them that are puffed up, for there is no power; and, in truth,

they only expose their pride and ignorance, and the starving condition of their souls; and convince the spiritually-minded, that not a reformation in life, improvement in language, or even ministerial, which are called spiritual gifts, make a man a spiritual man. Nothing but a spiritual birth can do this: "*that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*" Such men, though they may be ranked, as they often are by ignorant professors and weak believers, with gospel ministers, yet neither their rank nor their gifts secure heaven to them, nor their souls from falling headlong into hell. Judas, says Peter, "*was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry,*" and it was the worst part, the gift, not the grace, that is so necessary for the discharge of the office that he had taken: therefore from this part of the ministry Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. This coming and going from the place of the holy will be eternally forgotten in the heavenly Jerusalem, Eccles. viii. 10, though they have so done in Mount Zion.

Nor did you appear in well-set hair at Cranbrook, but in baldness: the shame of your nakedness was not hid; nor did your melody rise from the certain sound of the gospel-trumpet; but, like that of a drum, from the emptiness of the preacher.

Did God ever give you a message against me? Had you either your message or impulse from him? Did you once ask him either for matter or manner in this undertaking? Did your face shine or heart flow with grace in that work of naught? Did the fair beauty of the Lord appear in the meeting? Were the outgoings of God seen in it? or, did he once stir up his strength, and come among you? Were the ungodly alarmed, the unruly warned, the gainsayers confuted, the hypocrites exposed, and the bowels of the saints refreshed? Did you go home with the testimony and approbation of God in your heart? Had you nearness of access to him in prayer at your return? or did either scripture or conscience say, "Well done, good and faithful servant?" Do not you think that the freewill

Baptists, the hypocritical Arminians, and some that are called members of that place, beside the openly profane, stood in more need of the sharpness that you used among them, than I did? Is there one mote in my eye that the beam in your own will allow you to pull out? If there is, get about it.

Wo to such wanton trifling! Remember the fall of him that you are gone to succeed. I heard him, about twelve years ago, at Kingston upon Thames; and said, as soon as he had finished his discourse, that he had run before he was sent: and I said the same of one since, who was ordained at Hammersmith, who confirmed it soon after; and the same of two since, whom God discovered in the same way, to let me know that my judgment of those men was from him. "*Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.*" I hope those who are going, according to report, to ordain you, will look about them; and not lay hands, suddenly on any man; nor countenance and recommend a man to the work of the ministry, upon a reason of his hope, and a confession of his faith, in general terms; without an account of his heart-felt experience of the truth; a confession of the faith delivered to him, and impressed on his soul, by God himself; and a testimony in the ordainers' consciences from God, and from men of experience, touching the testimony of God to the word of his grace by him; besides the witness of some converts, or living seals of his mission and commission from God.

Sodomites, adulterers, and fornicators, have been palmed upon the church of God heretofore, instead of ministers of the Spirit. If he that bids an erroneous man, who brings not the doctrine of Christ, God speed, is a partaker of his evil deeds; what must they be partakers of, who, upon a partial examination, a written schoolboy's confession, and perhaps an inexperienced people's call, or an attachment to a party, lay on hands, countenance and send forth a wolf in sheep's clothing, instead of an under-shepherd? It is well if this work

does not one day recoil, with a double discharge both of grief and guilt, upon the consciences of many who in our day are called Presbyters. When God makes manifest the counsels of the heart, it will appear that this is no small part of the mystery of spiritual wickedness, in the propagation of errors, that will be unfolded in the great day, to the confusion of such deceitful workers and hypocrites, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation. Which pre-ordination of God is no excuse for a partial ordination by men.

I have not a single doubt of my effectual call, both to salvation and to the ministry of the everlasting gospel, and that by Jesus Christ himself: and I believe I may say that God has set his seal a thousand times to the ministry that I have received, by working a change in sinners' hearts, and ministering the Spirit unto them. But, who sent you, I know not. Where is your genealogy? Where are the credentials that the Spirit of the living God has written on the fleshly tables of your heart? Produce the twofold witness, that of the Spirit, and of conscience, and the mystery of faith held therein. Let us have some account of the signing and sealing you to the day of redemption, that we may know what image and superscription you bear. If you are destitute of these things, you run before you were sent; and, if acquainted with them, even but in theory, you sin against light and knowledge, by walking in craftiness, and handling the word of God deceitfully.

"The law is good, if a man use it lawfully." I know it is: but, what could you bring from that text against a man who loves the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth? What is there in that passage against one in covenant with God, under the dominion of grace, and that serves God in the newness of the Spirit? "Is the law against the promise of God? God forbid!" *"The law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient,"* 1 Tim. i. 9. *"Whatsoever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law."* If the law is not made

for a righteous man, how could you apply it to me, whom God has justified? and if what the law saith, it saith to them that are under it, how could you level its voice against them that are under grace? The law speaks to such as you, who seem to be under it; and to them who are without the law of faith, and disobedient to the gospel, called lawless and disobedient. But *"they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts;"* *"and against such there is no law."* What, then, could you make the law, in your text, say against me?

The law is handled lawfully when it is set forth as a transcript of the holiness, truth, justice, and immutability, of God.

When it is set forth in the hand of Justice, accompanied with God's glittering sword, in all its spiritual meaning, and with all its unbounded demands, and against every sinner that is out of Christ Jesus, whether professor or profane.

When it is preached as a revelation of the righteous judgments of God, a revelation of his just wrath and holy indignation against all sin, and sinners who are under the law, for they are under the curse; and whatsoever things the law saith, it saith to them.

It is handled lawfully when its spiritual meaning is enforced, as reaching to the thoughts, words, acts, and workings of the very souls of men; working death in them by itself, which is good.

It is handled lawfully when the eternity of it is insisted on; so that devils and damned souls shall have a gaol delivery when God shall cease to exist, when his eternal sentence shall be recalled, and an everlasting law be repealed; but not till then.

It is lawfully handled when it is set forth as added because of transgression; that sin by the law might appear sin, and

become exceeding sinful; that the offence might abound, being viewed in that perfect glass; that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world be brought in guilty before God.

It is handled lawfully when it is set forth as magnified and made honourable by the Saviour; who gave a perfect obedience to every precept of it in his life; and was obedient to his Father in submitting to the sentence of it in death, even the death of the cross.

When it is set forth in the heart of Christ, who is our Mercy-seat; and kept there, as the two tables of it were in the ark of old, never more to arrest them who put their trust under the shadow of Christ Jesus, who is the end of the law for righteousness to all that believe.

Again, It is lawfully handled when it is proved that the end of the commandment is charity; that love is the fulfilling of the law; and that all those who have laid hold on eternal life, in whose heart the love of God is shed abroad, and to whose faith the righteousness of Christ is imputed, that *"the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in them, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."*

"If a man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God," saith the Spirit; and I will leave you to judge whether the law be not lawfully handled in this letter, and whether I have not spoken in it agreeably to the oracles of God: and if, upon examination, you find I have, then in future use all the lumber that you may rummage up, against the world, the flesh, and the devil; and leave me and my oddities to stand or fall to my own Master. There are plenty of sinners at Cranbrook to level your discourses at, without spouting or bending your tongue, for lies, at me; especially when you knew I was not present to answer for myself. If you will preach a discourse, and allow me to be present, I shall have no objection to come down; and, if I cannot put you to shame, you shall put me to it. I have

done nothing against the truth, nor have I corrupted the word. Let us see if you can say the same.

Your text is,

"*The law is good if a man use it lawfully.*" First, You endeavoured to prove, Who they were that used it lawfully. 'The unbeliever could not.' Ergo, it must be the believer.'

'The believer having no more to do with the law than a woman with a dead husband, is black 'Antinomianism.'

'A non-entity may be a rule as soon as love.'

'Faith is a hand, an eye, a leg; Ergo, no rule.'

'The law is perfect; therefore perpetual and 'everlasting.'

'Angels are under it.'

Is this speaking as the oracles of God? Let us try it by "*the law and the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.*"

'The unbeliever cannot use the law lawfully.' Ergo, it must be the believer.'

This, sir, was as crafty a beginning as you could make. It was a cunning step to put the unbeliever quite out of the question; and then to introduce the believer, as the only person that could make a lawful use of the law, for this had the face of truth, and carried a very fair show with it; and, doubtless, this was as wise a course as you could steer to give your text a deceitful handling, in order to blacken your antagonist, and stumble the weak. But, though the context did not answer your end, it will answer mine, and therefore I shall produce it; and, without applying the words to unbelievers without restriction, I shall let them speak to suspected teachers, for to

them they are directed, and especially to unbelieving, or faithless preachers, who run before they are sent.

"Timothy, as I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine; neither give heed to fables, and endless genealogies, which minister questions rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do. Now the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned; from which some having swerved, [or not aimed at] have turned aside to vain jangling; desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor whereof they affirm. But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully. Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient," 1 Tim. ch. i.

If you had handled this context faithfully, and levelled its force against ministers of the letter, and spoken from your text, as the oracles of God, against such men, it would have established my doctrine, and saved you the trouble of making application; for every new-born babe in the audience might have replied, Thou art the man. But applying it to private believers instead of public preachers; and using it as their only rule of life, instead of using it as a charge to vain janglers, who have swerved from the faith, was the only method you could adopt in order to expose your antagonist to contempt; and it is a method that shall one day or other expose you to it.

"The end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned." He who is blessed with this mystery, holds it fast, enjoys it, and preaches it; is the real saint, and true servant of Christ; and such a servant is to charge suspected persons, that they preach no other doctrine; and they who swerve, or aim not at this, are those that turn aside to vain jangling; novices, who desire to be teachers of

the law, understanding neither what they say nor whereof they affirm.

"The Law is good if a man use it lawfully." Let us see the lawful use that you have made of it. 'The unbeliever,' you say, 'cannot use it lawfully.' True: but, if you had made a lawful use of it, you should have levelled all its contents at his head, for to him it belongs; "*Knowing,*" says Paul, "*that the law is made for the lawless and disobedient.*" But you levelled all the weighty matters that you brought from it at me, who am a believer; for I can shew you my faith by my works, and the law is not made for a righteous man. If the unbeliever cannot make a lawful use of it, ergo, are you not that unbeliever, and, through ignorance, have handled it unlawfully? And, if so, ergo, Who set such a novice at it? But, if malice led you thus to pervert the text knowingly, your sin is the greater; and such walking in craftiness will make sad work for conscience another day. If to do as we would be done by, be the law and the prophets; perverting the Scriptures, to injure the just in the work of the Lord, can be no branch of that law. Ergo, Who, then, is the Antinomian? I, who have levelled the law's force at the sinner; or you, who have used it to slander the righteous?

'The believer having no more to do with the law than a woman with a dead husband, is black 'Antinomianism.' If it be, I think my own experience and the Bible furnished me with it.

"Know you not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then, if while her husband liveth she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but, if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, ye also are become

dead to the law by the body of Christ [ye were crucified with him, and died in him,] that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."

The apostle here compares the elect, before called, to a woman bound by the law to a husband; which is binding, and cannot be dissolved as long as either of the parties live. Secondly, That, if her husband be dead, she is free from that law, and may be married to another, man: so the elect sinner, who reckoned himself alive without the law in a state of nature, finds that, when the commandment comes, sin revives, and he dies. And, as soon as he is killed by the letter, or finds the law to be ordained unto death, Rom. vii. 10, he is become dead to the law; and the law is a killing letter, or death, unto him, for it cannot give life. He may then be married to Christ; not that he may live a loose, licentious life, for none .but the devil himself could ever father such things upon a spiritual union with the Lord Jesus Christ, but that we should bring forth fruit unto God; which the killing power of the law could not enable us to do, because it could not give life: "*For, when we were in the flesh, the motions of sin, which were by the law, did work in our members, to bring forth fruit unto death.*" The apostle tells us that we are dead to the law, loosed from the law, and delivered from it, and that by the body of Christ; for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus makes us free from the law of sin and death.

If all this be true, that the believer is dead to the law, as a widow is to the charms of a dead husband; that the law can give him no more life than a dead husband's corpse can to a surviving widow; that, from this death, the widow is free from the law of her husband, as the believer is from the law of Moses; and that she may be married to another man, as the believer may to Christ; and bear fruit to the second husband, as the believer does to God; and be under the law of wedlock

to the second husband, as the believer is under the law of eternal wedlock to Christ, who has made him free from the law of sin and death by the law of the Spirit of life, and brought him under grace, having espoused him to him for ever in righteousness, in faithfulness, in lovingkindness, and in great mercy, that he may know his Lord and Husband; I say, such souls can have no husband but Christ, nor be under any law but to him: and he gives us a sweet account of his easy yoke in various terms, such as his word, his law, his sayings, his commandments, &c. which all amount to one and the same thing, as we shall shew presently.

God's laws, which are his new covenant, are written in the believer's heart by the Spirit of the living God, which makes him a living epistle, not a dead formalist. It is a fountain of life, not a killing letter; and it makes him fruitful to God, not barren in the knowledge of him. The law, magnified and made honourable, is in the heart of Christ; and it is the law of the Spirit of life in him that makes the saint free; and he is under that law to Christ, whose word is life. *"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting."* *"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me."* *"If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him."* *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, if a man keep my saying, he shall never see death."* *"He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings,"* John xiv. 24. This is the law of the Spirit of life, that the believer is under.

If ever my own lust should entice me to a loose and licentious way of living, the right horse shall wear the saddle: the devil and William Huntington shall bear the scandal; for I will never palm it upon this doctrine, which has brought me from the

drudgery of devils and the pains of hell, and has kept my soul in hope of heaven for now these twenty-five years: and, for my own part, I wish every one that calls me an Antinomian had got the same hope. I think the devil would have more cause to complain than he has now; and that less licentiousness, and more good works, would appear, than do at present, except in the talking part; for a fool is known by a multitude of words. "*In all labour there is profit; but the talk of the lip tendeth only to penury.*"

'A non-entity may be a rule as soon as love.' Is this true, sir? Is a non-entity, a thing that never had existence, as good a rule as love, which is the fulfilling of the law? Divine love, impressed on the soul by the Spirit, is more valuable than the word, love, in the letter, or on tables of stone. Love in the heart to God and our neighbour is the grand hinge of all the law and the prophets, and a fulfilling of them, for it is both the old and the new commandment. But is it not strange that the word, love, in the letter should be the believer's only rule of life, and the Spirit of love in the heart be nothing but a non-entity? And is it not more strange, that he who holds the killing letter a rule of life, should be an evangelist; and he who holds that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in those who walk in the Spirit, should be a black Antinomian? You will no more live by your letter rule, than you would by the word, bread, in the midst of famine. It is the substance, not the shadow; the thing, not the name; the power, not the word, of him that is puffed up; the life, not the letter; God's own work in the heart, not the talk of the lip, that God looks at; and that must save you, if ever you are saved. The will of God in the gospel is a perfect rule. This mystery of his will, which is the mystery of faith, when revealed to the heart, and held in a pure conscience, is the law of faith on the believer's mind and heart. Such a man is a spiritual man, and has a spiritual rule; is a new creature, and walks in newness of life; is guided by the Spirit of God, and serves in the newness of the Spirit, not

in the oldness of the letter. *"In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature: and as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God,"* Gal. vi. 15.

Query. If the law of Moses, or ten commandments, be the believer's only rule of life, should not a believer be said to walk, to live, and to work, by that rule? Does one text in the Book of God call the Pentateuch the believer's only rule? Or is there one text in that book which says that the believer is to walk, live, or work, by that rule? 'Does not the Scripture say that he walks by faith, and lives by faith, and works by faith? On which account his obedience is called the obedience of faith, his life the life of faith, and his works the works of faith. And the law of faith must be a perfect rule, if whatsoever be not of faith is sin.

Query 2. *"They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments of the Lord blameless,"* Luke i. 6. If they were both righteous, they were justified by faith, for *"he that believeth not is condemned already, and the wrath of God abides upon him."* And if they walked in God's commandments blameless, the commandments was the way they walked in, and faith was the rule, by which they walked in that way.

"I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart." Unbelief and slavish fear contract the heart; faith, that worketh by love, enlarges it; love casteth out fear. Then he that walks in love, which you call a non-entity, walks the way of God's commandments, though he be called a black Antinomian, for love is the' fulfilling of the law; and he that lives and walks by faith, as his rule, is a righteous man, and walks in, though not by, God's commandments, blameless, though he be never so much blamed.

I will keep my readers in suspense, and my opponents at bay, no longer; but, for the comfort and establishment of the former, and the confusion of the latter, I will put a few Queries: for hitherto some have cried one thing, and some another; the assemblies have been confused, and the greater part have not known 'wherefore they came together, nor what they were come to hear. Paul says, we are "*not without law to God, but under the law to Christ.*" Here the believer has a law to God, and is under a law to Christ. Query, What law is this that a believer has, and holds, toward God? Is it the law of Moses, which worketh wrath? Is it the ten commandments, engraven on stone, that minister death? Is it the covenant of works, by which no flesh living can be justified? Is it the killing letter, that stops the mouth, and brings the world in guilty before God? If you reply, yes, then, I say, we are just where we were; our faith is vain, we are yet in our sins, and Christ profits us nothing. And if you say, no, the believer is not without law to God, for he has his law in his heart, and holds a new covenant toward God; as it is written, "*The days come that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers when I took them out of the land of Egypt which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my law in their inward part, and write it upon their heart; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall all know me, from the least to the greatest, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more,*" Jer. xxxi. 31-34. I say, if you allow this to be the law that the believer has toward God, you must say, as Paul does, we are delivered from Moses' law, that we may serve in the newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. Yea, you must allow that the believer is not under the law, but under grace; for this law is the law of faith, and this covenant is the covenant of grace: and if you allow this to be the law

that a believer hath toward God (who is not without law to him), then what becomes of your only rule of life? yea, and you are as black an Antinomian as I. But if you reply, It is not this new covenant, it is not this law of faith in the heart, that the believer has and holds toward God, but the old covenant, or the killing letter, then I ask, What is that law that we are redeemed from, and delivered from, and are not under? What is that law that the child of grace is not under? My opponents must either make Christ's redeeming us from under the law, his delivering us from the law, and his easy yoke of grace, nothing, in order to hold their only rule; or else confess themselves Moses' disciples altogether. They must either give up their rule, agree with Paul, and become rank Antinomians; or else drop their present title, and assume that of ministers of the letter, and hold their rule by virtue of that office. By the other they cannot; grace must be no more grace, or work must be no more work: they must stick to the law, and give up the Saviour's yoke; or stand fast in Christ, and give up the yoke of bondage.

"We are under the law to Christ," I Cor. ix. 21. Query, What law is this that the believer is under to Christ? Is it your only rule of life? If so, what is that law, as was before observed, that Christ delivered us, and saved us, from? And if you say, It is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, that the believer is under, which makes him free from the law of sin and death, Rom. viii. 2; then you agree with Paul, and submit to what all my opposers call rank Antinomianism: and where, then, is all that reproach to fall that has been heaped upon my head?

God has writ his law on the saint's heart, and put it in his mind; and this is the law of faith: therefore he is not without law to God. The law of the Spirit of life, in Christ, makes him free from the law of sin and death, and he is under this law to Christ. Bring any other yoke, or rule of life, from God's book, if you can. I defy every opponent I have to do it, or to bring one

text to prove it. This law of the Spirit of life in Christ goes by various names: it is the old commandment which is the word, and that is the word of life. It is called Christ's sayings, which is life: "*If a man keep my saying he shall never see death.*" It is called the law of the wise, which is the fountain of life; the law of liberty, that makes us free from the law of death. It is called the law of truth, that was with Levi; the law of kindness, that comes from love, that we may not die, but live. It is called the law of faith: "*The just shall live by faith.*" It is called Christ's Father's commandment: "*He gave me commandment what I should say, and what I should speak; and I know that his commandment is life everlasting.*" Here is the Father's commandment, and here is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ. This is the law written in the mind, and put in the fleshly tables of a broken heart, where it appears a fountain of life springing up into life everlasting; while your only rule, engraven on tables of stone, ministers nothing but death.

Fighting against these things is only beating the air; and blowing the old trumpet is giving an uncertain sound, for the watchman knows not what he says, nor whereof he affirms; and who can prepare for the battle, in hope of gaining the victory, when it is not the fight of faith that they are called to engage in?

'Faith is an eye, a hand, a leg; Ergo, no rule.' Answer. The law of faith includes, and affords, every thing that the law of Moses requires. And it is a perfect rule; for whatsoever the law of faith doth not point out, and whatsoever is not done in the faith of the gospel, is sin. If it be no rule of obedience, how can the saint's obedience be called the obedience of faith? And how can men be punished with everlasting destruction for not obeying it; and be condemned as hypocrites and unbelievers, if it be not a rule of obedience? It appears to me, that it is both a rule of life and a rule of judgment. The Scripture says, we are to walk by faith, and live by faith. How

can a man walk by it, and live by it, if it is no rule? The law of faith is a perfect rule, and the grace of faith directs the steps of the saints to walk by it. Nor is the law of Moses, or ten commandments, ever called the believer's only rule of life or walk; nor is the believer ever said to walk by the law of Moses, or by the ten commandments. A believer is said to walk by faith; and a just man to walk in the commandments, not by them; and to nm the way of them: and without faith there is no walking in these commandments; and, without love to enlarge the heart, there is no running the way of them; and both faith and love belong to the perfect rule that I contend for:

'The law is perfect, and eternal.'

Both these are true: and, had you seen the perfection of it, and felt its force, you would have called it, as others have done, a yoke that neither Saint nor sinner is able to bear; and would have been glad to have found it magnified by, and secured in the heart of, a Mediator, rather than contend and desire to have your neck brought under it.

'Angels are under it.'

Is this speaking as the oracles of God? The law was delivered by God himself to Adam, and by Moses it was delivered to Israel; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a Mediator. But I never read that it was delivered to angels; nor were they ever circumcised to become debtors to fulfil it; nor is there one inspired penman in the Bible that ever applied it to them. God's voice by them is to the sons of men; nor did I ever hear of any modern divine applying it to them, till Sir Ham Coltish and Mr. Wake appeared in orders. If angels are under any law, I think they are under the perfect law of liberty, or what Solomon calls the law of kindness. It is their liberty that makes their service perfect freedom; and it is the law of lovingkindness that makes them fly so swift as they do, and cover their faces and their feet, when they have done, in token of no boasting of merit: the glory is given to the Object they

cry to; Holy holy, holy; Holy Father, Holy Son, and Holy Ghost. This law of liberty and love none but the real saint knows, and is most certainly the law of angels; and will be enjoyed in perfection by glorified saints when they come to be equal to the angels of God, being the children of the resurrection.

In these matters are manifested the children of the bond woman and the children of the free; the ministers of the letter, and the ministers of the Spirit. The minister that hath this new covenant made with him, and this law of faith written on his heart; who is made free from the law of sin and death by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus; is a minister of God's Spirit, not of the letter. He is an ambassador of Christ, and an ambassador of peace. He is an adopted son of God, and the Spirit of his heavenly Father speaketh in him. He is, according to the troubled sinner's wish, in God's stead. He takes forth the vile from the precious, and is as God's mouth. He has the Spirit and word of God, the keys of the kingdom of heaven. What his ministry binds upon earth, in heaven is bound; and what such a ministry looses on earth, in heaven is loosed. Christ is with such always, even to the end of the world. The gospel is the ministration of the Spirit to the end of time; and Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. As Christ was, so are such ministers in the world. He that receives them, receives Christ; for he dwells in their hearts by faith, and is in them the hope of glory; and they who despise them, despise Christ that sent them; and his Father, who sent him. They have power to shut heaven, that it rain not during their prophecy: for there can be no benediction from heaven but by the ministry of the Spirit. They have power to turn waters to blood as often as they will. Sinners, compared to water, must die in their sins, and in their blood, if they do despite to the Spirit of grace, or quench the Spirit in the Lord's ambassadors. And this power is not of them; they have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency and the power may appear to be of God, and not of them. Such men come

not with excellency of speech, or men's wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit, and with power: not with the words that man teacheth, but with such as the Holy Ghost teacheth; not comparing themselves with themselves, but comparing spiritual things with spiritual; appealing to every man's conscience in the sight of God; not knowing the speech of them that are puffed up, but the power; declaring that the kingdom of heaven standeth not in word, but in power; and that a saint's faith stands not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. And who will make me a liar in this, and prove my speech to be nothing worth?

It is the blessed Spirit of God that testifies of Christ to us, and glorifies him in us; and it is in spirit and in truth that he will be honoured in us, and worshipped by us. Nor do I believe that God pays any regard to any one's vindicating his honour or his truth, but his own spiritual children; not allowing a hypocrite to take his covenant in his mouth, or even to declare his statutes; nor to offer a sacrifice without committing abomination.

When I first came to London, I heard strange things held forth for doctrines: but I knew that I was young, and durst not shew mine opinion; for I thought that days should speak, and that the multitude of years should teach wisdom. But I find, now, that old men are not always wise, nor do the aged understand judgment. Man must fetch his knowledge from afar, and ascribe righteousness to his Maker, if he does any good. It is the breath of God that gives a man life, and the inspiration of the Almighty that gives him understanding. Without this, a man reasons with unprofitable talk; and with words, or speeches, wherewith he can do no good. His conversation and arguments are blunt; and, if he cannot whet the edge with prayer, he must put forth more strength, Eccles. x. 10. But "*by strength shall no man prevail.*" When the poor and needy, in spirit, speak right, how forcible are right words! But

conversation, or argument, from a barren heart and a crafty head, are, like the white of an egg, unsavoury, and without a conclusion; and what doth their arguings prove, disprove, or reprove?

An unconverted man is no minister of the gospel; an uninspired man is no minister of the Spirit. An unbeliever cannot preach the faith of God's elect; he is not endued with power from on high; nor is there either excellency or power with him. Casting out devils is not conversion; the devil must be cast out of the heart, and Christ formed in it, before a man can be converted to the faith of Jesus. Such are no preachers of the kingdom of God, for that is not in word. Such can say no more than Judas could, that they have taken part of the ministry, the office of a minister, not the spirit of the ministry; and such are sure to make shipwreck of their system of faith, for a prating fool shall fall, and another shall take his office. The best titles that the word of God gives to uninspired men, are wells without water, boasters of a false gift, clouds without rain, virgins without oil, instruments without life, trumpeters without any certain sound, beaters of the air, runners at uncertainty, cutters, wolves, creepers into houses, haters of those that are good, vain janglers, ministers of the letter, deceitful workers, and false apostles. These are the best titles that men can claim from Scripture, who are sensual, destitute of the Spirit, and who have not the doctrine of Christ, for such have not God. And it is clear that the children of God and the children of the devil divide the whole world: the bond woman's bastards, and the free woman's sons; the ministers of the letter, and those of the Spirit; impostors of Satan, and ambassadors of Christ; goats and sheep; serpents and doves; children of the flesh, and children of promise; reprobates and chosen vessels; divide the human race. Nor is it in the power of either devils or hypocrites to break down this middle wall of partition, so as to lay the garden of Eden and the dreary

desert together. The church will ever remain to be God's husbandry, God's family, and God's building.

I shall now take notice of a few learned and weighty sentences discharged against this doctrine, at different times; with a few queries on them.

'The daring Antinomian, who denies the law ' to be a rule of life, does despite to the Spirit of 'grace.' Query; How can a man who levels the force of the whole law at ministers of the letter and bond children, to whom the law speaks; and enforces, and insists upon, a spiritual birth, spiritual worship, a spiritual life and walk, a deliverance from dead works and lip-service, and a service of freedom in the newness of the Spirit; and who declares that, without holiness in heart and life by the Spirit of Christ, a man is no more than a hypocrite, do despite to the spirit of grace? I think, if such a man does despite to any, it must be to a dead formalist, and his dead works performed in the oldness of the letter.

'Let no man exalt Jesus at the expense of Moses.' Query; Is there any other way of establishing the honour of Moses as a faithful servant, or his law as a revelation of wrath, than by the righteousness of faith, which was witnessed both by the law and the prophets? If we would imitate Moses in faithfulness, must we not ascribe greatness to our God, seeing he is the Rock, and his work is perfect; and there is none like the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heavens in our help, and in his excellency on the sky? And say to all those who cleave to the old veil, as Moses did, that they are blind, and destitute of faith; a nation void of counsel; children in whom is no faith? "*I have led you forty years in this wilderness; and God has not given you eyes to see, nor ears to hear, nor hearts to understand, to this day.*" Does ascribing the whole of our salvation to the grace of God dishonour Moses, who has cursed, and still accuses every soul that breaks his law, and

yet cleaves to it for life? Or is there any other way of exalting Moses, or ourselves, as God's servants, but by bowing down the mean man, humbling the haughty, and exalting the Lord of Hosts alone, seeing he only is to be exalted in gospel days? *"They that honour me, will I honour; but those that despise me shall be lightly esteemed."*

'The only rule of life is included in the law.' Query; Can you point the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, repentance toward God, justification by imputation, regeneration by the Spirit, worshipping the Trinity in spirit and in truth, self-denial, a daily cross, walking in newness of life, serving in the newness of the Spirit, and going to God by a new and living way which he hath consecrated through the vail of Christ's flesh: I say, can these things be made plain from the ten commandments? Does God promise to give grace and glory in or by that dispensation? Or is the shining path of the just discovered by blackness and darkness; or by looking with open face, and beholding', as in a glass, the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ?

'I would as soon let the Pope get into my pulpit, as a man that says the law is not a rule of 'life.' Query; Would you not, then, exclude the Saviour, and all his apostles, from your pulpit; and all the ministers of the Spirit who speak as the oracles of God? Do any of these send the believer to the law of Moses for their only rule to live, to walk, and to work by? Would not this doctrine have kept them halting between two opinions? Can the believer's thoughts be established by this? Has not God divided the world into two classes, children of the flesh, and children of the promise? Are not the children of the flesh under the law, and those of the promise under grace? If the law speaks only to those who are under the law, does not the gospel speak to the heirs of promise who are under grace? If the law is a rule of life to the bond child, This do, and thou shalt live; is not the law of faith the believer's rule, seeing he

that believes has life, and shall never die; and as many as walk according to this rule, mercy on them, and peace, and upon the Israel of God? Is there any thing that the law requires which the promise does not give? Is there any thing by God's commanding will required, that his will of promise, called the good pleasure of his will, does not work in us? Does God's willingness to shew his wrath on the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, as revealed in thick darkness, bring any better tidings to sinners' ears than the good-will of him that dwelt in the bush; and who has since proclaimed from heaven, by his angels, glory to himself in the highest, on earth peace, and good-will towards men in the law of faith? The law of faith respects all, implies all, includes all, and fulfils all. There is nothing revealed in the law that faith is not obedient to; there is nothing required in the law that the law of faith doth not furnish the believer with. God's will of commandments reveals him *"willing to shew his wrath, and make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath,"* Rom. ix. 22. *"But this is the will of him that sent me,"* says the Saviour, *"that whosoever seeth the Son, and believeth on him, might not perish, but have everlasting life,"* for it is not the will of our Father, which is in heaven, that one of these little ones, in faith, should perish. Here is God's will, and my rule; and it may truly be called the believer's only rule of life, for life everlasting accompanies this rule, and all who walk according to it.

"We have got some in our day who say the 'law is not a rule of life. For my part, I not how such men read their Bibles: I read that, without holiness, no man shall see the Lord.' Query; But does holiness come by the law? Are we sanctified thereby? Those who stick to the law are clew in their own eyes; but are they washed from their filthiness? They justify themselves; but, are they just before God? Can they be holy without being sanctified by the Holy Ghost? "And he that ministereth the Spirit, doth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of

faith?" Is not the Holy Ghost the Spirit of promise? Does he go forth from Mount Sinai, or Mount Zion? Does he come by the law, or by the gospel? Are any cleansed but by the Saviour's blood? Is there any heart purified but by faith? Is it not by the exceeding great and precious promises that we are made partakers of the divine nature? Are not the sons of God made partakers of the Spirit of Adoption? Does not God chasten such for their profit, that they may be partakers of his holiness? And does not this all come from the ministration of the Spirit, which exceeds in glory? *"For the ministration of death had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth; for if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious."*

These are some of the weighty sentences which have at different times been thrown out against me, and the doctrine that God himself hath taught me. And it is evident they have confuted nothing, cleared nothing; nor hath any thing been established by this buffoonery, nor ever will; for Truth hath declared, that those who turn aside to vain jangling, desiring to be teachers of the law, know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm; and this chain of quotations is a sufficient proof of it. I shall now leave the priest, and speak to the people; or, drop a word to the reader.

Courteous and Christian Reader,

I LITTLE thought that, for dropping a single sentence from the pulpit, I should have been loaded with so much reproach, and have been led forth into so long a controversy; but we read of some who make a man an offender for a word, even when the poor and needy speaketh right. But, blessed be God, all that has been written or said has never in the least brought my mind over to long for Padan-aram, the land of Egypt, or for a second journey through the Wilderness of Sin. My face is still

toward Mount Gilead; the land of Canaan; and Mount Zion, so beautiful for situation, hence called the joy of the whole earth: for I am persuaded that these are still in my road; knowing that those who are saved shall view the house of Isaac, see the land that is very far off, and inquire the way to Zion' with their faces thitherward.

I have as yet seen nothing in the writings, nor heard any thing from the pulpit, nor seen any thing in the life of my opponents, that has in the least influenced my mind to incline toward the yoke of bondage, but quite the reverse; and I bless God that he has not in the least permitted my soul to wander from the truth, in order to follow them in stumbling upon the dark mountains; but, contrariwise, all that they have said has drove me closer to Christ, and farther and farther into the mystery of faith. And I do in reality believe, that this controversy has been intended, under God, to make me search the covenant of grace more closely, and to bring forth those truths which are so contrary to flesh and blood, and so despicable in the eyes of the unconverted. And I must confess that I am greatly indebted to my numerous opposers for their close pursuit of me; for, had they let me alone, I never had, in this my pilgrimage, seen the beauty of the everlasting covenant, as I now see it; nor the rich displays of grace, as they now appear, especially in the muddy glass of my opponents' ignorance.

The law of God, so often mentioned in holy writ, as written on the hearts of his chosen people, is the covenant of grace, the mystery of faith, the new covenant, or the everlasting gospel, which is so little understood in this our day; and all the happy partakers thereof are under the grace of God, which shall reign, through righteousness, to eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.

There are five things, reader, which will make thee and me fruitful, and acceptable, even when it shall be made manifest

that the kingdom of God is not in word; and these are, an union with the true and living Vine; a confidence in the blood and righteousness of the Saviour; the dominion of grace reigning through righteousness; the promise of God that we shall bring forth fruit in old age; and the certainty of the Holy Ghost abiding with us for ever,

Also, take no heed, reader, unto all the words that are spoken, for a vain jangler utters diverse vanities: but search the Scriptures for thyself; and they will inform thee concerning the two covenants, that of grace, and that of works; God's will of commandments, and his will of promise. God's will is man's rule: the former is a rule for the servant, and the slave; the latter is a rule for the son, and the heir. The servant must work and walk by the former, in order to get his wages, which is reckoned of debt; for it is the will of God that he should do those things, if he will enter into life. The latter is God's good will to the son; and the penitent son that obeyed, and went into the vineyard, did the will of his Father, Matt. xxi. 31. "*For whosoever shall do the will of my Father, which is in heaven,*" saith Christ, "*the same is my mother, and sister, and brother.*"

To the servant God calls himself a Master; but to the son he calls himself a Father. "*A son honoureth his Father, and a servant his Master. If, then, I be a Father, where is mine honour? and if I be a Master, where is my fear? saith the Lord of Hosts.*" If this be the case, reader, is not the Master's will the servant's rule? Let the Master's commanding will be resisted, or not obeyed or complied with, the place is lost, and the wages too, "*for the servant abideth not in the house ever, but the son abideth ever.*" And is not the good-will of the father the son's rule, as hath been before proved; which is called our heavenly Father's will; his good will; the mystery of the Father's will, made known; the good pleasure of his will, which lie fulfils in us, and the work of faith with power? Henceforth Christ calls us not servants, "*for the servant knoweth not what*

his Lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you."

Thou seest, reader, that the servant knows not this mystery of our heavenly Father's will: he is not acquainted with this rule; only sons and friends are entrusted with these secrets; God's secret is with them that fear him, and them only; and he shews them his covenant.

It is for want of knowledge in this mystery that thou hearest so much cavilling for the law being the only rule of life. They may have some knowledge of it literally and grammatically, but not spiritually nor experimentally. The natural man discerns not the things of the Spirit, nor does he know the power: therefore they do err, not knowing the Scriptures, which are spiritual, nor the power of God. If the law of Moses be the believer's only rule of life, the gospel has no rule at all: so they make God's good-will, which is the law of faith, a mere nothing; and so the life, walk, and work of faith, is no obedience at all; for there is neither will, law, nor rule, to be obeyed. Surely these good men do not exalt Jesus at the expense of Moses, but they exalt Moses at the expense of Jesus: for our King, Sovereign, Lawgiver, and Ruler, has left us no rule to live by; though the man that does the will of our Father which is in heaven shall enter into his kingdom; while the servant that comes with "*Lord! Lord! open to us!*" shall be shut out.

Christ's voice is to his sheep, and everlasting life attends it. His sheep hear his voice, and follow him; and such shall enter into life, for he is the way, the truth, and the life. On the other hand, whatsoever the law saith, it saith to them that are under it: and this way to heaven by works seems right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. This is not the voice of Christ, but the voice of words: nor is it the new and living Way that God has consecrated, but the contrary. Nor is the old cry, 'The law is the only rule of life,' Christ's voice, nor

any thing like it; it belongs to the old wives' fables, not to the lively oracles of God by Christ Jesus.

Satan has gained a deal of ground by the repeated cry, 'The law is the only rule of a believer's life.' It has served to keep many seeking sinners in chains; and to blind some discerning people, who have been so hoodwinked by the old veil, that a little dry morality will suffice. It has armed legions of light, trifling professors, with malice, and matter for slander; so that, as soon as a gospel minister brings forth the mystery of faith, it is blasphemed, and loaded with the name of black Antinomianism; and the preacher of it is viewed as first cousin to Simon Magus. By these means the bond servant keeps the pulpit, and the devil the palace; for Satan knows there is no fear of truth gaining ground upon the heart and affections while it is ridiculed and blasphemed. If this is not rebelling against the light, and doing despite to the Spirit of grace, what is? The gospel is set forth as having no sufficient rule, Christ is divested of his sovereignty, the old law as the better covenant, and Moses as worthy of more honour than. Jesus: his ambassadors are represented as encouragers of vice, and the truths of the everlasting gospel as leading to licentiousness; and what can the devil himself do or say more?

I have in this little piece endeavoured to furnish thee, reader, with a few arguments, that thou mayest have somewhat to answer them that glory in appearance, but not in heart. Love thou the truth, and peace: and be not dismayed and terrified at every minister of confusion; such must come, but God will bring every work into judgment. If a preacher holds not the mystery of faith in a pure conscience, you know he has nothing to recommend him to the excellent of the earth: such always will be battering the middle wall, and warping to the flesh, and to the law; contending for no other holiness than a fair shew in the flesh, an outward reformation; dealing in

general terms; drawing no line between the elect and reprobate, saint and sinner; obscuring the great truths of the gospel; dealing in invitations; speaking well of the erroneous, and ridiculing the 17th just; aiming to affect and move the passions; coveting the name and applause of a gentleman of candid and liberal sentiments, and giving up nine doctrines of the Bible out of ten in order to gain it. But this is not rightly dividing the word of truth, nor doing the work of an evangelist; no real conversion work goes on here; God sets not his seal to this; this is not taking forth the vile from the precious, nor being valiant for truth; it is walking in craftiness, and handling the word of God deceitfully; and so it will appear when the great and terrible day of the Lord comes, in which he will "*render his anger with fury, and his rebukes with flames of fire.*" The canting applause of hypocrites will be no shelter from that storm, nor armour proof sufficient to repel the force of those flames.

Take heed how, and what yon hear; anti, if a man hath not the doctrine of Christ, Truth declares that he hath not God: receive him not, neither into your heart, nor into your house, nor bid him God speed. Let others justify him, and caress him, as they may; be not thou a partaker of other men's sins; nor entail his evil deeds on thy head, by wishing him success.

Prize your liberty, and stand fast in it. If thou art a son of the free woman, with a great sum thou didst obtain this freedom; freedom from the bondage and curse of the law; freedom from the reigning and destroying power of sin; freedom of access to a throne of grace; freedom to call God Father; freedom of speech, and freedom of soul. Troth hath made thee free, therefore love the truth; the Spirit hath made thee free, therefore walk in the Spirit; Christ hath made thee free, and thou art free indeed. And may God bless thee with the joys of his salvation, and uphold thee with his free Spirit; and then thou wilt say with truth and wisdom, what many have uttered

in falsehood and ignorance, namely, that God's service is perfect freedom.

But, if thou once turn thy back upon the truth, thou hast neither shield nor buckler. He who keeps the Word of Christ's patience shall be kept from the hour of temptation. He that erreth from the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead. The prudent are crowned with knowledge; and they must hold fast that which they have, that no man take their crown. It is not candour that secures the prize, but faithfulness. "*Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*"

The son and heir is not to be debased, nor reduced to a level with the bastard and the slave; nor is the servant to be exalted to a footing with the son. The son, who is lord of all, differs much from him: for he is not now under tutors and governors; for the time appointed of the Father is come, and the Spirit of adoption is given, Gal. iv. 2, 6. The son is not to wear the servant's yoke, nor is the easy yoke of the son to be applied to the servant. This is not rightly dividing 'the word. God hath mercy on whom he will have mercy; and this will of mercy is the good-will of God in Christ concerning his sons and daughters; it is the heavenly Father's will revealed, and is our rule. I will, and you shall, runs through the whole mystery of faith: it is his will of purpose, and his will of promise; and is the saint's perfect, unalterable, and eternal rule of life, walk, and conversation.

And whom God will he hardeneth. This is his will of commandments; by which he will by no means clear the guilty, but will make his power known on the vessels of wrath. This, will, never humbled or softened any sinner, nor does his good will ever harden any. This is the servant's rule of life, and rule of work for life, by which none can ever live: "*Wherefore I*

gave them also statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live," Ezek. xx. 25.

When my opponents can make God's will of promise and his Will of commandments, his good will in Christ anti his will of displeasure in the law, his will of mercy and his will of judgment, the Saviour's easy yoke and Moses' unbearable yoke, the covenant of grace and that of works, the killing letter and the quickening Spirit, to be one and the same thing then the elect and reprobate, the child of God and the child of the devil, are made one also. And, when this is done, all my rank Antinomianism is confuted, and scattered into all winds. Which is just as easy to be done, as to unite the two poles; bring Christ and Belial, the family of heaven and hell, together: God's good-will fixes the one in heaven, and his will of judgment fixes the other in hell.

Reader, fare thee well. Grace, mercy, and peace, be with thee. And, when it is well with thee, remember me in prayer, That I may speak of the glory of Christ's kingdom, and talk of the power; "to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom," Psalm cxlv. 11, 12; and thou wilt greatly oblige thy willing servant, in the kingdom and patience of Christ,

W.H.S.S.

P.S. When the last piece on this subject appeared in the World, two young men, fearing to read it, laid it before God, and entreated him to convince them whether it contained the truth or not, that they might either embrace or reject it; and, after earnest prayer, they ventured to look into it, but proceeded with caution, as a man would over a bog. As God would have it, neither of them tumbled in; but they plunged, out of their bondage into that love, peace, and liberty, which they never enjoyed before. I wish every reader of this pamphlet would go and do likewise. There are no better

appeals than those which are made to the Searcher of hearts; nor is there any fear of false or evasive answers from a throne of grace: a trial there is sure to discover the rottenness or soundness of the author.

14.02.07.02