

Volume 2

William Huntington (1745-1813)

The Arminian Skeleton

or

The Arminian Dissected and Anatomised.

William Huntington 1745-1813

Should not the multitude of words be answered? And should a man full of talk be justified? Should thy lies make men hold their peace? And when thou mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed? For thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes. But O that God would speak, and open his lips against thee. - Job 112ñ5.

EPISTLE DEDICATORY (Prefixed to the Second Edition.)

TO THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES OF CHRIST
AMONG WHOM I LABOUR AT PROVIDENCE CHAPEL-AT
MONKWELL-STREET MEETING ñAND AT RICHMOND IN
SURREY-PEACE BE MULTIPLIED

Dear Brethren and Sisters in Faith,

Learning or eloquence you know, "I have none, but such as I have give I you." I here present you with the ARMINIAN SKELETON, together with an account of the anatomizing of Arminius, which I hope God will own and bless to you. I am well aware of all the envenomed artillery which malice is likely to discharge from her quiver: I sat down, and counted the cost before I began to build; and found, upon a proper computation, that it amounts to no more than this, "That which is highly esteemed amongst men is abomination in the sight of God. God is on my side, I will not fear. What can man do unto me?"

I have written what I believe in my conscience to be the truth; and "the lip of truth shall be established in the earth," though ten thousand set themselves against it. And "a lying tongue is but for a moment," though all the world support it. I have endeavoured in some things, to imitate young Elihu with Job; that is, not to "accept any man's person, nor give flattering titles to man, lest my Maker should take me away," Job xxxii. 21,22.

I know some of you, who are simple souls, but rather nearsighted, would like it better if there were smoother things, a softer language, and less fiery zeal in it. To which I answer, Though some upright men may be astonished at this, yet the innocent is to "stir up himself against the hypocrite." Job, xvii. 8. I ought not to aim at men-pleasing; Christ alone is my master; it is to him I look for my wages, and to him I must stand or fall. The divinity and the language I got on my knees, in answer to prayer, and by the mere dint of hard study; and, when you have read it through, I am ready to appeal to your conscience, whether the doctrine and experience be from heaven or of men. If it be of men, the Arminians will love it,

though it is sure to come to nought; but if it be of God, they will hate it, though it cannot be overthrown.

This I am sure of; the doctrines which I have here written are "not after man; for I learned them not of man, neither was I taught them, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." For I have been some months in the glorious liberty of the gospel before I went to hear the gospel at all; and from this consideration I am warmly attached to the blessed tuition of that great prophet of the church, Christ Jesus my Lord; and do most heartily acquiesce with pious Job, in his confession and question, "Behold, God exalteth by his power; who teacheth like him?" Job, xxxvi. 22.

Some may say, it is presumptuous in such a babe as myself to take so capital an error by the collar. To which I answer God sometimes, "out of the mouth of babes and sucklings, ordains strength to perfect praise, that he may still the enemy and the avenger," Psalm viii. 2; Matt. xxi. 16. But perhaps my reader is one of that stamp that has a hope of all the world being saved, whether they hold a truth or a lie. If thy faith is thus founded, its basis is nothing but falsehood, and God will "sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow such hiding place," Isa. xxviii. 17. Take heed, therefore, lest thou shouldest be drowned in destruction and perdition. Such a false hope, and such a gospel, is all thine own; it never came from God. If thy soul had suffered under the severity of the law, as some have, and thy deliverance from guilt and wrath had come to thy heart by faith in Christ's atonement, the same Spirit that wrought faith in thee would have led thee into the truth of God's election, that God might have all the glory, and boasting be excluded. If this be thy blessed experience, thou wilt be valiant for the truth, and, as a good soldier of Christ, fight the good fight of faith, and "contend for that faith which was once delivered to the saints." But, if thy religion be taken up upon trust only, and it is a matter of indifference with

thee what thou art established in, truth or error, thy religion has no root at all in Christ; thou wouldst sell all for less than thirty pieces of silver; yea, for one morsel of bread thou wouldst transgress; for thy faith stands in the wisdom of men, not in the power of God; and therefore thy faith cannot be genuine, nor its basis firm.

Every essential truth that we part with is an infinite loss; and we daily see an awful departure from the doctrines of the gospel. Errors gain ground; and champions for the truth are but few in number when compared to the other host. If thou art a child of God by faith, see to the ground-work of it. Hast thou the faith of God's elect? let election be its basis. Hast thou a justifying faith? let imputed righteousness be its basis. Hast thou a victorious faith? thy victory lies in a Saviour's arms. Hast thou a purifying faith? then faith fetches its purifying efficacy from a Saviour's blood. Give up none of these truths; for, if we think truth is not worth contending for, we may expect the Spirit to clap his wings, and take his flight from us. You read of a bird of the air carrying a voice, and of that which hath wings declaring a matter; and woe to our souls when God departs from us. But, if thou canst not digest the doctrines herein contained, thou must wait till the day of doom, when the gospel net will be drawn to the end of time-its last shore-and then thou shalt see all Adam's offspring assembled in a valley called "the valley of decision;" perhaps so called because the Lord will decide the long controversy between the children of God and the children of the flesh, about the doctrines of sovereign grace and those of fallen nature; "Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe; get ye down, for the press is full, the fats overflow, for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision; for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision," Joel, iii. 13, 14. I know a controversial writer is always deemed to be in his own spirit: however, God "hath a controversy with the nations," Jer. xxv. 31; and his ministers

"shall teach his people the difference between the holy and the profane; and in controversy they shall stand in judgment," Ezek. xliv. 23, 24. God's decree shall not always be called horrible, nor an everlasting righteousness be called imputed nonsense. Vindictive justice shall avenge the quarrel of sovereign mercy, so soon as old Time shall bring on "the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion," Isa. xxxiv. 8. What thou hast to say against the truths herein contained will cause but little trouble to me; God's approbation, and the testimony of a good conscience, are sufficient to support any faithful servant of the Lord under the scourge of tongues.

In all probability my reader may find some tautology in my book, which is easily accounted for; because, when I have been indulged with a great flow of matter, I have been obliged often to stop the spring, in order to study a discourse; and preaching six, seven, or eight times a week, in places lying wide apart, has been an impediment in my way. For, when I came to sit down again, I had forgotten what I had gone through; and it was some time before I could get my cruse to spring again. I have had many visitors also to hinder me, and many letters to write; together with much sickness in my family, which has sometimes obliged me to sit up all night to write.

I believe this work will be very offensive to the devil, because I have been often violently tempted since I have been at it; but those that honour God, God will honour. I also think it will be a comfort to some, because at times I have been much comforted myself. And I hope it will not be altogether without power; because I got most of it on my knees, in answer to prayer; and we all know that God never gives a stone for bread, nor a serpent for a fish.

I have more works on the wheels, and as soon as possible will mould them together, and work them off; and they shall inform the world what God has done for my soul. All the errors that thou findest in this book I acknowledge to be my own; what is truth I hope never to give up. If thou get either edification or comfort, thou art indebted to grace for it; when it is well with thee, remember Joseph. Do not condemn it until thou hast read it through; and then, if thou canst prove the devil to have influenced the author, I wish thou and all the Christian world would take up their pens against it: but, if it be of God, none can overthrow it. If thou thinkest I have darkened counsel by words without knowledge, may God incline thine heart to sit down and write a treatise better and brighter: I will readily become a subscriber, and use every effort in my power to circulate the work. For why should truth fall in the streets before the doctrines of devils, while her advocates, like Manoah and his wife, are only lookers on?

To expect salvation from truth only for ourselves, without any regard to the rising generation, is to be like Ephraim-empty vines, and to bring forth fruit only to ourselves. But, if God give us enlargement of heart, as he did to Solomon, compared to the sand on the sea-shore, we shall take all the elect into our hearts, down to the end of time-the uttermost shore of this confused and sin-disordered world: therefore we ought to contend for God's truth, and to leave our testimonies on record, that others, who come after us, may tread in our steps; and not leave volumes of free-agency, human merit, and a pack of nonsense behind us. We may be sure they will bring enough of this trash in their hearts when they come into this world, therefore we need not add to their abundance. I doubt not but many of the rising generation, when they come to be called by grace, and read some of their father's treatises about free-agency and Sinless perfection, will cry out, as the Gentiles did in the days of old, "Surely our fathers have inherited lies," Jer. xvi. 19.

It is doubtless our duty to pray for the increase of Christ's kingdom, and for more light and knowledge of the truth; to labour day and night in God's vineyard, and to be charitable to the necessitous to the uttermost of our Power; but never to strive against God's decrees in order to please rebels, or make the Bible comport with the pride of wretched and depraved nature: the man that doth this is allied to Satan, and engaged in the war of devils: "Let not him that girdeth on the harness boast himself as he that putteth it off," 1 Kings, xx. 11. I know some of you, among whom I labour are much tinctured with that abominable doctrine called free-agency; and your life and walk proclaim it as loud as your tongues; for it is visible that the world loves her own, and that you love it: being crafty, I have caught some of you who are of this stamp with guile. To talk of free-agency and good works, while the feet run to evil, is nothing but sounding the trumpet of an hypocrite. I am sure you never learned this Satanic trick from my mouth, nor from my life.

I think it my duty," as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance," lest ye be led away with the errors of the wicked; and so fall from your own steadfastness.

If God of his infinite mercy keep you from Arminianism, Arianism, and Antinomianism, I shall think you are Christians indeed. I rank the errors of Arminianism at the front, because the others are not so well masked. While the Arminian is robbing you of the doctrines of sovereign grace, he puts the fable of sinless perfection into your hand, as a rattle to amuse you, while he robs and plunders your conscience; and, while he is teaching you to resist the sovereign will of God, he endeavours to charm your ears with free-agency. But the Arian is more open; he proclaims to every one that goes by that he is a feel. However, they are all three agreed against Christ; the Arminian cries down his merit; the Arian cries down

his divinity; and the Antinomian cries down the revelation of him to the heart. May God turn their hearts to the truth, and keep your souls from turning to their errors!

Fret not yourselves about my creating to myself enemies; it is better to be hated by all the world, for the truth's sake, than to lie one week under the dread full apprehensions of God's wrath, and the severe lashes of a guilty conscience: "When God gives peace, who can create trouble?" A man's spirit will sustain any outward affliction; "but a wounded spirit none can bear."

I must beg leave to inform my reader that I thought proper to make an alteration in the second edition of this work. The letters which were sent out in conjunction with it, relative to ministerial abilities, I thought proper to sever from it, as they had no connexion with it. But I will correct them and send them out by themselves, if there should be a call for them, as I think they are more proper to bind up with the Epistles of Faith than with this work. Having got rid of the Epistles, I have in their room brought in a few more witnesses against Universal Charity, or natural affections, influenced by a spirit of rebellion against the God of sovereign love.

The sovereignty of divine grace, displayed in the revelation of Christ to my soul, was the first saving truth that ever God made known to me: and, as I could not find one person in a thousand that had ever seen or felt the same power, it convinced me still more that what God had done for me was a sovereign act. I have since been more confirmed in it, because it was revealed to me who never expected it, and is withheld from thousands who are working hard to get it. These things led me to see that "the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong;" but that both the prize and the victory are "of God, who sheweth mercy." This, and the other connected doctrines, being revealed by God himself to my soul, I think I

am in duty bound to enforce and defend, with such abilities as God shall think proper to furnish me with.

To my own Master I expect to stand or fall; and, if this my testimony in behalf of his sovereignty be a false one, he has wisdom enough to overthrow it, and power sufficient to punish me for it. But I know it is the testimony that he revealed to me; the testimony impressed on my conscience; the testimony of his own word and Spirit; the testimony that himself bore; the testimony that God will ever honour; and the testimony that he never did, nor ever will, disdain to own.

Arminianism at present sadly obscures the truth of God Poperly and that system will one day unite under one displayed banner, and out of each host the elect of God will one day be called; and a light sufficient will be given them to discover the enemies of their liberties, to which, by a covenant of sovereign grace, they were predestinated. These things considered, have led me to exclude the former letters, and to bring in a few more witnesses against Universal Charity, in order to push the sentence a little more home into the compassionate bowels of rebellious nature.

If my reader be inquisitive to know what I mean by the term Universal Charity; be it known to him, that I do not mean that love and liberality that is required by the second table of the moral law; far from it. For I know that in this sense a man is to love his neighbour as himself; and, if he be able, he his to shew it by a generous relief of him in his necessities. According to my ability, I have no objection to be weighed in an even balance with any accuser that I have in the world, with respect to this commodity.

Nor do I mean that affection which every converted soul should shew to his neighbour, in reproving him, exhorting him, praying for him, or holding forth the word of life to him, which (if blessed by God to his conversion) is that charity which

covereth a multitude of sins. In this respect I could spend and be spent for my neighbour; and have laboured as hard, and suffered as much, in behalf of their souls, as those who have pretended to exceed the hovels of God himself in the behalf of sinners. But the universal charity aimed at in this work, is that pretended love of erroneous professors, who are contending for the salvation of all the world, and disputing against the sovereignty of God, and against his word in the behalf of them. Surely if this spirit came from God, it would never cavil against his sovereign will.

The Saviour rebuked this in Peter, as coming from the devil; "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto me; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men," Matt. xvi 33. Thus the Saviour shews that every spirit which takes the part of flesh and blood, and rebels against the will of God, is from the devil himself.

Men of this temper seem to measure God by themselves; because they pretend to shew so much love to apostate rebels, and to those that bear the condemned image of Adam. They think that God's everlasting love must run in this their pretended channel, and that God is altogether such an one as themselves; for which wretched comparison God says he will reprove them, Psalm 1. 21. From this pretended affection, influenced by a spirit of rebellion against God, comes all the universal doctrines that we hear of in our days. God's love, which in every age has appeared discriminating, is fixed upon all the human race, they tell us; when the Saviour declares it to be sovereign; "for many be called, but few chosen," Matt. xx. 16. Some declare that God chose all alike (if such a choice can be); but the Saviour says that he chose his People out of the world, John xv. 19.

They tell us that Christ redeemed all men; when the scriptures declare that God redeemed his elect from among men, Rev.

xiv. 4. If God redeemed some from among others, then those that the elect were redeemed from, were not redeemed. When God gave Egypt for Israel's ransom he gave no ransom for Egypt. If the wicked are a ransom for the righteous, and transgressors for the upright, Prov. xxi. 18, then those wicked transgressors had no ransom paid for them, however the doctrine of universal redemption is earnestly insisted upon But I defy the world ever to get one text of Scripture to prove it. Christ says, "I lay down my life for the sheep," John, x. 15. But ah are not sheep. They that are the chosen flock of God are redeemed; "I lay down my life for the sheep." All that the Saviour died for were ordained to life; and those that are thus chosen and redeemed must be brought to receive the grace of faith; for "as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed," Acts, xiii. 48. But some are not chosen; these are not sheep, therefore the gift of faith is withheld from them: "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you," John, x. 36. Christ, in the 13th verse, had called them hirelings, and in the next place he told them that they were not of his sheep; and that was the reason why the gift of faith was withheld from them: "When the Jews heard this, then they took up stones to stone him," John, x. 31.

As universal redemption cannot be proved from the Bible, I am sure it cannot be taken or supported from any observations that can be made on the conduct of the world; for the generality of mankind give us no proof, by their conduct, of their being washed in a Redeemer's blood, or of their being "redeemed from a vain conversation," 1 Peter, i. 18.

Thus these universal bowels of corrupt nature, that sound so universally in their compassions towards the inhabitants of earth and hell, are set up as a standard for God to work by, and have brought forth the doctrines of universal grace and universal redemption, which I believe to be nothing but

universal lies. Hence I conclude that those persons who pretend to have so much love for poor sinners as to make the grace of God, and the redemption of the Saviour, come over to their standard, is a pretended charity, which comes not from God, but from themselves, because it favours falsehood more than truth; and, whilst sounding out universal grace, it bears a false witness, contradicts the scriptures and rebels against the sovereignty of God, in Perverting his word to please men. Surely "there is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord," Prov. xxi. 30.

I fear that some have been so strenuous for universal, that they have neglected particular redemption. Every man that is saved must experience redemption for himself; it must be known by every particular sheep of the Saviour's fold. Universal redemption will afford but little comfort to one in rebellion against God, condemned by his own conscience, and who never was purged from his guilt, nor redeemed from his vain conversation. Thus redemption becomes particular to every chosen vessel: nor can it ever be proved to be universal, until we have gotten the universal testimony of every man in the world having received it; which I see no likelihood of at present.

Reader, fare thee well. Peace and truth be with thee: while I remain thine to serve, with such as I have.

WM. HUNTINGTON.

Universal Charity - Pursued And Taken.

"Try the spirits whether they are of God," 1 John 4:1.

PRAY, from what fountain does this Universal Charity flow, which seems to exceed even the bowels of the Almighty? God himself has declared his love to be discriminating; "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated," Mal. i. 2; Rom. ix. 13. But is the eternal love of the Godhead fixed on all the human race? I answer, No. An erroneous church, or a mystical harlot, is one of the deep pits into which the abhorred of the Lord are to fall, Prov. xxii. 14. Now, as the scriptures declare some to be hated and others abhorred of the Lord, it cannot be "the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost" that appears so tender of rebels and so furious against the decrees, and against the obedient and loyal subjects of the King of kings.

As God does not appear to be the fountain of this love, it must come from a corrupt spring. I believe the devil, operating on the natural passions of men, has deceived many: he can shew a shining robe as well as a cloven foot. Some, whose convictions are real and deep, he will engage with dreadful assaults, and follow hard with fiery darts. He can also turn himself into an angel of light, and act on the other side of the question. In this dress he operates on the fleshly passions of many, and fills them with pity for all who bear his image; but arms them with malice against God, and against those Who shine the brightest in Christ Jesus. This unscriptural love appeared in Jezebel the queen, who fed four hundred prophets of Satan at her own table, but would not suffer a sound prophet of God to live upon earth. When the judgments

of God fell on her favourites for witchcraft, her tender passions flowed so rapidly for those miserable wretches, that she would expose her soul to all the vengeance of Heaven in avenging their blood: "The gods do so to me, End more also, if the life of Elijah be not as one of them by to-morrow about this time," 1 Kings, xix. 2, 4.

However, she was mistaken; she could not make the life of Elijah like one of them, because he was a chosen vessel; nor could his own prayer, put up in a pet, alter God's irrevocable decree, 1 Kings, xix. 4. Nay, though he requested to die, confessing that he was no better by nature than his fathers, yet his prayer was not answered, because he asked amiss. He neither dies according to Jezebel's threatening, nor in answer to his own prayer; but goes to heaven a new way, according to God's pre-appointment. As these bowels of charity sounded so much in Jezebel towards the basest of mortals, we have great reason to believe that they were stirred in her tender bosom by that spirit with whom she was so familiar. It appears to me that both her title and her possessions, together with all her religion, came from Satan; and, according to the portrait drawn of her by the Holy Ghost, she was a mistress of witchcraft, the nurse of wizards, a murderer of saints, an enemy to Christ, a banquet for dogs, and a portion for devils.

This universal charity, tintured with rebellion against God, has often, under the temptations of Satan, wonderfully appeared in many eminent saints of God. Various are the suggestions of Satan to such as fear the Lord, and generally suited to the person's state of mind and disposition: but all operations that beget hard thoughts of Christ, rebellion against him, or that lessen in any degree our esteem of him, most surely come from the devil and ourselves: "There is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel, against the Lord," in his word, Prov. xxi. 30. When this snare has been laid in the

council of Satan, in order to get God's servants to harden their faces against him, God has generally, in a reproving way, broken it, and delivered his poor saints out of it. But it appears one of Satan's strong holds to many; and I fear that many live and die in it. That soul shall never be said to be circumcised to love God with all his heart, whose tenderness is discovered in behalf of the wicked, and hardened against God and his elect.

Samuel himself, a man begged of God by his pious mother, and devoted to him from the cradle; a prophet, whose word never fell to the ground, and one of the brightest characters in the Bible, seems to have been for a while entangled in this net of Satan. Samuel found that Saul, who became a proverb for appearing among the prophets-whom he had anointed at the command of God, with oil out of a vial, to shew the brittleness of his kingdom, and his slippery foothold; to whom God gave another heart, 1 Sam. x. 9, for government and war; but not a new heart as a saint receives, Ezek. xxx. 36; and knowing he was turned into another man, 1 Sam. x. 6, but not a new creature in Christ, 2 Cor. v. 17; the thoughts of God's rejecting Saul from being king so moved the bowels of natural compassion in Samuel, that he sits up all night weeping for Saul, 1 Sam. xv. 11, till the reproofs of heaven stop the torrent of his tears; "Samuel, when wilt thou cease weeping for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from being king?" 1 Sam. xvi. 1. "I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath," Hosea, xiii. 11. If these affections for Saul had flowed from a divine influence, surely God would not have rebuked them.

David himself seems at one time to have been entangled in this snare, and discovers it in a strange petition. He orders Israel to be numbered; and God commanded that each soul who was numbered should pay half a shekel for his head, as an offering to God, who had raised them from one as good as dead (Exod. xxx. 13) to be "as the stars of heaven for

multitude, and as the sand by the sea-shore innumerable," Heb. xi. 12. This appears to be done as an offering, to acknowledge the faithfulness of God to his promise in multiplying Abraham's offspring. Seventy thousand appeared to be idolaters; or, in other words, they loved their money more than their God; they pass the poll, but could not afford their half shekel. Justice draws her sword, and cuts off the seventy thousand at one stroke. At the sight of this, universal charity is stirred up in the heart of David, dictates a desperate petition, and asks an irreverent question; "Let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house: but these sheep, what have they done?" 2 Sam. xxiv. 17. However, when David got a little more into his right mind, he seems to drop his affections for idolatry, and lets them centre in their proper object; "Do not I hate them that hate thee? I hate them with perfect hatred; I count them mine enemies. Search me, O God, and try me; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting," Psa cxxxix. 21-24.

Paul himself, our great and blessed apostle, seems to be caught in this web: but he soon finds the snare broken, and he is delivered; "I could," says he, "wish myself accursed from Christ for my brethren's sake, who are Israelites according to the flesh." And this was fleshly affection with a witness, blown up to an amazing height; even to wish himself accursed from Christ for their sake, Rom. ix. 3. Howbeit, God sent him a few stripes, bonds, and imprisonments, from his fleshly brethren, in order to wean him, and then he appears with a becoming zeal for his God: "If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha," I Cor. xvi. 22.

It appears to me that Moses was for a time taken in this snare, while encamped in the wilderness. Israel had made a calf, danced round it, and worshipped it; and they must all be pardoned to a man, in answer to a petition put up by Universal

Charity: "And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, Oh, these people have sinned a great sin, and have made themselves gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt, forgive their sin: and, if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written," Exod. xxxii. 31, 32. But the success of this prayer shews that it was not dictated by the Holy Ghost, as evidently appears by the answer: "And the Lord said unto Moses, whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book. Therefore now go, lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee; behold, mine angel shall go before thee: nevertheless, in the day when I visit, I will visit their sins upon them. And the Lord plagued the people because they made the calf," Exod. xxxii. 34, 35. I believe that petition in the Common Prayer-book came from the same quarter, "That it may please thee to have mercy upon all men." Christ prayed not for the world, but for them that his Father had given him out of it. I believe the earth was never without the sin unto death upon it; and the Spirit of God never gave us leave to pray for that.

David seems to be caught in this web again at the time when the withered arm (of free-will) was by Uzzah stretched out to the assistance of Omnipotence. God, in the fire of jealousy for his own glory, struck him dead for his pains. If he is cursed of Obed who makes flesh his own arm, what can he be but doubly cursed who puts forth an arm of flesh to prop up the ark of God's strength? "God smote him for his error," because he had kindled his anger, 2 Sam. vi. 7. Universal Charity steps into the heart of David, and takes up the cause of Uzzah: "And David was displeased because God had made a breach upon Uzzah," and refused to take the ark home to him, 2 Sam. vi. 8-10. We have too many in our days who are making fleshly confidence both their basis and their bulwark; however, the fire of God's anger will make a breach in them, even if they set up a thousand.

The ark was by David refused, and consequently his God also, while this universal charity for Uzzah kept the throne of his heart. David, it seems, carried the ark aside, into the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite, and there it must rest three months because it would not allow of co-partnership. However, God's blessing attended his own ark, though not the fleshly arm of Uzzah; "And God blessed Obed-Edom for the ark's sake, and all his household." These tidings coming to David, provoked him to jealousy; and a little spiritual jealousy cures the breach which Universal Charity had made between his Lord and him, and brings him to own that they had not sought God "after the due order."

I am much mistaken if this Universal Charity was not the door by which the whole troop of hypocrites crept into the primitive church; "Thou seest, brother Saul, how many thousands there are of Jews who believe, and they are all zealous of the law." Thou must shave thy head, and say, four men with thee have a vow on them (thou must say so); then purify thyself with them. This is establishing what Christ came to abolish: "And be thou at charges with them." This is reconciling the world and the elect together. But their counsel for peace God turned into a war, and Paul paid dear enough for it; and so will all those who go on with it, Acts, xxi. God soon cured the apostles of this disease, by shewing them what monsters they had embraced. Some advanced dreadful errors; some divided and scattered; others persecuted and raged; so that they were obliged to purge out this old leaven, shut up the door of Universal Charity, discharge a whole shower of artillery from the quiver of God at them, and give a command to all the elect, not to receive them into their houses, nor bid them God's speed.

God shews us in his word the unalterable doctrines of his covenant delivered by his servants, for our establishment in free grace. He likewise shews us the noble feats of their faith,

and their holy walk for our example; and he shews us their failings also, and the advantage Satan took of them, for our admonition. And, among all the temptations with which they seemed to be tried, this to Universal Charity was none of the least; but God delivered his servants out of them all.

I had an experience of this temptation myself; being at times sorely tempted, for five-and-twenty years at least; and for near two years before salvation reached my heart I seldom was free a minute. I was tempted to believe that Satan made the world; and this was strengthened by my long seeking, working, striving, crying, confessing, and praying, and yet not being rewarded with grace for all this lip-service. I was grievously tempted also to pray to Satan to deal propitious with me in hell, when I came there, because I had long fled from his service. I cried also to God to deliver me from Satan; but I could find no God, therefore I was tempted to believe there was none.

What kept me from praying to Satan was, that of my being tempted perpetually to blaspheme the Almighty. If there is no God, why am I tempted thus to abuse him? Having been long tempted with such things as those, to drown myself in the Thames, and many more too base to mention, and being at last chased from all confidence in myself-finding my rationality hang long at a balance, and my life in doubt, I was obliged to throw away my Whole Duty of Man, and my Common Prayer also, and betake myself to calling on Christ alone. And, though my prayer was with the words of one desperate, yet, in answer to that prayer, Christ delivered me. My sin, guilt, despair, hardness of heart, envy at God, cavilling at election, fear of death, darkness, ignorance, and unbelief, took their flight at once, and Satan with them. Christ, with all his salvation, beauty, grace, and glory, came into my soul in a minute; for which I hope and trust I shall bless his name for evermore.

At this time I had never heard the gospel, nor did I for some months after. I now saw my calling was clear, and my eternal election sure; and for many months my soul enjoyed it. Satan now could not invade me as an assailant, but he came as a visitor, to endeavour to spoil this bright work by turning me into an Arminian. He first set me to look at the whole troop of Pharisees, who attended the church, and especially the communicants; and, to move me the more to pity them, he put my wife among them. Had it stopped here, it had been well; but, alas! it was accompanied with malice against God. I conversed with several of them, and found them all blind. And here I looked up in anger, and impiously asked Clod what was to become of all these? And he as powerfully answered me, "Except they are born again, they cannot see the kingdom of God." Having shed some thousands of tears over them, I was tempted to view the profane, the heathens, and the blacks; and then it was suggested to me, What do you think of election now? Here I began to wage war against the sovereignty of my Maker, and wept for those whom I never saw. This is taking part with the potsherds, and striving against our Maker, Isaiah, xlv. 9.

After this, the hard state of the beasts was represented to me; how hard they fared, and yet they were never to be saved. Many tears of pity I shed over them also. These tender feelings I nursed, and thought I had more mercy than even God himself. Here I felt a heart rising with malice against God, Christ, his sovereign grace, his elect, and all that held election. Long did I carry on this dreadful rebellion against God, and yet mourned and wept over beasts, creeping things, and insects; but no feeling for a suffering Saviour. God left me for a while, to shew me my folly; and folly it is, or I am sadly mistaken.

The next step I took in this wonderful progress, was to consider fallen angels, who I knew were excluded from all

hope in God, and that for ever. Soon my bowels began to yearn over them; feeling this, the very heavens began, I thought, to lour over my head; my blood ran cold, my hair stood on end, my loins shook, my hope sunk, and the pains of hell gat hold upon my soul. Here God brought afresh to my mind the long siege and many snares Satan had laid in my way, in order to drag me to his infernal regions. And I was now pitying the cursed adversary of God and man, and fighting against my God and Saviour, who died to save me from sin, Satan, death and hell. I went so far in this snare as to determine to cast off all hope in God, and to take my lot with the world, supposing that eternal damnation was to be my doom.

This is the very root of Arminianism, and I know what fruit it bears. However, God, in answer to prayer, delivered me, and I went back in my affections to my dear Master, wept over him, loved him as a friend, revered him as a sovereign; and left heathens, brutes, and devils, to the disposal of infinite wisdom and sovereign pleasure. Since that I have thus accounted for Satan's coming in this dress. We have more indwelling sin in us than we have grace; therefore Satan works on that, being his own seed; and hence it is that some are led to pity devils. We have also more flesh and blood than grace; hence we are led to pity our own fallen image in rebels. Every man being like the beasts that perish in his nature, and brutish in his knowledge, a very slight temptation will lead him to pity brutes; we having more of sin, flesh, and bestiality, than we have of God's Spirit. Natural affections will flow, under strong temptations, more to sinners, beasts, and devils, than they will to God himself.

These temptations have beset many of God's elect; but he always makes a way for their escape; and they who continue in them cannot say that grace reigns; and those who die in them will find none of this universal charity exist in hell-there is

no love there. We need not wonder at these temptations besetting the elect, when even Christ himself was tempted to self-murder, and even to fall down and worship Satan. It is from this root of universal charity that those compassionate words flow, which we so often hear of, being poured out in behalf of Cain, Esau, Judas, Saul, Ahab, and Pharaoh; declaring that Christ died for them. Christ promised to ransom his people from the power of the grave, and to redeem them from death; "O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes," Hosea, xiii. 14. Now, if Christ redeem sinners, he has promised to redeem them from death; it cannot mean temporal death, for "it is appointed unto all men once to die." It must be spiritual death that the Saviour means: and, if all are thus redeemed, how comes it to pass that the scriptures declare so many to be in hell already?

When we hear from a pulpit those bowels of universal charity, sounding in all their tenderness, pity, sympathy, and love, for rebels, reprobates, traitors, and apostates, we may soon guess who is the preacher. And, if they call themselves apostles, as Peter was, we may answer them as Christ did him, "Get thee behind me, Satan." They ought to be an offence to us, because they savour "not the things that be of God, but those that be of men," Matt. xvi. 23. All the enemies this universal charity has appear to be only God's sovereign, electing, and everlasting love to his chosen, Christ's particular redemption of his people, and the Holy Ghost's sovereign and discriminating operations on the favourites of God. All the advocates for free-will that I ever conversed with seemed to be in love with all, but the sovereign acts of grace and the chosen of God; and these they oppose. And, seeing they open their mouths against God, his living temple, and they that dwell in the heavens, we have reason to believe there as not much of God in them; if there was, their hearts would be where their treasure is, Matt. vi. 21.

A woman once told me that a certain preacher threw the gates of heaven wide open. I answered, that she ought to be damned if she boasted of power to enter in and yet staid out. Howbeit, I fear she is on this side the door to this day. Another told me, after hearing a discourse from me about election, that I barred the gates of heaven, but Mr. Universal Charity opened them to all. I told her, if he did, there were none let in but God's elect: for all that are there "are called, and chosen, and faithful," Rev. xvii. 14.

A free-will preacher, some time ago, made a complaint that his congregation was thin; he had preached them almost all away; and, under much concern, he said that election was the doctrine of the day; nothing would go down with the people but election. I would to God that every professor in the world were able to make their calling and election sure, as God commands; and then I believe they would rejoice, as the Saviour says, that their names were written in heaven. But, if this salesman has so clogged the market with free-will that all the buyers stand idle, he ought to set forth free grace, and see what that will do. Let him take his market-bell, and cry a sale as Isaiah did, "without money, and without price," Isaiah, lv. 1. Why does he "set forth the refuse of the wheat, making the ephah small, and shekel great, and falsifying the balances of justice by deceit?" I know there is corn to be sold in our Egypt, and God has sent it from heaven for our food, and why should he try to make a famine? "He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him; but blessings shall be upon the head of him that selleth it," Prov. xi. 26. God has not sent us "a famine of hearing the word of the Lord," Amos, viii. 11; and why they should make our fruitful land barren by their wickedness I know not. God has promised "corn to make the young men cheerful," Zech. ix. 17; and I see no cause why they should be made sad with chaff. They ought to tread out the corn, 1 Cor. ix. 9, and feed the young asses with clean provender, Isaiah, xxx. 24.

I will take notice of the effects of free-will charity, and leave the root for awhile. After God had delivered my soul from that gilded bait, called, or rather nick-named, Charity, I walked about five months in the happy enjoyment of electing love, till one day I dropped into company with a very strenuous free-willier, who lived at Weston-Green, in the parish of Thames-Ditton, in the county of Surrey: he was one who appeared to walk like an angel, and was fourteen years old in his profession. I mentioned God's love to my soul, and innocently told him how I had fought against election; how God had applied it to me, and my comfort in it; not in the least suspecting that he would deal with my conscience as a thief. However, his visage soon changed with envy. He told me I was wrong, and that I was but young in the ways of God, while he was of long standing. I, fool like, thought that length of days must teach wisdom, Job, xii. 12; not considering that "old men are not always wise, nor do the aged," at all times, "understand judgment," Job, xxxiii. 9. However, he being very zealous, though not according to knowledge, took me into a private apartment, to expound to me (I may say) the way of confusion, for so indeed I found it to my sorrow.

He brought forth a treatise, written by one F-h-r, and entertained me with it almost the whole afternoon. The book, as far as I can remember, seemed to be as sound as flesh and blood could make it; and I believe was as good a web as carnal reason is capable of weaving from the quills of human invention. And, in order to set it off, there was, here and there, a text of scripture jumbled in. But that good author seemed to be more earnest for fruit than for ingrafting; and I believe would be better pleased with a crop of leaves than a good root. However, we are told not to expect grapes from thorns, figs from thistles, nor good fruit from corrupt trees. I often cried out, "O Sir! that is boggy ground, I cannot venture on that." "Don't speak against it," says he, "you don't understand it." Thus he endeavoured to put a better face on it; but it was

still one of the lean kine. And he laboured with more fervency to bring my soul from Christ than ever I did to bring a soul to him-" I speak this to my shame." Finding my head like a gentleman's garret, filled with this lumber. I fled out of the house, both wounded and naked, and went that night to hear the word preached; but there was nothing for me: free-will and free-grace were striving perpetually in my mind for a month or more, having nothing in me but this pro and con. The thoughts of falling from the blessed state in which I had long been, and being damned after all; knowing what a dreadful place hell was, by the dreadful pains which I had felt of it, and what a powerfull adversary Satan is; "Alas!" said I, "if final apostacy from a state of grace be true, and I only stand in my own strength, fall I must; and then there is no sacrifice for sin, but a fearful looking for of judgment," Heb. x. 27.

These things filled my soul with slavish fear, threw me into bondage again, set me to striving in my own strength, and my heart to fretting against the Lord, Prov. xix. 3. My evil tempers often hurried me into sin, which stopped the mouth of prayer and praise; nor could I read, meditate, or stay my thoughts upon any thing. Thus was my mind entangled in the Arminian labyrinth, till the billows of horror rolled over my soul, and I sunk "in deep waters, where there was no standing, so that the floods" of despair "overflowed me." This makes me so severe against that doctrine, as a burnt child dreads the fire.

Being one day busy in hoeing a sand-walk at Ewell, in Surrey, mourning under my present distress of mind, and the perilous state I appeared to be in, and reasoning that it was God's grace alone which begun, and would surely carry on, this work; the answer in my mind was, No; I had improved the day of grace myself, and falling away was a truth, for I was already fallen. This cut me so deep, that I cursed the day I ever saw that wretch. "O," said I, "if Christ will but shew me that the whole work was of him, and give me security for the future, I

would never grudge to serve him day nor night I would not care how hard I worked, or how much I suffered, if an eternal portion of his love and presence was but secured to my soul."

In answer to this, a voice from heaven sounded in my heart with these words: "Don't you know that the scripture says, "No man can come to me except the Father draw him?" I answered in anger, with a loud voice, "I know it says so." The answer came again, and said, "If you can find a passage in scripture where it is said that a man has a power to come, then you may prove the Bible lies." This taught me that God holds his power to command, though man has lost his power to obey. And, as there are many who boast of will and power, God has an undeniable right to set them this impossible task, namely, to put away their evil, make themselves a new heart, learn to do well, make themselves clean, &c.; and, as a just God, damn them for not performing that task which they boast of having power to do. And, as for the elect, I saw they were brought under the terrors of the law, and there set to work ill their own strength, to convince them of their inability to create in themselves a new heart and a new spirit; and, by spending their strength with nitre and much soap, Jer. it. 22; and finding it nothing but washing the Ethiopian white, Jer. xiii. 23; and that their iniquities are still marked before God, Jer. it. 22; they fly for refuge to sovereign mercy in Christ, having spent all their living, and getting only worse instead of better; then Christ gives them a new heart, a new spirit, makes them clean, causes them to walk in his statutes, and promises that they never shall depart from him, Ezek. xxxvi. 27.

This I found was the privilege of a son, the other is the task of a servant; and the son is to abide in the house for ever, John, viii. 35, while the servant is to be cast out of doors, Gal. iv. 30. And, although a gift to preach or pray, or a legal awakening, may be given to a servant in this life, yet they are all to be taken away again from him, but not from the son; he is to lose

nothing of his inheritance for ever, Ezek. xlvi. 16, 17. These things made that scale of Arminianism move up, and soon I saw it kick the beam; for poor sinners in that scale are lighter than vanity. But eternal election and final perseverance came down full weight, and I soon felt myself in that scale. This brought me out of the free-will fog, and truth shone in my heart like a comet. And he that cannot reconcile these things has not lost his veil; and he that perverts them with open eyes is worse than a devil; for he is a rebel against God, and deceives the souls of others.

From that moment I waged war against free-will; and, if God spares my life a hundred years longer, I hope he will employ me in this battle, and let me die in this fight; and I am fully persuaded I shall never doubt of its being the battle of the Lord. Soon after, this champion (whose name was Hackston) attacked me again, and brought many passages to my mind, which I had not considered: yet God gave me understanding in them while he was bringing them forth, and enabled me to wrench the sword out of his band, turn its edge against him, cut his ears, and make his countenance fall. And I lived to see his fancied joy wither; for I fear he was but a son of man, Joel, i. 12; because he seemed to drop into the world again, and under every sermon he generally slept till it was over. Alas! if the grace of God does not hold us up in our profession, I am sure free-will must give way.

We had a parson in the church who was seldom sober one day in the week; against whom I never heard him say any thing: but, if he went to hear an honest, sound Calvinist, he generally wrangled against him to those in company all the way home; so it appeared not to be sin which he hated, but the truth of God. I have often been enabled to stop the mouths of these pretend9rs to good works, in point of merit, by setting my works against theirs, and appealing to their own consciences for a testimony, as they lived close by me. I told

them they promised to go, but went not: I said, I would not go, but God made me go. I worked hard, yet felt myself unprofitable: they did nothing but cavil, and yet boasted of merit. And I have sometimes told them that my works would weigh down the works of fifty such trunk-makers. Though we dare not boast before God, yet we are not to debase ourselves before hypocrites: "The righteous falling down before the wicked is as a troubled fountain and corrupt spring, Prov. xxv. 26.

When they had been contending with me for final apostasy from grace (as they call it), I have told them, if they believed that they could finally fall and be damned, they might fall. Their faith was not the gift of God, nor the faith of God's elect. According to their faith (or rather their fancy) be it unto them. I believed I should never finally fall, and according to my faith it would be unto me, Matt. ix. 29. God is not bound to keep them on in his strength, who reject his omnipotent arm. I found I could not drag them out of their pit, and why should they want to pull us down from our Rock? They have been forced often to confess to me they were in bondage: and I do not wonder at it; for, if truth will not make free, there is no ground to expect that lies will.

These are some of the fruits and effects which my poor soul has felt of universal charity, which robbed me of that which was sweeter to my soul than life itself; I mean the peace of God ruling in my conscience. I own the man was liberal enough of such as he had; he gave it me freely: but, if a gentleman makes me a present of a draught of mercury, though it is a free gift, yet, if it kills me, I do not see much charity in it. Christian recoiler, beware, lest thou get to dealing, or rather exchanging, with them as I did. It is called charity, but it is only exchanging-they will take away your peace, and give you nought but confusion; and that man that takes away

truth, and gives thee nothing but a fable, has but little right to a tribute of praise from me.

How the name of Universal came to be given to these fleshly, brutal passions, tintured with such malice against God's sovereignty, and all who in humility bow to it, I know not. Pray, Mr. Charity, what is your Christian name?-Answer, Universal. Pray who gave you that name? Who were your godfathers and godmothers, and what did they promise to do for you? Did they promise you should live in charity with all men? -Yes. So indeed you do with all men in the flesh. But how came you to lift up your hands against the Lord's anointed? I mean the prophets, apostles, holy fathers, old honest Calvin, Hervey, Toplady, Whitfield, and all such as, though dead, yet have a voice in the church, and a blessed memory also.

If thy name be Universal, how camest thou to call the sovereign Monarch of heaven and earth a tyrant God? And how camest thou to call the King of Zion to an account about the chosen subjects of his kingdom? Dost thou want to condemn the chief Shepherd, and call him to an account about his particular fold? Dost thou want to alter his register book, and bring in endless genealogies of thy own, blotting out the names of his sheep, and interlining it with the names of goats? Thou hast put Judas, Ahab, Cain, Esau, and perhaps Simon Magus, among the redeemed. "By what authority dost thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?" Thou despisest the unconditional promise of faith. And what hast thou to do to declare God's unalterable statutes, or with thy wavering tongue and unstable heart to declare his unconditional covenant, or take it into thy mouth; seeing thou hatest all the instructions the whole cloud of witnesses have given thee, and castest all God's words spoken by them behind thy back? "When thou sawest a thief" (who robbed God of his unrivalled prerogative) then "thou

contendest with him, and hast been a partaker" with the spiritual adulterers of Rome.

Thou givest thy tongue to evil, and teachest many to rebel against God; thy tongue frameth deceit, and thou hast canonized hypocrites, declaring that Christ died for some now in purgatory. Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother in the flesh, and hast slandered Zion's blessed Son. These things hast thou done; and because God hath long kept silence, thou thinkest he is altogether such an one as thyself; but he shall reprove thee, and set thy wickedness in order before thine eyes, and tear thee in pieces; and it is not free-will, nor universal charity, that shall be able to deliver thee. Because judgment on thy evil work has not been Speedily executed, thy heart is fully set in thee to do evil, Eccl. viii. 1. And thou thinkest the effect of every vision to be prolonged, Ezek. xii. 22, 23. Yet know thou that damnation slumbereth not, 2. Pet. ii. 3. And, if thou couldst live a hundred years twice told, an untimely birth is better than a false conception, Ezek. vi. 3.

"Oh thou full of all subtilty," in wresting the word of God, and abridging and altering the testimony of the dead in faith, and spoiling their good report! thou "full of all mischief," in sowing discord among brethren! "thou child of the devil" by birth and practice! "thou enemy of all" imputed "righteousness!" when "wilt thou cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" Acts, xiii. 10, 11. There is a mist already fallen on thee, and thou art stumbling "on the dark mountains," Jer. xiii. 16. And, let me tell thee, judicial blindness, insensibility, and the scorner's chair, are an earnest of utter darkness, and the heaviest judgments God inflicts in time. And, though the troops which possess thee give thee the name of Legion, yet that name is no refuge. They are most in number called "children of the desolate;" and, as to the name of "legion," it is given even to

devils, Mark, v. 9. Therefore put that lie out of thy hand, for it shall never deliver thy soul, Isa. xlv. 20.

I see thou art still silent. I asked the name of thy godfathers and godmothers, but thou gavest me no answer: I can answer for thee. Thy godfather is "the god of this world," and thy commanding father too; and thy godmothers are Jezebel the ancient and Jezebel the modern; and thou canst not deny it: "Wot ye not that such a man as I can certainly divine?" Gen. xlix. 15. "Why art thou wroth, and why is thy countenance fallen?" If thou canst not stand the scrutiny of the righteous, thou shalt never stand the judgment of God: "Go thy way for the present, and when I have a more convenient season I will send for thee."

Universal Charity Examined.

"Try the spirits whether they are of God," 1 John 4:1

"I HAVE set thee for a tower and a fortress among my people, that thou mayest know and try their ways," Jer. vi. 27. Master Universal Charity, alias False Affections, I have a commission from the King of kings to examine and try thee; and, having obtained mercy to be put into this office, I am determined to be found faithful, and abide only by the laws of the celestial realm. I adjure thee therefore to inform me what thy occupation is, and from whence thou comest. Of what country and of what people art thou? Answer-My father is God, and I teach according to his law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." If God were thy father, thou wouldst own his sovereignty, and wouldst love Jacob: but, instead of that, thou hatest Jacob, and contendest for Esau, over whom the sword barbed in heaven hangs impending, Isaiah, xxxiv. 5.

If God were thy father, thou wouldst love them that love him: "He that loveth him that begets, loveth him also that is begotten of him," I John, v. 1. But, instead of this, thou hast cavilled against the testimony of all those who "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Yea, thou art at war with all the burning and shining lights in the land of the living. Thou hast taught men in public pulpits to belie the dying testimony of that undaunted and immovable champion for truth, Mr. Toplady; a man who stood fast, and died in the happy enjoyment of God, and in the fullest assurance of triumphant faith; and one whose divinity thou, by all thy sophistical turnings, windings, and false constructions, which thou hast used against him, canst not deny, for invincible truth was his shield and buckler, Psalm xci. 1.

And, though thou hast taught many to accuse him of being bitter and severe, yet the spirit and power of Elijah were upon him. He fought for God-bore not his sword in vain-fought the field with valour-stood and withstood all error-overcame by faith in the blood of the Lamb-cut his way through all opposition -was more than conqueror through electing lovedied at war with the flesh, and under the sweetest influence of the King, the Lord of hosts, mighty in battle! And hast thou taught thy pupils to prate against him with malicious words? Surely, if he was living, he would remember thy deeds.

And I am informed that thou hast taught thy pupils to alter the Pilgrim's Progress of John Bunyan. Pray what business hast thou to set a reverend master of thy arts to interfere with the trade of tinkers? Thou hast mixed false and base metal with his golden bell, Exodus, xxxix. 26. Verily, if he was living, he would punch a thousand holes in thy tinkling cymbal, for gathering all that dross into his gold, which the Almighty by so many fires purged from him. What sayest thou to these things? "Hearest thou not how many things are witnessed against thee?" Thou sayest, I have altered them; but it was

out of love to my neighbours, that all men might understand them. But how camest thou to fight against God? He says he has "hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes," Matt. xi. 25. And what right hast thou to eclipse the glory of his hidden pearls, and then cast them before swine? Matt. vii. 6.

God has bound up his testimony among his disciples, and left his whole mystery in a sealed book, Isaiah, xxix. 11. And hast thou attempted to open the broad seal of the great King, which the modesty and conscious inability of angels refused to undertake? Rev. v. 2. Even, when in heaven the question was asked, they stood silent half an hour, Rev. viii. 1. But thou, having engrossed all wisdom to thyself, hast made thy pupil a second pope, set up another infallible head, and hast rifled the treasures of the Almighty; by teaching him to explain away by human learning, magic art, and false construction, what he could not comprehend by purblind reason. And thus he appears another key-keeper, and has laid violent hands on the Saviour's girdle, who alone keeps the keys of hell and of death.

These things hast thou done, yea, and taught souls to detest and renounce the perfect obedience of Christ; which single obedience believed in, and put on, is to make many righteous, Rom. v. 19. But then hast taught thy pupils to call Christ's obedience, which is to justify many, imputed nonsense; and that they should trust in fleshly obedience, which God calls a spider's web, Isaiah, lix. 5. The gospel reveals no other righteousness to justify sinners before God than the obedience of Christ alone. This righteousness the heavens shall reveal, not the earth, Rom. i. 16, 17. It is God's righteousness, not man's, Isaiah, liv. 17. But thou hast taught men to refuse an everlasting righteousness, which alone can justify the ungodly, Dan. ix. 24, and to trust in a righteousness which God says shall never profit them at all, Isaiah, lvii. 12.

And thou sayest thy name is Universal Charity, that God is thy father, and thou art the first-fruit of the Holy Ghost. In this thou liest against God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; for, if God were thy father, thou, as Charity, wouldst believe all things in the Bible; for Charity believest all things, 1 Cor. xiii. 7. If God were thy father thou wouldst do as those who love the law of God after the inner man, and obey the voice of God therein; for God tells his preachers to bring forth the best robe to every returning prodigal, Luke, xv. 22; to fill their hungry souls with the bread of heaven and the fatted calf; to shoe their feet with that peace which Christ has prepared: to give them a ring, as an undoubted token of their indissoluble marriage union with the Son of God; to declare to their souls that they are found, and alive for ever; to charm them with a sweet foretaste of heaven's melody, Luke, xv. 24; to give them a divine kiss to cast out their fear; to destroy their doubting of his favour; and to encourage them to a holy familiarity, he then sends them with that kiss to the Son, to pay it away: "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him," Psalm ii. 12.

But thou, Mr. Charity, dost not constrain thy teachers to do this as servants, Matt. xx. 27, for thou settest them in Moses's chair, and teachest them to make laws of their own. They become task-masters-they set people to work without clothes, shoes, victuals, or tools Thou sayest that the best robe is nonsense, that the ring of everlasting love may be lost in a minute, that they who have it may receive a final divorce; and that those who are charmed with heavenly music and dancing in the large room of gospel liberty, are Antinomians. Thou teachest blind guides to preach contradictions, and to set the dead to perform impossibilities. To the dead they say, "Up, and be doing;" to the lepers, "Make ye clean;" to the distressed soul, "Be ye perfect in the flesh;" and to them that are blinded with pride, and past all feeling, that they have completely obtained it, and so are under the second blessing.

Thus thou teachest men to condemn the just, by saying they are Antinomians; and to justify the wicked, by telling the proud and insensible hypocrite that he is perfect; when, indeed, by his spiritual wickedness and hardness of heart, he is in the second darkness, which is an earnest of the third; and under the second curse, that of insensibility. To be past feeling is to be seared both against law and gospel. But these thou lovest best, and justifiest them; telling them they are perfect in the flesh, even as God is perfect, making God flesh and blood as they are: "He that says to the wicked, Thou art righteous, him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him, Prov. xxiv. 24.

Mr. Universal Charity, thou art a liar, an impostor, a deceiver, and a thief; a liar, by calling God thy father, when thou art a rebel against his laws; an impostor, because, under the name of Charity, thou art a robber; thou runnest away with the key of knowledge; thou hidest the strong meat of eternal election, which is to confirm the feeble knees; thou hast stolen and hid the best robe, and left the poor without any covering in the cold, Job, xxiv. 7. Thou art a deceiver, because thou sayest thy name is Universal Charity, whilst thou art only an Ishmaelite. Every godly man is against thee, and thy hand is against all the children of the free woman. Thou hatest every heir of promise and contendest continually for them whom God has cast away.

If thou wast the love of God, thou wouldst lead souls "to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem," to the company of elect angels, "and to the spirits of just men made perfect," Heb. xii. 22. But, instead of this, thou contendest for reprobates, which proves thy guests to be "in the depths of hell," Prov. ix. 18.

Universal Charity, what sayest thou to these things? Answer ñ I teach sinners against imputed righteousness only because I am afraid it will spoil their own. And, as for election, I taught

them to reject that, fearing they would get idle; and by keeping that back God gets more works from them.

O, thou cunning hypocrite! I see through thy mask; thou as one of those foxes that spoil the vines. Thou teachest against imputed righteousness, which alone can save, and to trust in one that cannot. So thou teachest to commit two evils; to forsake a fountain of living water, and make a "broken cistern that can hold no water," Jer ii. 13. To reject a wedding garment, Matt. 11, and to stand in filthy rags, Isaiah, lxiv. 6. Surely if thou wast the love of God, thou wouldst do as Christ commands; "Simon, lovest thou me? then feed my sheep," John, xxi. 16. Yea, thou wouldst not keep back their food, that a greater task might be performed, but wouldst do as Christ did; he gave them strong meat first; "Rejoice that your names are written in heaven," Luke, x. 20. Then he fills their bellies also; "Children, have ye any meat?" They answer, "No." "Then," says he, "Come and dine," John, xxi. 12. Then he lifts up his hands and blesses them, and says he is with them always, Matt. xxviii. 20.

At the day of Pentecost, he filled them with the Holy Ghost. Acts, ii. 4. Then they went forth and wrought, and the Lord wrought with them, "confirming the word with signs," Mark, xvi. 20. Christ is a priest, after the order of Melchisedec. Blesses them first, meets them with bread and wine, and then receives his own fruits. But thou hast made him a priest "after the law of a carnal commandment," instead of "the power of an endless life," Heb. vii. 16. And by these means thou hast taught souls to abhor the offerings of God: yea, thou hast taught such foolishness of men's inventions as to pervert the ways of many, until their hearts have fretted against the Lord, Prov. xix. 3.

If thy name and nature were Charity, thou wouldst feed the hungry and clothe the naked; and not lock the strong meat up

in a cupboard, Jesuit-like, that people might work the harder. Who can work and starve? We commonly say hard-working men want good substantial meat; but thou sendest them into the wilderness with only a bottle of water at their back, and there they may work and wander till they are obliged to turn archers. And thus it is that, when they see others look fairer and fatter (feeding by faith) than children of their sort, they grudge (not being satisfied with husks), and often "bend their bows in secret, and shoot at the upright in heart." Thou hast not only taught souls to reject JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, who is our JUST GOD and SAVIOUR, and the JUSTIFIER of them that believe. Rom. iv. 5; but thou hast taught souls to stagger at the arm of the Lord, by denying the final perseverance of God's elect; "In the Lord have we righteousness" to justify, "and strength" to travel on and overcome, Isaiah, xlv. 24.

We are commanded to go forth "in the strength of the Lord God;" and to "make mention of his righteousness, even of his only," Psalm lxxi. 16. God has promised to strengthen and to uphold us, Isaiah, xli. 10, and to say we are strong in him when nothing but weakness in ourselves, Joel, iii. 10. None shall pluck us out of his hands, 1 John, x. 28. Though believers fall, they shall not be cast down, "for the Lord upholdeth them with his hand," Psalm xxxvii. 24. But thou hast thrust sore at this arm of God, that they might fall, by telling souls that they might stand to-day and fall into hell to-morrow. Surely this must weaken their confidence in the omnipotence of God. And this proves thee a preacher of rebellion, by encouraging unbelief; for "he that believes not shall be damned," Mark, xvi. 16.

Thus thou preachest against the sovereignty of our elect head and foundation, Christ Jesus, by denying election: thou preachest down the everlasting righteousness of God, by denying its imputation; and thou preachest down the

omnipotence of God, by denying our perseverance therein; and then thou criest out, "Lo! here is Christ, in this secret chamber of imagery!" But we believe it not, for thou tellest lies in the name of the Lord, Jer. xxvii. 15. Then thou tellest thy name Charity, when in very deed thy name and nature is nothing but thievery. Thou hast robbed God, and hast robbed his children of their bread; this is a two-fold sacrilege. When wilt thou leave off this trade of picking and stealing, lying and slandering?

O, thou walking pestilence! creeping in darkness, when wilt thou pull off thy rough garment, and cease to deceive? Zech. xiii. 4. "What shall be done unto thee, O thou false tongue?" Psalm cxx. 3. Thou speakest wickedly for God, and talkest deceitfully for him, Job, xiii. 7. "Out of thy own mouth have I judged thee, thou wicked servant." Thou ownest that thou lockedst the strong meat up in the cupboard, that sinners might work the more. Surely a sacrilegious Jesuit is two-fold worse than a begging friar! Thou art too proud to beg, but not too honest to steal. Thy wretched name, Universal, is only partial; thou regardest devils, rebels, hypocrites, and brutes; but hast no more mercy for the honest saints of God than his unmerciful holiness of Rome, when, by the laws of his bloody inquisition, he has baptized and named them Heretics.

If a person come to thine assemblies, who has learnt the Satanic trick of wresting the scriptures, cavilling against God's essential doctrines, and who is a hater of the elect, with a gloomy countenance and a Nazaritish head, proudly boasting of his own perfection, though he gives God himself the lie to his face, I John, i. 8; yet such is the man that shall dwell with Moab, and Moab becomes a covert to him from free grace, which is supposed to be a spoiler. But, if God sets a soul at liberty, he is cast out as an abominable branch, lest he should season others. If Charity cast out the salt, she has only the name, but loses the savour; and how is her family to be

seasoned with it, when you say it is neither fit for your land nor for your dunghill?

Old Thomas Brown, a weaver at Gainsborough, in Lincolnshire, sat among a society of universal lovers twenty years in chains of guilt, with his ears charmed by the class-leader, who had long entertained them with this vain repetition, "Come, my dears, lets up and be doing;" which was singing a lovely song to a heavy heart. But God at last, pitying his long captivity, applied this passage to him, with power and comfort:-"I will bring the blind by a way that they know not; I will lead them in paths 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, xii. 16.

The poor man, tasting the sweetness of this promise, went to the class-meeting, shewed the class-leader the promise, and told him the joy it came with. The class-leader, who was almost perfect in his own eyes (pope-like), snatched the Bible out of his hands, sternly asked him if he was going to turn Antinomian; and told him to work out his own salvation with fear and trembling, when God had wrought in him both to will and to do. A few days after this class-leader went to him again, and, finding him reading the Bible, took it away; which much distressed the poor soul; who at last came to hear me, and God delivered him: and ever since he has been rejected of all that perfect society of universal lovers, because he by the Spirit is made perfect, even as his heavenly Father is perfect," Matt. v. 48.

If Universal Charity holds universal redemption and says Christ died for all, why not for them who are born again of the Holy Ghost, as well as for Cain and Esau? And if the Bible has no such doctrine as reprobation, nor the earth any such inhabitants, what will become of Tom Brown? Universal Charity has cast him out, excommunicated, and reprobated

him. It looks as if this sort of charity had destroyed God's prerogative of choosing and refusing, only to establish her own sovereignty. But how a building of hay, straw, and stubble, is to stand, established on the ruins of God's sovereign prerogative, I know not. If God's honour be trampled in the dust, Universal Charity has little room to expect he will exalt hers: "Them that honour me I will honour; and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed," 1 Sam. ii. 30.

So the arm of the Lord there spoken of, to lead sinners into paths they have not known, is rejected; and free-will and human power are established. Surely this is making the law of God of little effect, and the gospel of none, by this old way of tithing rue, anise, and cummin; but neglecting mercy and faith, which ought to have been done, Matt. xxiii. 23. To forsake and hate a man because the mercy of God has lifted him up, is a strange way of shewing charity. However, it is the way that Saul shewed his love to David. The Lord sent an evil spirit upon Saul, but stood by his servant David; therefore David must fly the court, or receive the javelin. Saul became David's adversary continually, because God was his friend. If a pure affection for the best of men, for the sake of Christ's image on them, be the characteristic of a real saint, what shall we say of these?

However, Saul was not without charity; he exalted Doeg the Edomite for cutting off seventy of God's priests; and raised him from his former service of deer-keeping to that of being lord of his household. This place was the price of blood, 1 Sam. xxi. 7, and 1 Sam. xxii. 18. Universal Charity shews her pity further in Saul. There came up the Ziphites, and said to Saul, "Doth not David, ' the Calvinist,' hide himself with us? Now, therefore, O king, come down, according to all the desire of thy soul, and," though he has done nothing amiss, yet "our part shall be to deliver him up into the king's hand."

This moved the bowels of universal charity in Saul; and he said, "Blessed are ye of the Lord, for ye have compassion on me." Ye blessed traitors, and Doeg the murderer, are my best friends!

But, as for David, he is one of the elect, the Spirit of God is in him, the anointing on him, mercy is sure to him, and the oath of God secures him; therefore I hate him. Yet the sovereign Lord God of Israel is with him, and has chosen him; and by his faith he is more righteous than I. And God has given him the kingdom by a covenant of salt, or grace, and has chosen him before me and all my house. Therefore this sovereign Lord, and his chosen vessel, are the worst tormentors I have. And he will go for refuge elsewhere: "Seek me a woman with a familiar spirit," 1 Sam. xxviii. 7. For, though he made God and Samuel his enemies for rejecting the word of truth, yet he will have a friend somewhere, if it be the devil himself; and, as he was altogether for outside things, he will have Samuel's mantle, if he cannot have him, 1 Sam. xxviii. 4. "Bring me up Samuel."

Formerly Saul had, in his zeal for God, cut off the wizards out of the land; but, when he saw the sovereignty of his Maker in his choice of David, he goes to one of that number, even with a prayer in his mouth, "Divine to me, I pray thee, by the devil," 1 Samuel, xxviii. 8; but found, as Haman did by Zeresh his wife, that he was to fall before this Israelite indeed, as Haman did before Mordecai; that is, drop into his own pit, by his own counsel. However, as he had been a friend to Satan's family, and a lover of Doeg and the traitorous Ziphites, Satan's dear daughter begins to comfort him; "Now therefore hearken unto the voice of thy handmaid, and let me set a morsel of bread before thee, and eat." But he, in mock modesty, refused; however, she persuaded him. O how wretched is the state of a carnal professor when God is become his enemy!

Saul was a man very fond of his own righteousness being established before men. He requested Samuel to honour him before Israel, though God had rejected him; his royal self was so delicate, that he could feed on nothing but human applause; he could not make a meal of Christ revealed in every sacrifice which he saw offered: but, though he could not sup on the fatted calf in the scripture, yet he could eat one dressed by the witch of Endor, Sam. xxviii. 25. Universal Charity was partial in nature then as well as now; if it hates poor old Tom Brown, yet it loves hypocrites. This appears in Saul; he will pursue the life of David through all the thousands of Judah; but, if he finds the witch of Endor, he swears by the Lord God of hosts not to put her to death, 1 Sam. Xxviii. 10; though God says, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live," Exod. xxii. 18. This pitiful principle had shewn its pity before in the salvation of Agag, 1 Sam. xv. 19. But Samuel, that zealous advocate for God, being void of charity chopped him to pieces before the Lord, or in his presence, as a thing that pleased him, because his sword had made women childless, 1 Sam. xv. 33.

I once laid hold of some hymns written by a perfect man, or one that talks at that rate, who is a great champion for charity, or universal love; and in that piece of poetry all gospel ministers, who declare the whole counsel of God, are styled children of the devil in these words:

"Hear the hellish monster roars
For you Christ died, and not one more.
His children listen to his call,
And shout, Christ did not die for all."

Ambassadors of peace are here called children of the devil: and, because Christ said he did not pray for the world, nor die for the goats; and told some men that they were not of his sheep; we, adhering to this in the Bible, are called listeners to

Satan; and preaching these truths is called shouting for the devil. This is strange language for a perfect man; and, if his charity be universal, he has a very odd way of shewing it to gospel ministers: for, though he will not allow of God's reprobating sinners for wickedness, yet he will reprobate them that preach the truth. This appears to be a revival of the old doctrine, calling light darkness, and darkness light; sin holiness, and holiness sin, Isaiah, v. 20.

This wonderful charity is so tender about the fall of man, that it cannot allow him to be totally depraved, but insists upon it that man has a power to do good, to come to Christ, and to improve that talent that he brought into the world with him. And it is declared that Christ's invitation for sinners to come to him, implies that they have power to come, or else Christ mocks them with a fruitless call. I read that he called Lazarus, and that Lazarus was dead and stunk when he called him; but where the word of that King went there was power, Eccles. viii. 4. The power was in the call, not in Lazarus. And I believe a sinner to be as dead in soul as Lazarus was in body, and that he stinks worse by far, for Lazarus stunk only four days: but he that says "I am more holy than others" is a smoke in God's nostrils, and a fire that burneth all his days, Isaiah, lxxv. 5.

I know that Christ says, "No man can come unto me except the Father draw him," John, vi. 44. Howbeit some say he has a power, or he is mocked with a fruitless call. Christ says, "Without me ye can do nothing." Now, if we say that a man has power, and, out of charity to a fallen nature, boast of the rectitude of his will, the dignity of his nature, and praise his unbiassed reason, as some call it, and lead him to believe these lies; where is charity all this time? I cannot see that such a one has any charity either to Christ, the sinner, or himself. He has none to Christ, because he gives him the lie in his word. He has none to the sinner, because, though he has

led him to trust in himself, yet "he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?" Isaiah, xliv. 20. Nor has he any love to himself, for his false testimony makes him one whom God hates: "Six things doth the Lord hate, yea, seven are an abomination unto him; a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren," Prov. vi. 16, 19.

The way of shewing universal love is very strange, because it only exalts the flesh and nurses pride; and he that preaches to exalt fallen man can never honour God, or deliver souls; and therefore his pretended love is nothing worth; for "a faithful witness delivereth souls, Prov. xiv. 25; but a false witness deceives his neighbour," as well as himself. "A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall not escape," Prov. xix. 5. I cannot conceive it to be a charitable act to establish free agency among men, or rather confirm them in it: it has been established ever since Eve wanted to be as God, Gen. iii. 5. What good has free-will done for souls, that charity has so much to say in its behalf? Why it has rejected Christ: "Whom will ye that I release unto you?" Free-will says, "Barabbas." "What shall I do with Christ?" Free-will has delivered him out of envy, and desires a murderer to be granted instead of him, Acts, iii. 14. And it is free-will to this day that rejects the sceptre of grace: "We will not have this man to reign over us," ever was, and ever will be, its language.

Eternal life is in Christ; but free-will will not accept it; "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." I know none that make fairer promises than free-will, nor perform worse; "Son, go work to-day in my vineyard;" that is enough for a free agent, he wants no promises nor help. "I go, Sir," said he, Matt. xxi. 30; but we are informed he went not, Matt. xxi. 80. Israel of old told Joshua, "All that the Lord hath said we will do:" but Joshua says, "Ye cannot," Josh. xxiv. 19. And so they

found it; for they sacrificed their children to devils, "and the land was polluted with blood," Psalm cvi. 38.

Is this free-will established by Universal Charity? So it seems. Then, "O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united: for in their anger" against the truth "they have slain" many, and in their self-will they are trying to dig down the wall of free salvation: "Cursed be such anger, for it is fierce, and such wrath against souls, for it is cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel," Gen. xlix. 6. 7.

I think a free agent is the worst enemy to his own soul of any living, and deserves the sorest punishment; because he boasts of his will, power, and profound knowledge; and says, "Are we blind also?" It is an affront to tell him he is blind; yet they suffer themselves to perish, with all this noble stock, for non-improvement. Scripture informs us that those who were invited to supper begged to be excused: and were taken at their word, and excluded the feast. Not a soul comes in till compulsion is sent out: "Go, compel them to come in." Then they come: bring them also; "and the house was filled with guests." Well, we must leave them to the mercy of him who has said, "He that knows his Lord's will, and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes."

Universal Charity appears to me to be one that loves not God, nor regards the souls of men. Pray what right hast thou to send poor souls that feel their need of Christ to the Church of England; I mean to such of them as have nothing but blind guides in them? Christ says, "They shall east you out of the synagogue," but you drive them into it. So you drive these souls into the very mouth of divine reproof: "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" Christ is not a blind guide: he says, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate." But you teach men to say, "Keep ye among them, and be ye united."

This is a plain contradiction of God's word. However, that man shall never be God's mouth who takes not "the precious from the vile," Jer. xv. 19.

Where is thy love to souls in sending them under blind guides? And when they come there they pray to be delivered from blindness of mind. Thou teachest people to deny election, and yet sendest them to church to pray God to make his chosen people joyful. First thou teachest souls to deny the doctrines of the established church, and then sendest them to church to confess them. They are taught to contradict God, and then sent to mock him. Surely that charity can be of little use to my soul that teaches me to give God the lie, and then draw out a wide mouth at him. O Charity, thou usest the tongue of the crafty, and diggest a pit for thy friends, Job, vi. 27.

The whole work of pretended charity seems to be nothing but reconciling Christ and Satan, truth and error, saints and sinners, together. But the throne of iniquity shall have no fellowship with God, nor they who frame mischief by a law, Psalm xciv. 20. "What part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" I do not know, Paul; you must ask Universal Charity this question; it is all her work. If a man was to bring into my house a troop of wizards, witches, heathens, robbers, and murderers, and unite them with me and my family, I should not think it a very charitable act: and those that couple Christ and Satan will find nothing but wrath from him for their pains; "What is the chaff to the wheat?"

Surely the Saviour's family, which he received in eternity, and redeemed from among men, are not to be thus jumbled together with pagans. But all this is the noble effect of free-will, free-thinking, and pretended love. Pope says, "Though God bound nature fast in fate, yet he left free the human will." And he has acted with God and his saints as all free-willers

do, namely, stirred heaven, earth, and hell, together. But God's gulfs are fixed, and no free-wilier shall ever spread the sails of human merit, nor strengthen the mast of free-will, nor use the oar of human excellency, to cross that unfathomable gulf, Isaiah, xxxiii. 23. "And, besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed; so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us that would come from thence," Luke, xvi. 26.

Universal Charity operates wonderfully on that learned body the deists. They discover the same enmity against the sovereign God of the universe, and his revealed word, as the Arminians or Papists do; but are as tender of rebels and brutes as any on earth beside. I believe the doctrine of Pythagoras sprung from this root, namely, the brutal passions of unsanctified nature: and we have many in our days who will advance errors to the destruction of many souls, yet are so tender of brutes and insects, that they would kiss a fly, and disdain to hurt a worm.

Not long ago I was in company with a gentleman who makes a profession of Christ, and was to spend the evening and lodge that night with him. I found his head wonderfully stocked with the doctrines of the millennium, or Christ's thousand years' personal reign on earth. I gave him to understand that I believed the heavens must receive Christ "until the restitution of all things," Acts, iii. 21; and that he would not be seen until he had arisen from a throne of grace, shut the door of mercy, and appeared on the throne of judgment. However, he had wonderful notions of the thousand years' reign to come: "To-day shall ye hear his voice." And a heart established with grace is better than a head stored with notions of a thousand years to come. However, he brought many strange things to my ears about it, which he is welcome to; for I must confess that I love a religion that is near home-I mean in my heart, that I may enjoy it in my pilgrimage through this miserable world.

Having sat a while to have my head stuffed with these things- (only my head, I say, for it went no deeper) the second entertainment was to be performed by Mrs. Charity. As soon as she came forth I expected something new and strange, for she is very pregnant with her witty inventions. Here I was told that this millennium was to restore all things; brutes, fishes, creeping things, and insects; all were to appear as when created: and he had some hope of their salvation too, devils themselves also not excluded! And, to prop up his fancy, he quoted this text of scripture; "And every creature which is in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, honour, glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever," Rev. v. 13.

I sat and argued with him till one o'clock in the morning, but to no purpose; he was too firmly established to be moved with such weak arguments as mine. I therefore left him in his principles; and since that time have taken care never to hear any more of them. This convinced me that Universal Charity is a resident in a carnal heart, but only a visitor to God's elect, I know a lady who is wonderfully influenced by it; she is like Saul of old, a pharisee of the strictest sect; and charitable to all sorts, except those crawling mortals called Whitfieldites. She cannot bear them nor their doctrine to be mentioned; but is very tender to any poor girl of the town whom the foul disease has rendered incapable of business; yet a poor, honest, married woman, who is rich in faith, and poor in pocket, would speed but badly if she went to her in the name of Jesus.

The innkeeper that we read of in Luke appears to have been one of this sort; the inn was full, there was room for all but Joseph and Mary; they were of another lineage, therefore they must house in the stable, though the blessed virgin was in the perils of childbirth.

I was informed that a minister of the church of England once went, on the thirtieth of January, to preach king Charles out of purgatory; in which discourse he painted the Presbyterians in very sable colours, but drew the king in very pathetic strains. Where he took his text I know not: but we all know that the Bible says nothing against an honest Presbyterian, nor any thing in behalf of the author of massacres. However, this discourse was not without effect; an aged woman, who sat very attentively to hear what the Bible, or rather the priest, had to say, had her bowels of charity so moved with sympathy for the king, that her cheeks were all bedewed with tears; and yet so incensed against the Presbyterians, that she declared to an old dissenter, who sat next to her, that, if there had been a Presbyterian as near her as he was, she would have run her knife into his heart.

It was well for the man who informed me that she was ignorant of his being one of that number. This sort of charity always flows two ways; it runs up in rebellion, but down in compassion. I believe Herod was not destitute of it, for he was very tender of his brother's wife-he could take her to his own bed rather than send her home in the dark; and a great rewarder of fleshly excellency- he offered half his kingdom to reward a dancing foot; but in the matter of John, the Calvinist, he was rather severe, as it generally happens with such sort of pretended lovers.

It is common in our days to see lapdogs in the coaches of childless women, which would look better if filled with crippled infants. I have some reason to suspect that Ahab had many of these hairy passengers in his chariot, which caused Elijah, the salt of the earth and chariot of the nation, to run in the storm to Jezreel; and very likely the blood of the king was a supper to his own dogs. I am told that many in play-houses will sit quite dissolved at the tragic scene of Hector dragged round the walls of Troy, and also at the scene of fair Elenor's fatal

end; but they can read of all the agonies of a suffering Saviour, who was acquainted with our griefs, and bore our sorrows and our sins, and the wrath due to us on that account. Yea, these tender spirits, which are so pitiful to Cain, Esau, Ahab, Judas, king Charles I., fair Elenor, Hector, and dogs, can hear of a Saviour's groans, temptations, persecutions, and bloody sweat, and yet show no more signs of compunction than a flint! Surely the sable canopy of the heavens, the blushing of the sun, the convulsions of the earth, the phenomenon of the cleaving rocks, the rending of the veil, the confession of traitors, and the resurrection of many dead bodies, stand upon record to give the brutal passions of such God-hating hypocrites an everlasting rebuke.

Mr. Charity, thou appearest to be an enemy both to God and man; and I believe, upon an impartial trial, we shall find thee a chip of the old block.

We know Satan told our first parents that they should be as gods, knowing good and evil, if they would cast off God's easy yoke of obedience, and credit a lie: and Universal Charity labours hard to confirm his words. Some, under the mask of pretended affection, have crowded whole troops of apostates among the redeemed flock of Christ, and excommunicated and reprobated others, whose names are written in heaven: this is aiming at divine sovereignty.

Others are taught to trust in their own righteousness, which God calls filthy rags, Isaiah, lxiv. 6; and to reject the righteousness which God has provided, Isaiah, xlvi. 13; this is going about to establish a righteousness of the sinner's own, Rom. x. 3, upon the dishonoured obedience of the Saviour, which is to make many righteous, Rom. v. 9. And what is this but contending with the Lord, to know who is to bear the incommunicable name of Jehovah our Righteousness? Jer. xxxiii. 6. To tell a sinner he is perfect in the flesh, is teaching

him to reject daily dependence on sovereign grace, and is in effect leading him to mimic the self-existence of his Maker. Some are taught to reject many of the essential truths of the Bible, and to believe contrary to the sense of others; and this is aiming at infinite wisdom, in attempting to be wise above what is written.

That man who denies the sovereignty of the Almighty, calling his absolute decrees horrible, in order to establish his own free- agency; and cries down God's acts of discriminating grace to exalt free-will and power, acts worse than all the thousands of Babylon, and offers such indignity to the God of heaven as was never offered to Nebuchadnezzar for all the decrees he published. And what is this but laying violent hands on the sceptre of Christ, aiming at his throne, and invading his royal prerogative? And he who boasts of will or power to do any thing truly good, without God working in him both to will and to do of his own good pleasure, has quite forgotten by whom he subsists, and is aiming at the omnipotence of his Maker, Job, xl. 9, who says, "Without me ye can do nothing."

And he who cries down the testimonies of God, and exalts himself as infallible in the judgment of the ignorant, has quite forgotten that every man is a liar, Rom. iii. 4; and in effect says, "I am the truth." And that man, who by uttering error against the Lord insinuates himself into the affections of sinners, and establishes himself there on the denial of Christ's particular redemption, becomes to such a soul an idol set up in the holy place of Christ (where none ought to stand); provokes the Lord to jealousy, Ezek. viii. 3; and in effect shews himself to be God, saying, "Thou shalt love me with all thy heart."

We all know that God tells us to forsake them who have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof, 2 Tim. iii. 5;

and not to seek the living among the dead, or think to gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles. Therefore that man, who tells us to feed on husks rather than hear them who declare the whole counsel of God; and to stick to the form rather than adhere to those preachers who declare all the power to be of God, and not of themselves, 2 Cor. iv. 7; has cast off the yoke of obedience, is exalted in the scorner's chair, and has assumed the seat of the eternal Lawgiver.

Some boast of ability to keep the law, to arise and shake themselves from the dust, and to create in themselves a new heart, &c. And he that can do this is a creator. However, all "the gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under the heavens" Jer. x. 11. The preacher who advances any doctrine contrary to the plain scriptures, disannuls his Maker's counsel, attempts to bring him as a pupil to his feet, and is endeavouring to teach him knowledge, Job, xxi. 22. That man shall never be a real lover of souls who does not declare the whole counsel of God. He shews the greatest love to sinners who points out to them their danger, and the only refuge that God has set before them in his word.

To lessen any command of the law, or mitigate the severity of the threatening, is an affront offered to vindictive justice, and blunts the keen edge of her glittering sword, Deut. xxxii. 41. To teach men the wretched doctrine of final apostacy from the reigning grace of God, when a man is made a happy partaker thereof, is a most cruel reflection cast on the faithfulness of God, and is in effect giving him the lie in his promise, and declaring him purged in his oath, Isaiah, liv. 9. And that man who declares our standing in God's favour to consist in being faithful to grace received, or improving our natural talent; and that redemption is sure to all who perform these conditions, whether sheep or goats; plainly contradicts the Saviour, who says, "I lay down my life for the sheep;" and gives his dying

testimony the lie, when with his last breath he said, "It is finished."

Wonder, O heavens, and stand astonished, O earth, at this! Here is an infernal mask called Universal Charity, which passes current with thousands for the covering of God's eternal Spirit, though God's wo is unto him that wears it, Isaiah, xxx. 1. Blasphemy is uttered against God, his temple on earth, and all the elect in heaven, Rev. xiii 6; and worms are establishing themselves on the dishonoured, abused, and trampled perfections of the ever-blessed Deity; while lies, and doctrines of devils, pass for an everlasting gospel! The sovereignty of God is exploded, and free-agency is introduced. The omnipotence of God, and his eternal foreknowledge of the elect, is trampled upon, and man's wisdom and power to improve his talent defied and set up. The omnipotent arm of the Almighty, which leads a sinner out of the world, Isa. xlii. 16, keeps him on in God's way, is promised to bring him safely through, and not to suffer him to be cast down (that is to hell), even though he fall, Psalm xxxvii. 24, is cried down by a public bellman; and the excellency of human power to stand, or finally fall away, is established thereupon! The faithfulness and truth of God in his oath and promises, made sure to Christ and all his seed, Isa. lix. 21, are trampled down in the streets; and final apostacy from life and everlasting love is established thereon! The perfect obedience of Christ, who "thought it no robbery to be equal with God, yet took on him the form of a servant, and became obedient," to magnify the law which we had broken, and whose obedience alone is to justify many, Isaiah, liii. 11, called of God an everlasting righteousness, which is "unto and upon all that believe," Romans, iii. 22; Daniel. ix. 24, is called imputed nonsense; and pharisaical righteousness, which sets a sinner further from heaven than publicans and harlots, is substituted in its room! Matt. xxi. 31.

The eternal power of God, who has promised to make his chosen people willing in his own appointed day (Psalm, cx. 3) is rejected; and self-will, which speaks evil of dignities, is enthroned in his stead! 2 Peter, ii. 10. The blessed holy One of Israel, who alone is holy, and whose prerogative it is to sanctify all the elect, Eph. v. 25, has many co-partners; sinless perfection (falsely so called) being brought in as co-operator with infinite purity!

The chosen vessels of mercy are in public print called children of the hellish monster, while numbers in hell are contended for. Preaching particular redemption is called listening to the devil, and obeying his voice; whilst contending for traitors, apostates, and rebels, is called charity. But how the everlasting Father will approve of his own children being condemned, disinherited, excommunicated, and fathered on the devil, and bastards brought in in their room, I know not; but we believe, as the father of the faithful could not prevail to keep his bastard in the house with Isaac, so no man will be able to bring in Judas, whom the Saviour so long ago delivered up to the devil.

Is it not strange that the pretended infallibility of a creature, who is unstable as water, should be set up, in the judgment of men, before the whole counsel of God; and that a person who contends for the damned in hell, and who by his acts sets himself above all that is called God, or worshipped, should be so zealously affected as to keep the throne of sinners' consciences, while the sovereignty, the election, the righteousness, the wisdom, goodness, and strength of God, are set at nought and despised?

But all this is done in charity to flesh and blood, while the souls of poor sinners are perishing for want of the true knowledge of God. This is called love: and labouring hard to propagate errors, though it damns their souls, is called the

labour of love. But God says, "The vile person shall be no more called liberal, nor the churl be said to be bountiful; for the vile person will speak villany, and his heart will work iniquity, to practise hypocrisy, and to utter error against the Lord, to make empty the soul of the hungry," by withholding the strong meat from them; "and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail," Isa. xxxii. 5, 6, by doing despite to the Spirit of grace.

To teach souls to deny the stability of God's covenant, is setting them to rebel against the immutability of God in his counsel, and sapping the foundation, and battering the bulwarks, both of the triumphant and militant church. To teach sinners that an imperfect righteousness can justify them, is to overthrow the law; and to deny an imputed righteousness, is making the gospel a fable: "I am not," says Paul, "ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for therein is the righteousness of God revealed," Rom. i. 16. Whoever that man be, that commits this spiritual wickedness in profound ignorance, is a novice, and ought to stand aloof from the ministry; and be that doth it wilfully hath cast off the reins of fear, runs loose in the perilous path of presumption, and is guilty of the great transgression, Psalm, xix. 12, 13.

Universal Charity, I perceive that thou art no friend to God; and, upon a strict trial, thou wilt appear to be no friend to man. Out of pretended charity to fallen nature, thou endeavourest to make the best of a bad matter, lest thou discourage fallen mortals. So thou tellest them that they are not without some power; and he that credits this is taught to reject the arm of the Lord, and slight the petition of the Psalmist, "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe," Psalm cxix. 117.

Teaching men to deny the final perseverance of a saint in the strength of the Lord, because of his infirmities, is weakening his confidence in the sufficient grace and long-suffering mercy

of God. This doctrine is an enemy to faith, a nurse to unbelief, and a handmaid to the devil himself; because it makes us stagger at the immutable promises of God, and leaves a door for Satan, the accuser of the saints, to come in at.

To tell a man his works are profitable to, or can be available with God, is disfiguring the beauty, and lessening the value of sovereign mercy. Setting sinners to boast of power to make themselves clean, is setting them to reject the fountain God has opened for sin and uncleanness, Zech. xiii. 1; and to tell a man he has power to come to Christ, choose him, and lay hold of him, is teaching him to give the Saviour the lie, and to reject the attracting cord of everlasting love, which saith, "None can come to me except the Father draw him."

He, who is taught to boast of free-will, is taught to reject the day of God's eternal power, Ps. cx. 3. He, who is taught to believe he is perfect in the flesh, makes the groaning petitions of the Holy Ghost, and the intercession of Jesus Christ, of none effect to him. The man that denies any plain truth, rejects the counsel of God; he, who appears so infallible as to alter it, is too proud to submit to the prophetic office of Christ; and he, who will not allow Christ to choose or refuse whom he please, in one sense, justifies the ancient saying of the rebels, and tells Christ he shall not reign over him. He, who makes the best of man's fall, lessens the benefit of the cross; and he, who can pay one mite to God, rejects the gospel surety: "He that is whole needs not the physician;" and he that is not wholly lost is never likely to be saved. All these are towering imaginations, that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God; a man drunk with such phantoms has lost his senses, and he that dies in them will certainly lose his soul.

If this be the human system of Arminian grace, and they preach final apostacy from this, they speak the truth; we agree with them. We are as sure that a building of hay, straw, and

stubble, will suffer loss, as we are that the building of mercy shall reap everlasting gain; and we no more doubt of lies being established in hell, than we doubt of truth being settled in heaven.

Another crime committed by Universal Charity is her counterfeiting the graces of God's Spirit: but I suppose these labels are tied to the mouth of the sack, in order to vend the tares the better. O wretched delusion! I wish their souls had felt what mine has: they would then loathe themselves, and bless God for a crucified Saviour; for, when they have done and said what they please, there is no way to heaven but by grace, through faith in Christ Jesus.

They talk wonderfully about faith; but, finding they deny the doctrine of election, and fight against it, we readily conclude theirs is not the faith of God's elect: and, as their faith is allowed to fail, we know it is not the faith that Christ prayed for: because some honestly affirm, that, though their faith makes them children of God to-day, they may be children of the devil to-morrow. We know this is not that faith which leads from death to life, because such believers are never to come into condemnation, having everlasting life already. The faith of God's elect fights against, and overcomes, the world; but Arminian faith fights for the world, and tries to overcome the righteous.

If they talk of repentance, they are sure to set the cart before the horse: repentance, such as it is, comes first, and faith creeps along afterwards, to help this poor lame dog over the stile: and, when this faith has done its office, no righteousness is imputed to it, or to the possessor of it. Though God has promised an everlasting righteousness to faith, and faith is the hand to put that robe on: it is unto and upon all that believe. But the Arminian faith is not a hand, but a covering: so man's

fancy stands as a rival to the spotless obedience of Christ, which alone makes righteous, Rom. v. 19.

However, we know that faith in the justice of God comes first, spiritual convictions next, faith in an imputed righteousness is then felt; pardon and peace appear as the fruits or effects of it; the sanctifying and comforting influences of the Holy Ghost sweetly operate on the soul; and then evangelical repentance flows in to bring up the rear: "I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean. From all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes; and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. I will also save you from all your uncleanness; and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen." Then comes in gospel repentance: "Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities, and for your own abominations" And now all boasting is excluded, "Not for your sakes do I this saith the Lord God; be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel," Ezekiel, xxxvi. 24--30.

If they talk of patience, it is only patience in suffering to establish their own righteousness, and not the patience of Christ, for that is exercised under suffering for the sake of a righteousness already received; not to get one, or establish one of our own, but to hold fast one freely given. Patience

under suffering for the truth is the patience of Christ; but patience to bear up under just and godly rebuke, for persevering in the work of error, is the patience of Satan, and is exercised in his cause; and he has wretched ends to answer in it.

If they talk of love, it is not that love which delights in the excellent of the earth, and in such as excel in virtue; but a love that is warm only for rebels and traitors, and hates the elect of God. Surely he that hateth his brother because he holds the truth of God's election, is a murderer; and no murderer hath any part in the kingdom of God and of Christ. This Universal Charity is not of God, but of the world, because it hates the elect and loves the world; and, if the elect were of the world, Universal Charity would, with the world, love her own. God forbid that a friend of the world should ever love me; because "the friendship of the world is enmity with God;" he that is a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

If one possessed of universal charity mentions, or pretends to humility, it is not that humility with which God clothes a soul. A saint in true humility has the eye of faith fixed on a reconciled God in the person of Christ; and at the same time feels the benefits of the cross flowing into his heart, and the testimony of God's Spirit witnessing with his that he is a child of God. This makes him rejoice with a joy never to be described by mortals; and reflecting on Moses's rigorous brow, Sinai's awful storm, perdition's yawning jaws, wrath's envenomed arrows, and Topnet's endless flame, makes a soul tremble, though under a sense of pardon signed and sealed; yea, tremble to think and see now nigh be was to everlasting burnings when mercy helped him up. This is rejoicing with trembling, and a man always does this work in a robe of true humility.

But Arminian humility is quite another thing; it consists in a gloomy countenance and dejected look, filled with dismay;

inwardly fretting, because Moses will not accept of imperfect obedience, nor lessen the tale of bricks which they are making to build their mystical Babel; in which they shall have no better success than their ancient brethren had, who became a butt for laughter; and so shall these; "All that behold them shall begin to mock, saying, These men began to build, but were not able to finish," Luke, xiv. 29; and the reason is, because they began at their own expense, instead of drawing from the infinite fullness of the Saviour.

Such feigned humility was found in Ahab, when the artillery of heaven rattled in his ears for stealing his neighbour's vineyard; and such humility is a mask put on to deceive the souls of the simple, who think a fallen countenance, a gloomy visage, affected speech, a plain suit of apparel, and words smoother than oil, though at war with God in the heart, are the humble garb of a redeemed sheep; when, at the same time, all their grief is because their self-righteous spirits cannot make the Almighty stoop to allow of their boasting. This is "the foolishness of him who perverteth his way, and whose heart fretteth against the Lord," Proverbs, xix. 3.

A rebellious spirit, at war with God's decrees, under a sense of the venom of guilt, and the wrath of God revealed and felt in the conscience, is the root that produces all this feigned humility. But the humility of a saint, who is under the influence of everlasting love, is filled with self-loathing, and stands astonished at the lot of eternal election falling into his lap, Prov. xvi. 33. This humility makes the face to shine, and fills the heart with consolation, as a bottle that has no vent, Job. xxxii. 19, while the secret flame of everlasting love makes the soul melt like wax, till the second Adam's image appears in all his features on such a happy soul; and all his words come forth seasoned with grace, and drop like dew, while he ascribes righteousness to his Maker.

A true virgin soul carries the law of kindness on her tongue, but casts not her pearls before swine; loves the Saviour with all her affections, but shews no pity to devils, nor contends with her royal Head in the behalf of traitors; leaving the potsherds to strive with the potsherds of the earth; but escapes the woe due to them who strive with their Maker, Isa. xlv. 9.

The hope of Arminianism seems to me to differ much from the hope of the gospel, because it allows that Christ died for all men. But Christ declares that the gates which lead to destruction receive the greatest number, Matt. vii. 13. Therefore, if the former be true, some are in hell for whom Christ died; in which case there must have been a deficiency in the price the Surety paid, or else it reflects on his wisdom, and supposes him outwitted by the serpent, who, through his subtlety, has got legions in his possession, which were the Saviour's own by purchase. It does not reflect on his wisdom only, but on his power also, who could not hold them that were committed unto him; because the gates of hell have prevailed, and many are plucked out of his hand, John, x. 28.

It seems likewise to reflect cruelly on the justice of God, who drew his sword, and sheathed it in the great Shepherd, Zech. xiii. 7; and spared him not in the least, nor abated one mite of the debt, Rom. viii. 32. And it is plain that Justice promised, by the blood of his covenant, to send "forth the prisoners out of the pit in which there was no water," Zech. ix. 11; and further, to be "faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," 1 John, i. 9. But alas! this is all overthrown if Arminianism be true.

If Arminian hope be fixed on a surety that hath not paid, or cannot pay the debt; or, if it be fixed on a mutable Saviour, having no laws to encourage it but such as demand a debt twice; first of the surety, and then of the debtor; first sending

them out of the prison of sin on the surety's account, or, in their own words, making them sons of God by grace to-day, and after all this letting them fall away, and locking them up in hell to all eternity, until they can pay the utmost mite of what was paid long ago; what establishment is there for hope? I answer, a hope founded on such doctrines is just as stable as a feather in a whirlwind.

However, we have many who are hardened enough, through the deceitfulness of sin, to advance such lies in the name of the Lord, and father them upon him; and it is enough to make the flesh of those, who entertain any thoughts worthy of God, to tremble; and those who keep silent at the report of such indignity offered to God ought to be rebuked by every stone in the streets. But what has this hope, which is founded on falsehood, to do with the hope of the gospel? I answer, just as much as the throne of iniquity has to do with a throne of grace.

However, the Arminians honestly own their hope may be lost; and we verily believe it to be as they say, that a man may be a perfect man in this false-hope state to-day, and be in hell to-morrow. But the hope of the gospel is quite another thing Christ crucified is the only hope set before us; and he who takes refuge in him does not tumble into hell, but is said to fly from the wrath to come. Mark, to fly from it, not into it. He who hopes in Christ is not to be disappointed of his hope. But the hope of Arminianism has, it is to be feared, disappointed many; and no wonder, when it is founded on a conditional promise; a withered arm of impotent free-will, in copartnership with a weak and mutable Saviour of their own setting up.

But the hope of a Christian is an anchor which is cast into the immutable and unchangeable Godhead; its flukes take hold within the vail of Christ's flesh, and it is sure and steadfast to every chosen vessel of mercy, Heb. vi. 19. "The Lord is the

hope of his people, and the strength of the children," Joel, iii. 16. And, if an Israelite indeed lose his hope, or fail of the grace of God, and the glory of which grace is an earnest, and be cast away, the Lord himself must fail. However, he never hath failed them that trusted in him yet, Josh. xxi. 45, and it is time enough to cry out against him when we find he has.

Though David says, "Doth his promise fail for evermore, and hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious?" yet he is honest enough to own that this was his infirmity, Psalm lxxvii. 8, 9, 10. And surely that man is a blind guide indeed who cannot distinguish between the infirmities of the flesh and the glorious and everlasting gospel of the Son of God.

If we examine the peace maintained by universal lovers, we soon shall see it has nothing to do with the gospel. The peace which the gospel proclaims is a reconciliation between God and sinners; which peace was made by Christ our Mediator, by the blood of his cross, Col. i. 20; therefore he is our peace; God pre-ordained him so to be, Isaiah, xxvi. 12. Christ paid our debt of obedience to the law, removed its curse, and took it out of the way of every believer: and by his death he paid our debt of suffering to justice, which he had long since declared: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

Having thus by his obedient life magnified the law, and by his death paid our debt of suffering to justice, a throne of grace is established on justice satisfied, truth cleared, and judgment fully executed; "Judgment and justice are the habitation of his throne, while mercy and truth go before his face." From this throne he speaks "peace to them that are afar off, and to them that are nigh:" and believers shall be blessed with "the abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth." And it must be so; for Christ is the Prince of Peace, and to us it is proclaimed freely, "My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you." Thus peace is for ever proclaimed

between God and the elect, between the elect and their own consciences; yea, between the elect and the beasts of the field, Job, v. 23, and between one chosen vessel and another.

And when by faith we please God our enemies are to be at peace with us; that is to say, God awes the hosts of persecutors, making them lay down their rebel arms, and keep silence; while poor saints, almost wearied out with the long fatigues of war, may renew their strength, and rally their forces for a fresh attack.

But what has the peace of universal lovers to do with this peace proclaimed in the gospel? Surely nothing at all: those who contend for the house of Ahab and Jezebel have nothing to do with this peace. Our answer to such is, "What hast thou to do with peace?" get thee behind us; we are at war with Ahab and his bloody house, because the witchcrafts of Jezebel are so many. But these universal lovers call the decrees of God horrible; a language that savours of such rebellion as no man dare offer to an earthly prince. Such maintain an impious war with the sovereign Lord of heaven, rebel against his laws, fight against all the loyal subjects of grace, who are humbled to how to his sovereign will, and make reconciliation between the church and Jezebel.

This is making peace where God has declared war; "I will put enmity between" the church and the serpent; between Christ, the woman's seed, and the serpent's seed, which are to bruise each other. And surely Christ never came to contradict his Father's will, but to delight in and do it; "I am not come to send peace on earth, but a sword and a fire; and what will I if it be already kindled? From henceforth there shall be five in one house divided," three universal lovers against two lovers of God: and the nigher they are in the bonds of nature, the hotter shall be their war; "A man's foes shall be those of his own house."

However, we must leave these pretenders to love to shift for themselves; for they neither fight for God, for his laws, nor yet for the church of England. If they fought for God, they would not fight against us, and help the ungodly: "And Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned to his house in peace to Jerusalem, and Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldst thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? Therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord. Nevertheless there are good things found in thee," 2 Chron. xix. 1, 2, 3. And it was well for him that God's decrees were found in him.

Thus it appears that Universal Charity fights not for God, but helps the ungodly; nor doth it fight for God's laws: a man who is up in arms against his Maker's decrees, contending for apostates now in hell, can never be said to love God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his mind, and with all his strength; nor can he be said to hate father and mother, wife and children, and his own life, for Christ's sake; and if he cannot he is not worthy of him.

Universal Charity, notwithstanding all her pretensions to love, is no friend of the church of England, nor to them that are of it; for it teaches them to deny her doctrines, and yet cleave to her walls; it cuts off her breasts of consolation, and then tells us to stick to her carcass. Surely this is a strange way of shewing charity! The church of England tells me, in her catechism, that I am wholly unable to come to Christ, though he commands me: or to love God, though I am bidden; or to serve him, though it is for my life. "My good child, know this, that thou art not able to do these things of thyself, nor to walk in the commandments of God, and to serve him, without his special grace, which thou must learn at all times to call for by diligent prayer." Universal Charity contradicts this, and says, "Christ's calling me implies I have a power to come, or else Christ mocks me with a fruitless call." However, the spouse

could reconcile Christ's call and her own weakness very well together; "Arise, my fair one, and come away," says Christ. "Draw me, and we will run after thee," say the spouse. She turns his command into a petition, and obtains an answer.

Universal Charity teaches me to call Christ's righteousness imputed nonsense, and to boast of perfection in myself; and then warns me never to forsake the church of England. But is this charity, to send me wrapped up in my own righteousness, and boasting of my own perfection, to the Lord's table in the church of England? Surely, if I go there in this manner, I shall carry lies in my mouth, for it teaches us to say, "We do not presume to come to this thy table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy table," &c. Strange language this for a perfect man, taught to despise his Maker's righteousness! Such souls have no right to approach the Lord's table, or to join the church of England service, which forbids dissemblers with God. No man, perfect in himself, has any right there, but such as "are heartily sorry for their sins," and who can say, "the remembrance of them is grievous, and the burden of them intolerable." He that is taught to deny election is instructed to deny the church catechism, which teaches, "I believe in God the Holy Ghost, who hath sanctified me and all the elect people of God."

How can a man join with the church of England service, which says, "Endue thy ministers with righteousness, and make thy chosen people joyful," when he denies it in his heart? Drawing nigh to God with the lips, and honouring him with the words of election and imputed righteousness, while the heart is far from him as a sovereign, and as the justifier of the ungodly, is only worshipping him in vain. If a man be taught to deny and detest the doctrines of Clod, and then be sent to tread God's courts in falsehood, and compass his Maker about with lies, to cloak

his manifold sins with sinless perfection, and thus to "dissemble them before the face of Almighty God our heavenly Father," he goes the only way to rush into the greatest damnation, which they are threatened with, who are hypocritical mockers in worship. If the subjects of Universal Charity have any better doctrine than this to deliver, let them now declare it, or for ever hold their peace about their belonging to the church of England.

If we compare this Universal Charity with the copy Paul gives us of the love of God, we shall find it as contrary to that as its doctrines are to the established church. Paul gives us a true portrait of divine charity, or love, in 1 Cor. xiii. 1, "Though I speak with the tongue of men and angels;" though I speak with all the eloquence which the wisdom of this world teacheth; and though I talk of holiness and sinless perfection as much as an elect angel could do; yet, "if I have not charity," if I am not a happy partaker of the electing and everlasting love of God, and am not brought to love God above self, and God's chosen vessels above all apostates and traitors-I am nothing but sounding brass (base metal), or a noisy instrument about charity, compared to a tinkling cymbal And, though I have the gift of Arminian prophecy, as Mr. Bell had, and could tell when London would be destroyed by an earthquake, so as to drive thousands into Hyde Park to escape it;-"And though I understand all mysteries, and have all knowledge," so that I could contradict Mr. Toplady, Mr. Hervey, Mr. Whitfield, old John Calvin, the prophets, apostles, and even Christ himself, as was before hinted, and as some in our days do, yet, "if I have not charity, I am nothing."

And, "though I have all faith, so that I could remove the mountains" of guilt, and indwelling sin also; and declare a fallen wretch as perfect in the flesh as God is perfect; yet, if I have not the discriminating love of God in my heart, I am nothing; nothing but a deluded sinner in rebellion against God.

And, "though I give my goods to feed the poor," in order to make up my own righteousness, and bring in my Maker as debtor; and "though I give my body to be burned," or shew such charity for sinners as to wish my part taken out of a Saviour's blood, unless it streamed for all the race; yet all this shew of fleshly affections, which exalts me so high in the esteem of sinners, without the love of God in my heart, profiteth me nothing. "Charity suffereth long," endureth all things for the elect's sake, 2 Tim. ii. 10, "and is kind," especially to the household of faith. Gal. vi. 10, in feeding them with true knowledge and understanding, John, xxi. 15.

"Charity envieth not"- envieth no man for his faithfulness in declaring the whole counsel of God, Acts, xx. 27;-or his being valiant for truth, Jer. ix. 3. "Charity vaunteth not itself"-vaunts not about improving a natural talent, being faithful to grace received; or despising an imputed righteousness, in order to assist a sinner in establishing his own web on the ruins of a Saviour's obedience. "Is not puffed up" with a vain notion of free agency, nor with a vain conceit of fleshly perfection, or of infallibility; but says, "he that thinketh that he knoweth any thing, knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. Doth not behave itself unseemly," in crying down every preacher's reputation; nor teaches any to deny the doctrines of the Bible. "Seeketh not her own" glory; nor teaches any to speak vain visions out of their own hearts, but the glory of him who sent her; nor allows men to establish themselves in the judgment and affections of sinners above Christ and his truth. "Is not easily provoked" under just reproof when given. "Thinketh no evil" of them who preach eternal election, and contend for the stability of God's everlasting covenant, and the glorious privileges of it.

"Charity rejoiceth not in iniquity;" rejoiceth not because errors are abundantly propagated, and advocates for them are increased; shews no joy at the world's wondering after the

beast; takes no delight in parties made and armed with rebellion against God; "but rejoiceth in the truth." Rejoiceth when eternal election is revealed to a poor sinner, makes his soul rejoice that his name is written in heaven, Luke, x. 20, and shews him his witnesses there, and his record on high, Job, xvi. 19. Rejoiceth in the enjoyment of an imputed righteousness, which fills the soul with joy and peace in the faith of it, Rom. xv. 13; rejoiceth in the truth of a saint's persevering, and makes him go on his way rejoicing, and praising God with joyful lips, Psalm xlv. 15; gives the saint a full persuasion of his safe arrival in glory, and tells him he shall return with songs and everlasting joy upon his head, Isa. xxxv. 10.

"Charity beareth all things;"-beareth all oppositions, temptations, and reproaches, from false doctors, and all the arrows shot from their bows, rather than give up one grain of God's truth to their fancy. "Believeth all things." Never calls God to an account about his decrees, nor teacheth men so to do; never arraigns God at the bar of carnal reason, nor allows it to be done; but believeth all things, errors excepted; crediteth the doctrines of election, and its opposite reprobation; believes the elect shall all attain to the righteousness of faith without the law, Rom. ix. 30, and that all the rest shall not attain to it, though they seek it by the works of the law, Rom. ix. 32; believes that all the elect shall be taught of God, though the rest shall be "ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth," 2 Tim. iii. 7.

Charity believes that all who are written in the Lamb's book of life shall be saved, Dan. xii. 1; yea, all that are found written among them who are ordained to eternal life, and enrolled in the heavenly Jerusalem, Isaiah, iv. 3; and that they shall bear the names of called, chosen, and faithful, even in heaven, Rev. xvii. 14; and believes that all who are not thus written in heaven shall be cast into the lake, Rev. xx. 5. In short, divine

charity believes every truth in the book of God, but knows nothing of the newly- manufactured doctrines of Popery, Arminianism, and Mahometanism, or any other lies spoken in hypocrisy; but calls them the doctrines of devils, 1 Tim. iv. 1. And never doubts that God "will judge the world in righteousness, and the people with equity;" making his sovereign acts appear as clear as the sun, and his just dealing as the noon-day.

Charity never sets an universal lover to teach God knowledge, or as a counsellor to instruct him in the path of judgment; much less to condemn his eternal counsel, that a worm may appear righteous. "Hopeth all things;" hopeth to enjoy all the blessings of an everlasting covenant; and makes the soul believe he shall never be disappointed of his hope, or have his expectation cut off; but leads him into the enjoyment of hope to come, and makes a soul "rejoice in hope of the glory of God;" yea, and enables him in the strongest confidence to leave his very flesh to rest in hope.

"Charity endureth all things."-Endureth all things rather than part with any truth, or her portion therein; yea, rather than cast away her confidence for that hellish principle of falling from grace; and will cry and pray day and night, as all the elect do, Luke, xviii. 7, rather than part with her daily dependance on God by faith and prayer, or exchange it for that independent self-exalting and flesh-easing doctrine of sinless perfection.

"Charity never faileth."-Charity is a divine love fixed from all eternity, Jer. xxxi. 3, appears and draws a soul to Christ in time, John, vi. 65, and shall never be taken from him until the faithfulness of an unchangeable God can fail, Psa. Lxxxix. 33.

"Charity never faileth;"--it knows nothing of final apostacy from adopting grace, or of disinheriting the subjects of it; never dreams of God being perjured in his oath, or of the unalterable promise failing Christ and his seed; has not the least idea of

an everlasting covenant being broken, or of the holiness, truth, justice, and faithfulness, of God appearing as an everlasting blank to his elect, who are secured by every perfection of deity, and with ten thousand promises and blessings, besides a whole cloud of witnesses.

And we, in the name of the eternal and invisible God, defy all the legions of devils now in hell, and all the reprobate sinners of mankind with them, together with all the universal lovers on earth, ever to point out the person who, the period when, or the crime which, one single soul, chosen of God ill Christ from all eternity, redeemed by the blood of JEHOVAH the Saviour, and internally called and sealed by the Holy Ghost, ever dropped into hell as an heir of wrath. As I said before, so I say again, I defy you all to shew me, out of the word of God, or even out of any of the infernal annals of Beelzebub himself, that any one subject of special grace ever fell as an everlasting spoil for devils.

We believe many canonized by popes have dropped into purgatory for ever, and the papists do not altogether deny it; and we believe many fools, who have boasted of fleshly perfection, have gone from their paradise to perdition, agreeably to Christ's word, "He that exalteth himself shall be abased." And we doubt not but many have fallen from Arminian grace; and that Cain and others, enrolled by universal lovers, are in hell. But what has all this to do with the point in hand?-Indeed nothing. Popish rules and God's decrees are, and ever will be, two different things. God gives heaven, and the pope cannot sell it. Samson made sport enough for the Philistines, when they prevailed only to blind his eyes; but surely a spiritual Nazarite in hell would make much more sport than Samson.

Talking of God's love being fixed on all the human race one minute, and of redeemed souls being in hell the next, is such

dreadful charity as can come from none but the devil. We all know that Arminian prophecies have failed; that tongues boasting of fleshly perfection have ceased; and that a pretended infallibility hath vanished away: but still we hold that faith, hope, and charity, abide among the elect; and that the greatest of these is charity; and that charity never faileth. "And, if it be not so now, who will make me a liar, and my speech nothing worth?" Job, xxiv. 25.

I have for some years narrowly watched the wonderful effects of this strange sort of charity, but never saw it produce any better fruits on the minds of others than it did on my own foolish deluded soul. A man and his wife once attended my ministry at Thames- Ditton. The man was apt to drink, and used to persecute the gospel; and his wife was of a very vain turn of mind; however, they both heard me for some time, and a visible reformation appeared in them; but the woman soon fell sick; and, having a family of seven or eight children, they were oppressed with poverty, and at that time I was almost in the same predicament. But there was an Arminian who lived in the place; she visited this poor sick woman, and, in order to get her ear, appeared very liberal. Whether Universal Charity allows a premium to be given for converts I cannot tell, but I am informed that popery does; but whether the pope pays them in cash, or in superstition I know not. However, for want of ability to give alms, I lost my convert; and, when the poor woman appeared abroad again, she was established in the scorner's chair, and told me that Christ died for Cain and Judas as well as for me; and what was I? Finding her engaged in this awful rebellion against God, I thought it proper to let her alone. However, she sent many messages to me about Christ's dying for all. I sent her word that I feared he did not die for her. The answer she returned is too filthy to mention.

What divinity this Arminian planted in the poor woman's judgment I know not; but I have room to suspect her communications were evil, because they corrupted good manners. However, it is those persons who awake to imputed righteousness, and they only of whom it may with propriety be said, they sin not; but scorers have not the knowledge of God. I speak this to their shame.

After this instruction I very seldom saw them under my ministry; and it was best so, for these reasons-those who can prove the salvation of Cain, the devil's offspring, and Judas, the son of perdition, are wise far above all that is written; and who can teach them? However, the woman went on like the rest of the world; and, as for the husband, he was often reproved for being drunk in the streets after they had mounted the scorner's chair. And with respect to the zealous Arminian that seduced them, she was indeed an universal lover of flesh and blood, and had only three enemies;-a sovereign God, his sovereign grace, and a mystical body of obedient subjects. But we had a carnal parson at Thames Ditton, who was seldom sober a day in the year; yet this tutoress could hear him preach, and receive the sacrament at his hands with pleasure; and no marvel, for the world loves its own. However, since that she is dead, and left but little encouragement to those that survived her, of her religion having done any great things for her soul.

I was once in company with a man and his wife at Sunbury in Middlesex, at a house where I was to preach that night. They were visitors, and came from London. We soon entered into conversation about religion, when I perceived the man's notes were quite wild, and had nothing in them of the heavenly dove's pleasing melody. He was a man who had read much, especially the works of heathens, mystics, and free-willers.

I believe he had been for many years in legal convictions; and his greatest trouble had been to find out what would become of heathens, blacks, and infidels. These things had better be left with God; for his judgment of the world will, no doubt, be according to truth; and I believe that both the righteous and the wicked will be constrained to justify their Maker. I gave great attention to him, and soon discerned he had been a pupil at the foot of Satan, where I had formerly sat to my sorrow. He appeared to be a man of good abilities, strong memory, quick wit, of a studious turn of mind, and not without a snatch of the original languages, and wonderfully versed in scholastic and bombastic phrases. I said but little to him, finding he was wiser in his own eyes than seven men who could render a reason.

Howbeit, at dinner he began again; and I found he had been happily delivered from his convictions and troubles about the whole race of mankind by this doctrine—that all who entered hell were to be purged by the fire of wrath, and that Christ would, after they had paid Justice the debt of suffering, instate them in the favour of God. And this was the doctrine that had delivered his soul, and he was at liberty in this belief, and at peace in his own conscience.

Hearing this, and finding it to be the same snare out of which my soul had been marvellously delivered, I was sure his judgment was established in the doctrines of devils, his peace was nothing but a benumbed conscience, and his liberty was a casting off all convictions, fear of God, and light of truth. I asked him if he had any hope of a gaol-delivery for all the damned. He told me, Yes, Christ would restore all things. I asked him if he believed that the devils would be included in this universal reprieve; and he told me, Yes, as sure as I was alive. I told him, according to his doctrine, the unfathomable and impassable gulf, which God hath fixed for ever, is to be sounded and waded through; the never-dying worm is to

expire, eternal death resign his sceptre, and the ever-ascending smoke of sinners' torments to find a period. To which he answered, The word never must be limited. I told him, if it would bear a limitation in behalf of the damned, it would also against the eternal establishment of the redeemed; and, if so, even in heaven we should stand in jeopardy.

Of all that ever I heard open their mouths, I never saw any one so instructed in perverting, wresting, turning, and explaining away, the sense of the scriptures; and during our contention I found I had been delivered from many of those temptations, in answer to prayer, wherein he seemed to be so confirmed; I therefore was enabled to chase him warmly through all the labyrinths, shades, dens, bogs, mists, fogs, obscure straits, and ambiguous turning, in this wilderness of universal charity, which, as Pharaoh said, had hemmed him in.

I told him, if he lived and died in those principles he would be damned, if either God or his word were true. He told me not to judge, nor think of disputing him out of his confidence. I told him I had no hope of that; for, if God sent a strong delusion, that a man should believe a lie, it was that he might be damned for not believing the truth, but having pleasure in unrighteousness, 2 Thess. ii. 11, 12. However, I preached before him that evening and stopped his mouth; and he told the people, preach where I might, he would attend my ministry; but I cannot say I have any hope of being made so useful an instrument as to disentangle one so embarrassed in errors. O what a blessed thing it is to be taught by the Spirit of God, and to be guided into all truth by him that never erred! Reader, if thou lackest wisdom, ask it of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not.

It would be endless for me to rehearse all the wonderful effects that I have seen of this Arminian charity since I have

appeared in a public capacity. However, to rob souls of God's truth, and establish them in errors, is a very inhospitable act, call it what you will. I confess my very soul has been grieved within me when I have heard such strange phantoms of experience as some relate, such as seeing of ghosts, fighting with devils, which have appeared in view, as they say, and then lathering such devilish imaginations, fancies, and false doctrines, upon the ever blessed Spirit of God. Such wickedness is great; but no marvel, for God says, when the sinner's itching ears have swerved from the truth they shall be turned unto fables, 2 Tim. iv. 4.

Some time ago I was begging money for the little chapel we built at Sunbury in Middlesex, and a friend who went with me advised me to call at a china shop near Oxford-market. The man I found was a brother preacher, only he was of the Arminian persuasion. He began very warmly with me; and told me he used to hear me with pleasure, but now I did nothing but rail in the pulpit. I told him there was no preaching the gospel faithfully without railing against the devil. He told me he had read all sorts of opinions about religion, and he could teach me better than I knew of that matter.

Perceiving a large share of human wisdom in him, I asked him what he knew of the Holy Spirit's work, what doctrines the Spirit had taught him, how they were applied, and what he felt under his operations, and when liberty was proclaimed to his soul? for "where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty," 2 Cor. iii. 17. These things being strange to him, he thought proper to waive them, and get upon another subject; in order to which he asked me what the soul of man was. I began to tell him what the word of God said about it; but he interrupted me, and brought matters to a point at once, by telling me the soul of man was a thinking being, and the Spirit of God was that spirit which judged favourably of all; and real religion was to think and let think.

After a warm conversation we parted; and I began to consider this wonderful religion, and the spirit of it: and thought, if free-thinking would carry souls to heaven, there are as many ways thither as there are carnal men on earth. However, the Bible soon shewed me the religion of free-thinkers. The Saviour asked his followers, and others, what they thought of Christ; and they, as all free-thinkers do, varied much in their thought; some said he was John the Baptist, others thought he was Elias, others one of the old prophets; some thought he was a good man, others said Nay; some thought he was a deceiver, and some said he was a wine-bibber; others that he was an enemy to Caesar; others said he was Beelzebub; and some few said he was the Christ of God. And so it is now.

The Arminian thinks he is a changeable being; others think he is an angel of the highest order; the Turk thinks he is a footstool; the Jew thinks he is an impostor; the Arian and Socinian think he is a creature, and the Deist thinks he is nothing. However, he must reign till all his enemies be made his footstool; and he who made them at first shall dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Be still, and know that he is God; he will be exalted in the earth, therefore "kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the right way," which you certainly will "if his wrath be kindled, yea, but a little."

But what has free-thinking to do with the religion of Jesus Christ? Just as much as the pope has with the keys of heaven, and no more; for God knows the thoughts of the wise that they are vain, 1 Cor. iii. 20. Therefore let the unrighteous man forsake his thoughts, Isaiah, lv. 7; and, if he does not, the gospel has done nothing for him; for it furnishes a minister, not with the feeble weapon of purblind reason, but with the gifts and graces of God's Spirit, which are "mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every

thought to the obedience of Christ; and having in readiness to revenge all disobedience," when the obedience of the elect is fulfilled, 2 Cor. x. 4-6.

If free-thinking be the religion of Jesus, what need is there of taking men's thoughts prisoners? But this religion has nothing to do with the religion of Christ Jesus, nor has the spirit of Universal Charity, which shews such malice against God's elect in the behalf of rebels, any thing to do with the Holy Ghost. The God of heaven and the god of this world are two masters; and ye must love and serve the one, and hate the other, Matt. vi. 24. Christ and Belial are divided, and must be kept apart by every minister, 2 Cor. vi. 15; the mystery of godliness (1 Tim. iii. 16) and the mystery of iniquity are two opposite mysteries, 2 Thess. ii. 7; the spirit of truth and the spirit of error (1 John, iv. 6) are likewise divided. A throne of iniquity must have no fellowship with God, nor those who frame mischief by a law, Psalm xciv. 20; the tribes of spiritual Israel (Rev. vii. 4) and the tribes of the earth are two distinct tribes, Matt. xxiv. 30; the righteous nation that keeps the truth (Isa. xxvi. 2) and a nation against which God has indignation for ever, are two nations, and must be so called, Matt. i. 4.

The Lord's generation is one family, Psalm xxxii. 30, but the generation of vipers is another, Matt. xxiii. 33; a believer and an infidel are not to have one part, their portions differ much; the eternal God has drawn a straight line, by which every man's portion falls to him: "The lines are fallen to me in pleasant places," says David, "yea, I have a goodly heritage," Psalm xvi. 6. It was pre-appointed for him, 1 Thess. v. 9. And a wicked man's heritage, or portion, comes from God's pre-appointment also "This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed by God," Job, xx. 29. If a man receive righteousness from the God of his salvation, it is God's line that has reached to him, Isa. xxxiv. 17; and, if mercy and peace are upon him, he is an Israelite indeed, and

enjoys his blessings only while he walks by God's rule, Gal. vi. 16. And wo be to that man who breaks through God's bounds, Exod. xix. 21; Job, xiv. 15, removes his line, Psalm xix. 4, or puts a crook in his rule, Philip. iii. 16. It is true, we have some who regard neither God's bounds, lines, rules, nor hedges: but those who break through shall find the infernal serpent bite them, Eccles. x. 8.

However, Universal Charity has gone great lengths in this work; she has presumed to couple JEHOVAH and Jove together, as in Pope's Universal Prayer, where the saint and the savage are set on a level also. Others, armed with the iron breastplate of a seared conscience, are fighting against the most essential truth of the Bible; and, by the dint of magic art, explaining away the sense of others, to make them comport with carnal reason, Isa. xli. 21. Others are counterfeiting the Holy Ghost's secret flame of love to God and his chosen, under the name of Universal Charity; and by this means endeavouring to unite the world and the church together; though God says, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate."

Persecution is a bar fixed by God, to keep the vile from the precious; "You shall be hated of all men for my name's sake;" and it is because "I have chosen you out of the world." Election and reprobation are God's two mountains of brass, Zech. vi. 1. The chariot of salvation, with its white horses, Zech. vi. 3; Hab. iii. 8, came forth from between them, Zech. vi. 1, even from everlasting, as her being paved with everlasting love doth witness, Cant. iii. 10; Jeremiah, xxxi. 3. The Saviour from everlasting mounted this chariot; and, with his sword girt on his thigh, he rides on prosperously, to dispense the words of truth, imputed righteousness, and meekness, to all his elect, Hab. iii. 8; Is. xlv. 3, 4. And all the daughters, or virgin souls, who were from everlasting enrolled in the sacred records of eternity, get up into this chariot, and

ride with him. It was built and paved with everlasting love for the daughters of Jerusalem, Cant. iii. 10; and their names are written in the heavenly Jerusalem, Isaiah, iv. 3. And, although some are crowding this chariot with Cain, Judas, Esau, and all reprobates, yet this wise King will scatter the wicked, and bring his wheel over them, Prov. xx, 26.

The roll of God's eternal decrees is sealed with seven seals, Rev. v. 1; and, for want of being sealed by the Holy Ghost, Ephes. i. 13, these universal lovers cannot see their names enrolled there, Hab. iii. 8; Ps. xlv. 3, 4, or find their register among the Israelites, Nehem. vii. 64; so that they are at war with all who contend for God's genealogy. The glorious day-spring from on high, Christ Jesus, the ever-blessed Saviour, who guides our feet into the way of peace, is sealed also, John, vi. 27, so that the infallible Arian cannot find him out to perfection, Job, xi. 7; though he has dethroned him, trampled his honour in the dust, and taken God's awful challenges, namely, that of removing the rock of salvation, Job, xviii. 4, and that of causing the eternal day-spring to know his place, Job, xxxviii. 12; Luke, i. 78.

The Bible is a sealed book also, Isaiah, xxix. 11, and all its truths are sealed up among Christ's disciples, Isaiah, viii. 16, and none but a spiritual disciple understands them aright: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned; yea, they are even foolishness unto him." And though God writes his laws on the hearts of his chosen, and seals his testimonies among his disciples, and they preach out of their own hearts never so plainly, yet it appears a work which a self-sufficient man shall in no wise believe, though it be told him, Hab. i. 5.

The church calls herself a wall, Cant. viii. 10; and, when God by his Spirit writes his laws on her heart, as he did on the wall

of Belshazzar's palace, and poor souls, trembling under the severe impression, run to men in supposed orders to read God's hand-writing on their consciences, they find a right reverend Father in God (by title only), or a carnal Master of Arts, make no better out with the hand-writing than the Babylonish magicians did with the words "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharzin," Dan. v. 25. They do not know the appointments of God in providence, therefore have no notion of God's numbering the years of a kingdom, and finishing it. They have never been put into the balance of justice, and therefore know not what it is to be found wanting; and, as they are not acquainted with him by whom kings reign, they cannot think it is he that gives kingdoms to whomsoever he will. However, Belshazzar's wife informed him that the Spirit of the holy gods was in Daniel, and he was the man, under God, to resolve doubts and explain hard sentences; and such interpreters are so few, that Elihu compares them to one among a thousand, Job, xxxiii. 23.

I have known souls go to carnal priests under their convictions for advice, who have received very strange consolation for a troubled conscience. Some have advised them to read novels, in order to stifle an awakened mind; and, where this prevails, the wrath of God must awaken them, as it is written, "In hell he lift up his eyes, being in torment," Luke, xvi. 23. I have known others, who ordered the Bible to be taken from them: as if the promise of eternal life (which, in the hand of the Spirit, brought a prodigal to his senses, and the man bound among the tombs to his right mind) were a trap to entangle souls for Satan. Such, in effect, as others have done, call the master of the house, and substance of the Bible, Beelzebub, and all his spiritual servants mad, and say the snares of a fowler are in all their ways, Hosea, ix. 7, 8.

I have known blind guides recommend wine to heal a troubled spirit: but it must be only the new wine of the kingdom that will

refresh those who are of a heavy heart, Prov. xxxi. 6. Others I have known recommending wounded sinners to physicians for a blister to be put on their head, which is a very strange remedy to draw the sting of eternal death out of the conscience. One poor woman at Thames-Ditton, who had never heard the gospel, was sorely wounded in spirit, and carried her grievous complaints to a blind priest. What comfort she got I know not; however, when she returned, she threw herself into a well, but was got out without much hurt. Soon after this she went to another blind guide, of the same family, and then went home and cut her throat. I heard of it, and went to the house, but was withstood at the door; yet, by long persuasion, I gained admittance, and told her most of the trouble of her heart. She said it was so indeed, and seemed very glad to hear of a Saviour; but before I could see her again she was in St. Luke's mad-house.

I got two godly men to go with me to the mad-house; but the woman who kept the key of her ward was (to my great grief and disappointment) one of the free-will stamp. She asked me if I belonged to Mr. Whitfield or Mr. Wesley? Such questions being quite strange to me, I answered that I belonged to neither; yet I held the doctrines of Mr. Whitfield; in which case there was no admittance for me. Wretched work this, and so God will shew them one day or other; for they shut out the kingdom of God from among men. By free-will they cannot enter themselves, and such as are going they hinder: "O my soul, come not thou into their secret," nor into their assembly; but "from all such blindness of mind, from all pride, vain glory, and hypocrisy, from envy, hatred, and malice, and from all such uncharitableness, good Lord, deliver us!"

This charitable spirit, or fleshly passion (which these free-thinkers imagine to be the ever-blessed Spirit of God), is, they say, to judge favourably of all, and to preach or exclaim against none. If a man holds a false faith, we are to think the

best of it, though God tells us to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." If we find a man holding errors, we are not to level any threatening at him--it is uncharitable; nor to preach against him, though he refuse instruction. But God tells us to "cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out; yea, strife and reproach shall cease," Prov. xxii. 10. If a professor does not come up in life to the strictest of our sect, yet we must think the best of him, though God says, "Mark that man, and have no fellowship with him."

God declares that a self-righteous pharisee is further from the kingdom of heaven than publicans and harlots; yet we are only to judge of their lives, and, if they die insensible, benumbed, and past feeling, yet who dare judge them, or even mention any doubt of their happy end?-that is uncharitable; though God says, "The wicked have no bands in their death, and their strength is firm;" and that such lift up their eyes in hell.

If the doctrine of eternal election be offensive to those who will have some g 18c3 round left for boasting, we must let it alone, says Universal Charity, though it is the leading truth of the Bible, and foundation of all others; yet we must leave it, rather than give an offence; though God tells us to speak his truth, and to diminish not a word, Jer. xxvi. 2. If we find any who have nothing but a dry form of godliness on their tongues, and mocking God therewith, though they are void of grace, yet we must say nothing against them, nor their formality; though Christ declares that such shall receive the greater damnation, and from such we are to turn away.

If we find any in Arianism or Sociniamsm, we must judge favourably of them; for, though they differ in sentiment from us, says Universal Charity., there may be some good souls among them. So to be an universal lover is to please all men. The Arminian calls upon you to forsake the strong food, or

every essential truth in the Bible; the Arian and Socinian want you to give up your God, and to bow your knee to a creature; the Antinomian calls upon you to give up the Spirit's quickening power, your daily cross, and a tender conscience; and the Deist makes short work of it; he tells you there is a first cause, who had a hand in our beginning, but has nothing to do with our end, and declares that God hath forsaken the earth. These are scoffers, Ezek. viii. 12, who say, "Is there knowledge" of our ways" in the Most High?" Psalm lxxiii, 11.

The world has its main spring in itself, and all things continue as they were from the beginning, 2 Pet. iii. 4: but of his coming to judgment they are willingly ignorant, 2 Pet. iii. 5, because they do not choose to be brought to a final reckoning. As they never call upon God, they think God will never call upon them; therefore preaching the gospel is of no use in their ideas, but just to amuse an ignorant crowd, who know no better; and the Bible is nought but a cheat, religion only priestcraft, and a man is to die like a beast. It would be well for the Deist if he could end his days in annihilation, as a beast doth; but that cannot be, for God hath said that all must stand before the judgment-seat of Christ; and I can believe what he says, because my judgment is past already, and I have been justified by an act of sovereign grace.

Having thus followed Universal Charity, we find it operating at a wonderful rate on those that are pure in their own eyes, though never washed from their filthiness-I mean the Pharisees, Proverbs, xxx. 12. This charity is also to be found in Papists, Pagans, and Deists, as well as in free-willers; and it appears that devils, rebels, brutes, and insects, are more the objects of its pity than a sound orthodox Christian. The warmest contentions it enters into are against God and his word, in behalf of errors. Surely, if Mr. Universal Charity was of God, grace and truth would find some favour in his eyes.

However, agreeably to the King's command, we will call a court, and bring him to an impartial trial; being commanded to "try the spirits, whether they are of God;" and, if we bind Universal Charity on earth, he shall be bound in heaven. As Mr. Zeal-for-God has taken him into custody, let him be bound and put into the strong-hold, and deliver him to the care of Mr. Election, the gaoler; and I believe he will not escape his hands easily, for I know he is no friend to him; and, as you lead him to the hold, ask him to whom he appeals, and what court he would choose to be tried at, only to hear what he will say. For, as Milton observes, "No falsehood can bear the touch of celestial temper."

So Mr. Zeal-for-God asked him, saying, "Well, Mr. Universal Charity, to whom do you appeal?" Answer.-" I appeal to Unbiassed Reason, and should like to be tried in the honourable court of Conscience." So Mr. Zeal-for-God reported to Mr. Gospel-Experience, the magistrate, what Charity had said.- "Oh," said the magistrate, "his appeal shews his nativity; he is a child of the flesh, and it is to a fleshly court that he has appealed; had he been from above, he would have appealed to the saints, and 'to the law and testimony, for wisdom is justified of her children.' If he cannot stand the trial of God's word, he is not from above, but is ' earthly, sensual, and devilish,'" James, iii. 15.

As for his appeal to Unbiassed Reason, there is no such person; it is only a phantom, exalted by knaves, and admired by fools. But this his appeal is only to postpone the trial; for we might drag him to all the courts in the world before we should find Unbiassed Reason on the bench: and, as to the court of Conscience, where he wants to be tried, it is the court of "heathens, who, having not the law, are a law to themselves; their thoughts and conscience accuse or excuse one another," Rom. ii. 14, 15. And where a company of carnal thoughts are the jury, and a seared conscience the judge,

matters must be badly managed. I know Saul was justified in this court, for persecuting the Judge of quick and dead, and murdering the saints of God, Acts, xxvi. 9, according to his own confession: "I thought," said he, "that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus, which I also did." And Christ says, "The time cometh when whosoever killeth you will think that he doth God service; and all these things will they do unto you, because they know not the Father nor me."

This court seems but very little, if any, on God's side; it has been so confused ere now as to "call evil good, and good evil;" yea, they have put "darkness for light, and light for darkness," Isaiah, v. 20. And pray what is this, but putting God for Satan, and Satan for God? God is light, 1 John, i. 5, and Satan is darkness, Luke, xxii. 53. Call Mr. Zeal-for-God, and tell him to come to me. Mr. Zeal-for-God, go down to the hold, and tell Universal Charity, the prisoner, that his appeal to Unbiassed Reason, and the Court of Carnal Conscience, is objected to; his crime being spiritual, cannot be tried in a carnal court Paul was had to several of these, but they could not make a judgment

The Naked Bow of God;

OR

A Visible Display of Judgements of God on the Enemies of
Truth

William Huntington (1745-1813)

*He ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors. - Psalm vii.
13.*

The Bow was made quite naked. Hab. iii 9

TO THE READER

Christian Reader (if such thou art), daily observation of the judgments, mercies, and providences of God, is very establishing to faith; because God has promised that "his hand shall be known towards his servants, and his indignation towards his enemies," Isaiah, lxvi. 14. It is likewise a sufficient proof of the authenticity of scripture; because, on the one hand, we daily see God's judgments on the wicked brought to light, as his daily goodness appears conspicuous on the righteous; therefore we are commanded to behold "the goodness and severity of God," Romans, xi. 22. I am fully persuaded that the whole train of events were laid in the secret counsel of God from all eternity, and were by the Holy Ghost make known to God's eminent servant; and that the revolving wheel of Time turns up its prizes and blanks as fast

as it rolls, and will, until the whole "mystery of God is finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets," Rev. x. 17. Comparing visible facts with God's word, and tracing them up to God, their first cause, is sweet employment for a spiritual mind, and an excellent antidote against vanity. "He that will observe these things, even he shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord," Psalm, cvii. 43. It is cast as a reproach upon Israel, that they soon forgot his works; and those who "consider not the operation of his hands, he will destroy, and not build them up," Psalm, xxviii. 5. A watchful eye on the hand of God is a great enemy to unbelief; even Thomas himself, though he gave the testimony of ten men the lie, yet he credited what he saw; yea, even the murderers of the Saviour, when they saw the whole frame of nature convulsed, said, "Truly this was the Son of God."

David, upon a proper reflection of the hand of God appearing so visible on him, was brought to confess that goodness and mercy had followed him all his days; and good old Jacob on his death-bed owned, that God had fed him all his life long, and redeemed him from all evil.

Trials and difficulties have a tendency to lead us into this heavenly art of watchfulness. In deep poverty the kind providence of God appears; in persecutions his judgments on the wicked show themselves; and in soul distresses, his supporting, sin-subduing, and soul-comforting grace is made manifest. Thus the poor widow in her poverty sees the spring of kind Providence in her "cruse of oil," 2 Kings, iv. 7; and David, in his soul's deep distress, found God's wonderful grace bringing him out of the pit, and establishing his feet on the rock; persecuted Israel, too, at the Red Sea, saw destruction ride in triumph.

A Christian is not in his right element if his eye is taken from the hand, or handy-works, of God. If a person in distress has

no eye to God, he has work enough to bear up under it; and that soul who has no eye to God in prosperity, robs him daily of his tribute of praise, and goes the readiest way to close the bountiful hand of his Maker, by burying his mercies in oblivion. Unwatchfulness, ingratitude, and covetousness, are enough to entail a curse upon all our temporal mercies; and he that boasts of his wisdom, prudence, and industry, is said to "sacrifice to his own net, and burn incense to his own drag," Hab. i. 16. This is not acting like a Christian, but like the King of Babylon, who walked in his palace, boasting of his majesty, honour, and buildings, till the thundering voice of God from heaven knocked him from the pinnacle, and levelled him with the brute creation, even until seven years rolled over his head; and when he was brought to his senses, then he owned that "the Most High ruled." I must confess I have too frequently, to God's dishonour, and my own soul's discomfort, been off my watch-tower; but the few observations I have made of his providence have loudly pro-claimed his tender and parental care both for me and for my family; and the judgments which I have seen a just God inflict on his enemies, have as loudly proclaimed his discriminating grace, and terrible majesty; while my own weaknesses, and imperfections, have as sweetly instructed me in his long forbearance, mercy, faithfulness, and unchangeable love in Christ Jesus.

I could most earnestly wish to write a little treatise on each of these three subjects, if the Most High should spare my life; but at present I intend chiefly to treat - of the judgments of God, which I have known him to inflict on persecutors, who have opposed me - the most unworthy instrument he ever made use of in his vineyard; but by the grace of God I am what I am.

If my reader is an opposer of the Gospel, God may bless it as a caution; and, if a Christian indeed, mercy may appear the sweeter. Let us sing then of mercy and of judgment: but

mercy stands first; therefore we must sing of mercy in the highest key.

I should not have sent this awful account of God's judgments abroad into the world, if the word of God had forbidden it. But when God raised up Pharaoh as a butt for his vengeance, it was that his name, as a God of justice, as well as of mercy, "might be proclaimed throughout the earth;" and indeed the Acts of the Apostles abound with accounts of God's judgments; nor should have hinted at the names of the persons on whom these judgments fell, had not the scripture informed me of Pashur, Anania, Sceva the Jew, Sapphira, Herod, Elymas the sorcerer, &c. all distinguished by both their actions and names. Therefore we ought to behold the works of God, in order that we may declare amongst the people his doings, and to say with the holy man of God, "that which is with the Almighty, will I not conceal." God may bless this awful account to some poor soul, who is at war with his Maker; if so, I shall have my reward. May the Lord of his infinite mercy give us success in all the nets we may cast.

Reader, fare thee well

Thine to serve in the Gospel,

W. H.

The Naked Bow Of God

IT was at Kingston-upon-Thames, in Surrey, where God was pleased to convince me effectually of the evil of sin, and of the dreadful judgment of God to which I was exposed: his heavy hand made my spirit stoop, and the agonies of my soul appeared in many a gloomy shade on my fallen countenance, insomuch that my fellow-workmen could easily perceive it; while the terrors of God appearing in battle array against me, prohibited me from joining them in their vain and filthy conversation, or assembling with them in public-houses. This set me up as a mark, or subjected me to all their oaths and malice. But one man in particular was a most dreadful enemy to me; he, at time, uttered such blasphemies, that I have been obliged to leave the nursery, and wander in the fields, like a pelican of the wilderness, or an owl of the desert; and this at a time when I had a family to maintain on the scanty pittance of eight shillings per week, two of which I paid for a ready-furnished lodging; therefore could ill afford to lose time, in wandering in this solitary way: but that same man, some time after, fell sick; and as God had delivered my soul out of trouble, I was determined to visit him, which I accordingly did; and as soon as I saw him, this noble champion for Satan's cause was dissolved into many tears at the sight of that man on whose head he had formerly showered so many heavy curses. I stood astonished to see a person so depressed, and bowed down under the heart-felt dart of all-conquering and triumphant Death, who in his health could boast of his strength, of his valour, of his excesses, and of his disdain of all thoughts of God and of futurity. I asked him if I should pray for him; he wept and said, Yes. I did so; but the answer flowed into my own bosom; for before I departed, he cursed the limb of his own body, where he saw that Death had made his first attack; and soon after he closed his eyes in sorrow. His name was Costar.

Thus are the wicked cut down as the mown grass; and, under the burning ire of God, they wither as the green herb.

From Kingston I went to live at Sunbury in Middlesex. My guilt, distress, and temptations went along with me. I had often ignorantly confessed with my lips that I was "tied and hound with the chain of my sin," and had prayed (without the heart) the pitifullness of God's great mercy to loose me. But now I was sensibly acquainted with the import of those words, and also that other part of the church service, "Deliver me from the crafts and assaults of the devil, from thy wrath, and everlasting damnation." These were the groaning petitions of my burdened heart. Having waded through that summer, and the winter before it, in these perilous depths of revealed wrath, the family I served went to London, and left a woman, one of the baser sort, to keep the house. She soon perceived the sorrow of my mind, and the tender regard I paid to holiness; and being constrained at times to reprove, and at other times to admonish her, she kept her mouth as it were with a bridle from sin, though I believe it was a great pain and grief to her. At other times she would talk about religion, and appear in a garb of sanctity. This hypocrisy was assumed in order to sift me; and as I longed for some person to condole with me, I often hinted to her the sore temptations which I laboured under; and finding that my speaking to her assuaged my grief and eased my complaint, I thought her a friend that took pity. But afterwards she turned all into ridicule, broke forth into the vulgar tongue, and appeared with every feature of the devil's image. However, we must expect those swine to turn again from their hypocritical profession to their former filthiness, and rend our souls with reproach, if we are so foolish as to cast our pearls before them. All the rest of the winter I heard nothing from her mouth, but contempt upon all that appeared sacred, or serious; and what I had told her of my sore temptations she cast in my teeth; this was like striking the dying dead. But in the summer I escaped from the scourge of

her tongue, and went to live at Ewell in Surrey, where I was informed some time after by a Mr. Harkle, a grocer, that the same woman had been extremely ill, and in her illness was violently tempted to murder her child that lay with her; and fearing lest she should perpetrate this horrid crime, she leaped out of bed, ran naked into the fore court, was brought in again by force, and soon after expired. Thus she felt, and died, in the temptations of Satan, which she had so often laughed at, and out of which God in his mercy delivered me. "Is there not a strange punishment to the workers of iniquity?" Job, xxxi. 3. "Thus was the triumph of that wicked wretch short, and the joy of that hypocrite but for a moment," Job, xx. 5; and as she had laughed at "calamity, she went not unpunished," Prov. xvii. 5. Her name was Cole.

At Ewell I first began to speak for God; and indeed I had been so marvellously delivered, and was blessed with such a sense of everlasting love in Christ Jesus, that I was constrained to it. (But more of this in a treatise by itself, if God permit..) This preaching of Christ made me many enemies; but one man in particular seemed more furious against me than any other; it was a rare thing to pass him without many heavy curses. The gentleman I was gardener to manufactured gunpowder, employed many hands at that work, and gave me leave to supply the work-men with any vegetables that were not wanted in the family. I generally gave this noted enemy the greatest share, to see if it were possible to overcome evil with good. He would receive what I brought, at my hands, with a smile, and thank me; but as soon as my back was turned, he would storm my ears with every oath and imprecation which his venomous lips could utter, or even imagination suggest. God's long-suffering mercy permitted him thus to reign as a persecutor about six months, at the expiration of which time God laid his heavy hand on him while at his work, on the same spot where he generally uttered his blasphemy. He was carried home sick, and in a few hours the inundation of his

guilt began to break up, and the flood-gates of vindictive wrath to be opened. This alarmed his benumbed conscience to that degree, that his ghastly visage seemed to express all the horrors of the damned. He began to confess his feelings, and to tell others of the perilous voyage he was about to make. But God struck him dumb, which caused him to howl like a dog, and bellow forth like a bull, until he was forced to submit to the fatal dart of Death. His name was Toppin. This was another arrow from the quiver of God; and though it may appear a light thing with many, in the midst of health, to boast of their strength and of their valour, in opposing the lips of truth, and in defying the arm of Omnipotence, yet when the snares of death begin to entangle their carnal minds, and the pains of hell to invade their guilty consciences, they soon find a sense of these things sufficient to wither in a moment all their boasted strength.

Another man, who was employed by my master as a carter (to drive his team), whom I had often reproved for swearing, and to whom I had talked freely about the state of his soul, once answered, that he never in all his life had been troubled one minute about futurity, or what would become of him hereafter. This I told him I could not believe; but he confidently assured me he never had. I often therefore laboured in conversation with him, to beget some serious thoughts in his mind, as he appeared so extremely insensible; but as he had no feeling, it was very hard to reason with him; and to discourse with him about scripture was of little use, as he could neither read nor write. I however frequently continued to talk to him of his state, and of what the Saviour came to do for us, till at length he would listen to me attentively; and once or twice he went with me to hear the Gospel I often, too, cautioned him against spending his money, and hurting his family and constitution, by which means some little restraint seemed to be laid upon him for a time: but when a suitable temptation was laid in his way, he broke through all bounds into the greatest excesses,

and thus laboured hard to fetch up what he deemed his former lost time. As I went early one morning to the garden, I met him going to lead his team. I perceived him stagger with liquor before I came near him, when he said, Gardener, give me a pinch of snuff. I replied, Philip, you are intoxicated, and have been drunk all night. Upon this he sneered at me, hung down his head, and told me he should be drunker before night, which he accordingly was; for he came back from Wandsworth as drunk as possible. At Ewell, however, he insisted on having one pint of cyder more: the landlady refused him, but half a pint he would have, nor would he go without it, which he accordingly got. When he had drank this, he made shift to get upon the shafts of the carriage, and on Ewell Common he whipped the horses into a gallop, and kept them in that pace down the first hill on the Common; but in this mad career he lost his foot-hold, slipped from the shafts, and the broad wheel going over his head, shoulders, and hands, left him a trophy to Death. His name was Philip Cooke. This was another shaft from the Naked Bow of God; and happened on a day when the horse-races were run at Epsom. Some people on horseback coming down the opposite hill, saw the awful accident, and I thought God had left that spoil in the road, as a check to the prancing career of pleasure-takers. I went out, and looked at the corpse as it lay on the common, and had many soul-dis-tressing thoughts about the infernal course which I feared his departed spirit steered. I went home, and wept all the whole night long: pray for him I could not, for I knew his doom must be for ever fixed, before any petition from my mouth could reach the propitious ear of God.

The next day being the Lord's Day, I went to hear a gentleman preach at Mitcham: his text was, "We have an advocate with the Father," &c. in which discourse he spake much of our pity to our fellow-creatures (descending even to accidents), but of our unpitifulness to Christ. I took it as an awful reproof from God to me, as the gentleman never saw me before, nor

did any there know the before-recited circumstance. The preacher was Mr. Joss, whom I believe to be one of the greatest labourers in the vineyard of God. I thought God sent that as a reproof to me for crying all night after one who had been so thoughtless of his Maker, and so regardless of his own soul.

Having preached, exhorted, reprov'd, and invited many of these poor people to Christ Jesus, I perceived I had not laboured in vain; several were effectually wrought upon; one in particular, whose name was Webb, as also his wife. This poor man appearing serious among his fellow-workmen, they became much enraged against him; the more so, as I preached at Webb's house: and one of the men being determin'd to get him turned out of his employment, laid a scheme to this purpose, and abused the master's ear with false reports; who accordingly told Webb that he should require such and such things of him, or he must leave the work on the Saturday following. This poor man, whom I dearly loved, came with his complaint to me; informing me also of the deep design which his fellow-workmen had formed, and of the falsehoods which they had fabricated; as also of the impossible task which the master required of him; and added, that he was loath to lose his work, as his own parish was as far distant as Gloucestershire. I told him we would go and tell God of it, and I bid him watch and see if he did not turn all their counsel into foolishness. We accordingly prayed together every morning early, all the rest of the week; and when Saturday night came, the master said nothing about discharging him. The enemy seeing his measures baffled, abandoned his work, went to the ale-house, and continued a week in a state of intoxication. This circumstance set poor Webb higher in his master's favour than ever, and much incens'd him against the other person. The consequence of this drinking fit was, that he was thrown into a deep decline, carried home to his own parish at Whitton in Middlesex and

when the pains of death began to rouse his conscience, he confessed that he had at different times embezzled his master's property, and then bowed his head "to the king of terrors," Job, xviii. 14. His name was Hall. "Surely with our eyes we beheld, and saw the reward or the wicked," Psal. xci. 8.

From Ewell I removed to Thames Ditton in Surrey, where I soon received an invitation to preach the word of God at Woking, and some time after an invitation to preach at Warpolson. To this invitation I acceded; and great numbers came to hear me. I delivered a discourse from these words in John's gospel, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" John, ix. 35. In this work I found both freedom and power; the auditory, too, were very attentive. When the sermon was over, there came a good-looking reputable farmer up to me, and said, "God give me that faith which you have preached." I answered, "Amen; faith is the gift of God." The man, in consequence, began to search the scriptures, associated with those who feared God, and for several days appeared to be convinced, and very serious. But soon after this there came a clergyman to him, desiring him to mount his horse, (mark that), not of the church of God; if he had, he would not have gone a hunting. The farmer mounted, and went with this clerical hunter. Perhaps this hospitable act was intended to divert the farmer's mind from what is termed Methodistical melancholy. What instruction the ecclesiastical sportsman gave him, I know not; but at his return from the chase, he appeared a scorner, laughed at the doctrines which he had heard, and persecuted those who embraced them. But God soon stopped his persecution, by afflicting him, and throwing him on a sick bed. One of my congregation, with whom he used to associate, visited him in this situation, and asked him what he then thought of the doctrines he had formerly heard. He said he knew they were the truth, and his own conscience told him so, even when he spoke against them.

However, God allowed him to hear no more; for he went to his long home ere another fortnight elapsed, at the expiration of which time I was to preach there again. Such blind ecclesiastics "shut up the kingdom of God against men; they enter not in themselves, and such as are going, they hinder; woe unto them!" Matt. xxiii. 13.

The word of God gaining ground in this parish, greatly offended the blind guide; therefore he thought it necessary to furnish himself with a few two-penny sermons, fit to stop the growth of the gospel. You know, dumb dogs cannot bark without holes. One of these two-penny farragos was served up on the Lord's day to his congregation, with a view to debase me, whom he was pleased to style, a fellow from the plough-tail, pretending to inspiration. If this journeyman divine had gone home and read his Bible, he would have found Elisha was at the plough-tail, with twelve yoke of oxen before him, when God sent Elijah to "call him," 1 Kings, xix. 19; and the Bible informs us that a double portion of God's Spirit was upon him. Therefore I am not the first ploughman who pretended to inspiration; and for my part, I would sooner be a spiritual ploughman, than a hunting divine; for I believe every preacher who is useful in ploughing up God's mysteries, and sinners' hearts, is a spiritual ploughman. "No man," says Christ, "having put his hand to the plough, and looks back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Jeremiah tells us to plough up the fallow ground of the heart, and sow not among thorns. Therefore I to my plough, and he to the chase.

However, this cry of false fire in the church, sent many flaming with rage to the meeting-house; and no wonder, when the host was mustered and panoplied by a master of arts. I believe that a mob inflamed from the pulpit, and encouraged by a bench, would think they did God service, if they made the church of Christ to swim in blood. "The time cometh when whosoever killeth you, will think he doth God service; and all

these things will they do unto you, because they know not my Father nor me."

Among this impenitent host one appeared more furious than the rest. He sat and laughed in my face, preach how or what I could; and then went and informed people what tricks he had played with pool women who came to hear me but he was so famous for lying, that he himself became a proverb; therefore none would credit him, even if he told the truth. God permitted this man to reign about two years, and then laid him on a bed of sickness. At this time a young man went to visit him, and asked him what he then thought of the doctrines of the gospel: he said, "Get away with your damned nonsense, and let me hear no more of it." God took him at his word, and instantly bereft him of both his speech, and rationality: he struck him both mad and dumb in a moment; and soon the harbinger of death began to chase life through all his veins. Finding this, he lay on his back, and fought like a tiger. What views of hell his imagination was impressed with, I cannot determine; however, he soon closed his eyes in death. His name was M_____n. "Thus did the Almighty bend his Bow, and make it ready; he also prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors." Psal. vii. 12, 13.

I one day at Woking, in Surrey, was preaching from these words, "O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory?" 1 Cor. xv. 55. On that day curiosity led two poor widows to hear me, who got their bread by digging sand and selling it. A few days after, they went to dig sand on Sen Heath, and some of their children with them; when, as the women were digging in the hole under ground, one of the children said, "Mother, come away; the ground moves:" but they had no power to move, so it fell in, and smothered them both. Thus God sent me to preach their funeral sermon, and succeeded it with a strange burial. "The pestilence that

walketh in darkness is God's servant, and so is the destruction that wasteth at noon-day," Psal. xci. 6.

I had now been some time at Thames Ditton, in the miserable occupation of coal-heaving, and with a miserable company of coal-hearers, who daily assailed my ears with their oaths and lewd conversation, until my soul was bowed down within me: but whenever I could get into a stable, hay-loft, or store-house, to spend a moment with my God in prayer, it was as though I were wafted up into the third heaven; so sweetly did I feel the "sounding of his bowels towards me," Isa. lxiii. 15. I one day, in an agony, asked his blessed Majesty, wherefore he permitted me to labour among such men, as he had made my conscience so tender of sinning, and given me an holy indignation against it; adding, that I feared it would in time harden my heart; and beseeching him to send me somewhere else to live, though it were in a wood, rather than let me hear the filthy conversation of the wicked. In answer to my petition, he sent these words as a powerful reproof, "Do men light a candle to put it under a bushel?" Matt. v. 15. I was fully convinced from that hour, that I was to appear in a more public character, and I never prayed that I might live in a wood afterwards.

Seeing the whole place given up to blasphemy and dissipation, I found a desire to preach to these miserable beings; hoping that God would make it useful to them, for I grieved to see and hear their wickedness.

It happened on a certain day, that myself and others were unloading a barge of coals, at which time I laboured under sore temptations; and to add to the burden, I experienced extreme poverty, and an empty cupboard at home; various temptations within, and filthy conversation without, drove me to my wits end. The men soon after agreeing to go to the public-house to dinner, I went under the barge tilt, or cabin,

and wrestled hard with God in prayer, telling him of my little ones wanting bread, and how hard I felt it, to see them suffer; to which he sent me this sweet, soul-satisfying answer, "I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, but thou art rich," Rev. ii. 9. Finding great liberty with my God in prayer, I wept for joy, and further asked him, wherefore such a desire after the salvation of souls was kindled in my heart, if he did not intend to make me useful to them, as he had made me useful to many others? To which he gave me this answer, "Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it," Rev. iii. 8. I got up, wiped my eyes, and came away "with my countenance no more sad," 1 Sam. i. 18; having enjoyed a better repast than any of them, and found by happy experience, that "man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live," Deut. viii. 3. I told a friend the same day, that I was to preach the gospel at Ditton: and soon after a door was opened to another man, whom God gave but little to say. The person was a London professor; but I have reason to tear that he was not a possessor of the grace of God, and indeed his wretched life soon evinced it. The week following I was invited to preach at this place to a numerous auditory, who appeared very attentive, and God's presence was much with me: for, during several weeks many heard me gladly, and approved much of the doctrine. But several persons who were good customers to the publicans, seeming rather serious, and my zealous exclamations against dissipation, soon raised a storm, which beat violently on my head for several years; however, many still attended; and some few seemed really to be called.

One man in particular appeared to be convinced, and soon after brought his wife with him, who seemed "to receive the seed by the way side," Mat. xiii. 19; or to begin where she should have left off, namely, with joy. But the world beginning to laugh at her "withered all her joy," Mark, iv. 6; and kept her

from hearing any more; and she in consequence being ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, began to oppose her husband, who left my ministry also, to the great grief of my soul. Soon after this, I saw that he had mounted "the scorner's chair," Psal. i. 1. I one day passing him, received the following taunt, "Pray, are you born again, Mr. Inspiration?" My soul felt his "cruel mockings," Heb. xi. 36; but I made no reply. However, soon after he had this awful dream, namely, that the end of the world was come, and that God rained fire and brimstone from heaven on the wicked, and that he saw the felicity of the righteous, and those whom he despised among them; but his portion was with the damned. Being dreadfully disturbed in his sleep, he endeavoured to get from under the awful storm, and catching fast hold of the beadstead, immediately awoke, and soon found his conscience was as effectually awakened as himself. In great distress of mind he went weeping to several of his companions, telling them the dream, and his present distress on that account; from whom he received no more sympathy than Judas, who confessed to the high priest (in the anguish of despair) that "he had sinned, and betrayed innocent blood;" whose disconsolate answer was "What is that to us? see thou to that," Matt. xxvii. 4.

However, this dream appeared to come from God; "God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not, in a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men," Job, xxxiii. 14, 15.

This dream proved sufficient to stop the lips of contempt, to wither the strength of his tabernacle, cast him into a deep decline, and to lay him on his death-bed. A friend of mine visited him, and by his own desire I went and prayed by him, spake to him, and had some little hope of his soul's welfare. But a person under the alarms of wrath, and in the agonies of death, pours forth such confessions and floods of tears, that it is difficult at times to distinguish between genuine repentance,

and that which is common to nature. However, he soon went into eternity, and by this time knows certainly whether inspiration is really requisite or not. His name was Munfield.

Soon after this, a woman who had a kitchen adjoining the room I preached in, and a chamber over it, invited a company of bargemen to come and drink with her. They opened the kitchen door which stood next the door of my meeting, where they sat, and drank, and sung together, in order to prevent me from being heard: this not having the desired effect, she went up stairs, and with the heels of her shoes stamped so loud, that I could scarcely hear one word which I uttered; but finding I still proceeded, and the room being filled with hearers, they laid the following scheme. This ungodly, drunken wretch, was to enter the meeting, and strike any of the poor women who sat to hear the word; and in case any of my friends should offer to hold her hands, or turn her out, she was to cry Murder, as a signal to the rebel host to enter to her assistance. This was accordingly accomplished: the mob entering, broke the doors to pieces, burnt asafoetida and emptied soilage from a privy into the meeting. After their battling, and breaking the seats to pieces, this masculine heroine, and leader of the wretched crew, not satisfied with the mischief already done, broke an entire window all to shivers. The place of worship and myself being licensed, we procured a warrant, and took some of the offenders before a bench of magistrates, but to no purpose; for I soon perceived by their bitter appearance, that "judgment was turned into gall, and the fruit of righteousness into hemlock," Amos, vi. 12. So Truth and Innocence went back mourning in sackcloth, and well they might, when they saw their two sisters, Judgment and Equity, lie dead in the Court.

However, our adversaries meeting with more encouragement than us, we were attended home by them with their hats adorned with blue ribbons, &c. and on their arrival, the whole

parish appeared in triumph; the bells were immediately rung, and my little cottage was beset on all sides; my effigy then was made and brunt, a blasphemous harangue delivered as a funeral sermon over this figure of straw and rags, and unutterable insolence was sung in imitation of a solemn anthem. Upon this, one and all cried out, they were for the High Church: and indeed none could properly doubt of that, who saw the height of their wickedness; for had they been Turks or Pagans, they would have been ashamed of such conduct.

I shut myself up for some hours, and cried to God, whose displeasure seemed to appear against them, by sending a violent storm of rain, which put an end to their funeral procession. At that instant this word came with power to my heart, "they that strive with thee, shall perish," Isa. xli. ll.

Some few days after this, my female adversary was at a friend's house of mine, and in the same room where I preached, and he spake to her of her dreadful wickedness. She replied, "I know he preaches the truth; but I shall get worse and worse." Upon this my friend told her that she had drank too much; but her reply was, she should be drunker before night, or words to that effect.

This poor wretch had an associate, who lived near my little cottage, where they generally held their consultations with a company of bargemen, who assisted them in executing their wicked designs. The same night she behaved so desperate, that even the publicans themselves turned her out of doors: she continued, however, to disturb the neighbourhood till midnight, and at five o'clock the next morning was found dead at the door of her above-mentioned intimate acquaintance. The neighbourhood seemed much alarmed, but presently after a shouting was heard from several parts. I inquired into the cause of this uproar, and was informed that myself, or

some of my hearers, had laid violent hands upon her, for they traced her by drops of blood. A coroner was sent for, and a jury called: afterwards a physician was brought, to see where the wound was given; but on examination it was found that her death proceeded from the effects of drinking, and not from any stroke of violence. Thus was she publicly exposed, to the shame and confusion of all her wicked companions. Her name was Barret. "Every morning doth the Almighty bring his judgments to light: He faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame," Zeph. iii. 5.

After this judgment had appeared in so conspicuous a manner, the joy and encouragement which several of my enemies had received from the bench, appeared for a time visibly to wither; and indeed "the triumph of the wicked is but short at most," Job, xx. 5. Many, I believe, were able to see the flaming sword of God wielded in the defence of truth and innocency, though the temporal sword appeared a defence to vice.

My congregation now enjoyed a little respite, and we walked comfortably in the ways of God; but this was of short duration. A gentleman who came to live in the place, kept a great retinue of servants, and they by their number, countenance, and the assistance of their master's cellar, gave fresh life to the vanquished host. This caused my neighbours to rally their forces for a re-engagement. But after a few weeks hotter battle than the first, God's bow appeared bent again. One poor youth, who had long blasphemed at the door, even in my face when preaching, was taken ill, and put to bed. In the same evening a fellow-servant went to see how he did, and found him dangerously ill. He asked her what hour the clock struck; she answered, Eleven; "Oh! (said he) at twelve I shall run my last." Accordingly, when the clock struck that hour, he swore a dreadful oath; but divine vengeance immediately loosed the hinge of his jaw; it fell; and he, having filled up the

measure of his sin, was allowed to swear no more. This was another arrow from the quiver of God.

This circumstance, however, put but little stop to the enraged mob. Countenanced as they were by the bench, encouraged from the pulpit, together with the assistance which they received from the parish officers, these were sufficient to strengthen any hands against Christ, especially where preventive grace is withheld. Soon, therefore, were our doors and windows broken to pieces again; and even part of a neighbour's wall was pulled down, to furnish them with materials for mischief: the owner of the wall not being a man of our lineage, applied to a clergyman (who held the temporal sword of God), and he found redress; the enemies being obliged to build up the wall again at their own expense: but as to the damage which we had sustained, we could procure no redress; consequently were obliged to repair the injury done us at our own cost. This effectually convinced us, that our vain petitions, formerly put up in a state of ignorance, for "magistrates to receive grace, to execute justice, and to maintain truth," were never heard: because Truth appeared the greatest enemy that they had.

Some time after this, a man came into the meeting at a time while I was preaching, dressed in a woman's bonnet, petticoat, and a black oil-skin cloak, his face smeared with tallow, and coloured with soot: he placed himself in a corner of the room, and stood motionless, till the audience were thrown into confusion, and then he withdrew. The next day we were hooted through the village, and were told that the devil had made his appearance at our meeting the night before; and so the event nearly justified: for not many days after, this very man was sent to Kingston jail for debt; but as he was a friend to the High Church, a minister and some others raised a contribution, in order to release him, which in a short time was effected accordingly. However, although he again appeared

abroad, he never altarwards insulted us: but one day, as he was sitting in his chair, the devil entered into him in reality; as he jumped up, cried out, ran to the Bible and Common Prayer Book quite distracted, then rushed into the street, and was obliged to be brought into the house again by force, and put to bed: but he told his fellow persecutors that he should have one more race, and that would be his last; then made his escape a second time; and with no other covering but his shirt, ran into the Red Lion-yard, where he was again secured, brought back, dressed, and again set up in a chair. A third time, however, he escaped from all their hands, and ran down what is called Moulsey-lane, his fellow-persecutors pursuing him; and when they had secured him, he bit at them like a dog. By force they brought him back again, and once more set him in his chair, where shortly he closed his eyes in death. His name was Scurving. "Thus God cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels among them," Psal. lxxviii. 49.

After this awful display of divine vengeance, we had, if I may be allowed the expression, a cessation of arms; and were allowed to assemble together for prayer and preaching, without going with our lives in our hands. The family, whose servants generally led the van, returned to London for the winter season; and now we began to think we had fought "as good soldiers of Jesus Christ," 2 Tim. ii. 3.; and through "God's everlasting love were more than conquerors," Rom. viii. 37. Our enemies shut their mouths at us, and we were in hopes that the last bow that was bent, had discharged "the arrow of the Lord's deliverance," 2 Kings, xiii. 17.

Accordingly, we were now favoured with some comfortable meetings; our hearts were happily united to each other; and the more dangers we waded through, the more conspicuous did the hand of God appear, and the more invincible we found his armour to be.

In "this day of prosperity we were joyful;" but after a few months were over, came "the day of adversity," in which we were obliged "to consider," Eccles. vii. 14; finding by woeful experience, that it is "through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom of God," Acts, xiv. 22.

In the spring following the family returned to Ditton, which gave fresh hope and life to our adversaries, who had hitherto met with nothing but a constant defeat. Therefore on the next preaching night they made a fresh attempt at Lot's door, to see if their former allies would join them again in this impious and unproclaimed war, which they accordingly did. They then threw bricks and stones, until there was not a pane of glass left. The window shutters, which were an inch thick, and barred across, were also shattered to pieces, insomuch that we were obliged to stop up all the windows with brick-work, totally exclude the use of glass, and ever afterwards make use of artificial light, both in summer and winter.

When the engagement was finished, we were informed that our enemies held a council how they should be marshalled the next lecture night. An upper servant, in a certain family, undertook to be the first field-marshal, who bound himself with many oaths, that he would pull the fellow (meaning me) out of his hole, as he was pleased to term the pulpit; but in this undertaking he had no better success than "the forty Jews, who had hound themselves with a great curse, that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul," Acts, xxiii. 12. the evening arrived; I heard them sound to arms, attended with a band of rough music. Some called in the scattered troops from their respective quarters, by ringing the church bells; some with oaths and halloos shouted for the battle, while others were no less busy in storming the place with bricks and stones. I sat at home and heard their uproar, till my very soul sunk within me, and indeed I entertained some thoughts of "turning back in the day of battle," Psal. lxxviii. 9.

But this word soon put my cowardice to flight," he that will save his life shall lose it, and he that will lose his life for my sake, and the gospel's, shall find it," Matt. x. 39. I then left my habitation, and went through the confused ranks of this enraged host to our place of worship, with no other armour than half a grain of faith in my heart, and a little Bible in my pocket. Thus armed, I delivered my message, and returned home in safety, escaping the threatening of their ungodly leader, who happened, it seemed, to be absent. We were afterwards informed he was sent on that day to London; but fearing he should return too late, rode furiously in his way home, that he might save his oath, and execute his promise. But ere he arrived within the shout of their camp, his horse threw him; he was conveyed to a public-house, where he lay in his blood many days. Thus his horse, as well as Balaam's ass, wisely fought for Israel, though their riders were mad enough to fight against them.

Surely God will take his own part "against those who intend evil against him; they imagine a mischievous device, which they are not able to perform; therefore shalt thou make them turn their back, when thou shalt make ready thine arrows upon thy strings against the face of them," Psal. xxi. 11, 12.

This "divination against Israel" not having the desired effect, a council was held among the parish officers, who ordered a dinner at a public-house, and their consultation being ended, they came to the following resolution, viz. That a bench of magistrates were to be informed of my having intruded myself into their parish, without having gained any legal settlement, and if possible that a summons should be immediately procured, after the justices were informed "that a fellow who came in there to sojourn only, would now needs be a judge," Gem xix. 9.

First, a complaint was laid against my dame's fruitful womb, which generally brought forth once a year: said they, he has a large family; but surely this was no great crime, seeing we are commanded to "increase and multiply," Gen. i. 2. After this, my poverty was exclaimed against, which none experienced the bad effects of, except myself, as I always took care to pay my debts; and if poverty and honesty be coupled together, they surely favour more of virtue than of vice; this, therefore, could be no great sin, because "God maketh poor and maketh rich - it is he that bringeth low, and lifteth up." My occupation was next laid in the balance, and was found to be no more than the labourious calling of coal heaving, at ten shillings per week. "A poor man that oppresseth the poor, is like a sweeping rain which leaveth no food," Prov. xxviii. 3. - And, lastly, the greatest crime of all was, that I, with such a family, so poor, so ignorant a person, and only an intruder into their parish, should presume to be a preacher; yea, preach too against the church, the parson, and all the parish. This charge, indeed, was true; and none could help it, if they preached God's word. A summons was accordingly sent, and much general joy appeared at the thoughts of removing this enemy of the church. They then went and informed a neighbour of mine what feats they had performed, which doubtless deserved all praise, as it was done in defence of the church. This neighbour secretly sent for me, informing me of their proceedings against me: and as he was a collector of the king's taxes, he received the tax from me, and gave me a receipt, in order to settle me there as a parishioner. When the day arrived, I obeyed the summons; and as my poverty had been represented in a deplorable light, I took care to appear as well dressed as possible. A certain gentleman, who feared God, attended to supply me with money, if any were wanting: two attorneys at law, likewise, came from London, to afford me any assistance that I might require. Those two gentlemen demanded of the magistrates my legal right to the parish of Thames Ditton; first, as a licensed minister; and secondly, as

having paid the king's taxes, which the bench granted. A gentleman took me into a carriage, and carried me home, while my enemies were branded with shame, God's visible blast appearing so plain on the measures of this wise sanhedrin. At my return I gathered my flock together, and delivered a discourse from this text, "They said among the heathen, they shall no more sojourn there," Lam. iv. 15. But God says," the bounds of our habitation are fixed," and so we found it; for another poor man, whom they supposed to be an enemy also to their church, was likewise summoned before the bench, who came home a parishioner as well as myself; so they could neither remove the ringleader, nor the second in command. When we had finished our devotions, we parted in peace and happiness, saying, as Israel did of old, "many a time have they afflicted us from our youth up, but they have not prevailed against us," Psal. cxxix. 1, 2; nor is it likely they ever will, while God has one single soul to call by his grace - "I will work,;" says God, "and who shall let it?" This world is a stage for action, a scaffold for work, and a place of graves for rest; and when the human race shall have acted their several parts, the building of mercy will be complete; and when the dead have had their appointed repose, Time shall strike his last number, and that shall bring on the "midnight cry, Behold the bride-groom cometh," Matt. xxv. 6: then this stage shall come down, the scaffold shall be struck, and all that "sleep in their graves shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt," Dan. xii. 2. And then shall appear the Sun of righteousness, whose glorious beams shall bring on the blessed morning of eternal day, "in which the upright shall surely have dominion," Psal. xlix. 14.

We made several attempts to bring these offenders to justice; but all our endeavours proved in vain; "for Satan is not divided against himself; if he was, how should his kingdom stand?" Matt. xii. 26.

Our disappointment in this respect gave fresh encouragement to our enemies, they crying out in triumph," there is no law for them;" and that they might do just what they pleased. Accordingly, two men came one night, one of whom was a Roman Catholic: they swore at me in the most awful manner, even in the meeting. One of them soon after fell out of a boat into the Thames; but through the tender mercy of our God, his life was saved: and not many days after, the other fell overboard also; whose escape was so narrow, that there was scarcely a step between him and death. This awfully alarmed his conscience, and his visage proclaimed the terrors of his mind; his very joints were loosed, and his knees shook together. These circumstances struck them so forcibly, that, as they were one day at dinner, they remarked what an unlucky place Ditton was, as nothing but misfortunes had befallen them ever since they came thither. Fortune, Luck, and Chance, are the Trinity of fools; had they been wise men, they would have looked higher.

The Lord's displeasure was visibly seen in another judgment, which appeared among the ringers, who frequently rung the church bells, either to drown my voice, or to summon their fellow companions in mischief, to disturb me and those who attended me in my ministry. One Sunday evening in particular, they had been ringing; and after the peal was over, they went to wrestling, in which cruel game, on God's sacred day, one received a fall and broke his leg, and now is "gone to the house appointed for all living," Job, xxx. 93.

Another poor hardened youth had got himself entangled in a bell-rope, and tossed in such a manner, as obliged him to apply to an hospital in London, from whence he returned, and still remains a cripple. Thus "God striketh them as wicked men, in the open sight of others," Job, xxxiv. 26.

But what shall I say? an ignorant mind, an impenitent heart, and a seared conscience, are a coat of mail put on by the devil; and to be left to live and die in it, is an awful judgment from God. Our Saviour calls it "Satan's armour, wherein he trusteth; when the Lord taketh away that, the spoil is said to be divided;" that is, as I conceive, the devil takes the armour, "and the Saviour both the body and soul," Luke, xi. 22.

Without either fee or reward, I preached among the inhabitants of Thames Ditton during six years successively, and seldom went a day to prayer dry-eyed before God during that whole time. But God answered my prayers into my own bosom, and them to the confusion of their faces. How dreadful, then, must the state of that people be, when the hearts of those who fear God are hardened against them, the mouth of prayer stopped for them, and God declares that his Spirit shall no more strive with them? It is well for such, if the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah do not "fare better in the general judgment than them!" Luke, x. 12.

The person whom I mentioned at the beginning of this treatise as officiating priest, and who performed the mock-funeral solemnity when my effigy was burnt, soon after found the terrors of a guilty conscience, and declared that the infernal fiends pursued him wherever he went. At one time he leaped into a pond; but was got out with safety: he afterwards attempted to throw himself from a window, but was happily prevented. In short, his intellects were much impaired for a considerable period; but for some time past he is a little recovered. However, to this day, he labours under many afflictions: and I hope in the Lord that he has seen his error; as I am informed that when he was asked by some of his companions, wily he did not deride and abuse us, as he used to do; his answer was, "Let them alone, they are wiser than we."

Oh! it is awful to wage war against Christ, who is the Lord of hosts, mighty in battle; he is perpetually mounted on his white horse, and carries a bent bow against his adversaries, as well as a crown for his friends. "And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him; and he went forth conquering and to conquer," Rev. vi. 2. God grant that the poor man may find grace in his sight, as he has delivered him from pouring contempt on his word and commandment; and receive an answer to that petition which is often put up in hypocrisy, namely, "Forgive our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers, and turn their hearts."

Notwithstanding that the Almighty had displayed his judgments in so conspicuous a manner upon them, yet they most awfully persisted in persecuting us; insomuch that some who formerly encouraged them in their wickedness secretly, have been ashamed, when in the morning they have beheld our shattered meeting, and the road covered with brick, stones, and old tin ware - which last article was used by this rebellious band of rough musicians, in order to drown my voice, and confuse me in my preaching. One night when I was discoursing from this solemn passage, "The resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment," Heb. vi. 2.; a person who stood at the door to mock, make a riot, and disturb the congregation, uttered this awful expression when I concluded, "D--n the fellow, all that he has said is lies;" and went his way. But not many days after, as he was riding in a single-horse chaise (he being much intoxicated with liquor), and driving furiously, he overthrew his carriage against some pieces of timber, one of which his head pitched upon, and broke his jaw bone, received a wound quite through his cheek, and had one of his ears almost beat off. When he got up, he said, "O God! why am I so drunk?" In consequence of this he was confined to his bed many days; and after being a little recovered, and

his persecuting spirit being somewhat checked, whenever he met me or my wife, he always addressed us civilly.

Here God seemed to single out the offending members: the mouth that had cursed, and the ear that had heard, were distinctly punished, which gave me some room to hope that he saw his error. However, the wounds which he had received in this fall proved incurable; his cheek in particular baffled the efforts of the most skilful, laid him on a sick bed again, and finally in his grave. I shall forbear mentioning his name, nor shall I descend to any particular relative to his death; choosing rather to suppress them, as his widow, who lives in London, often attends my ministry, and is, I am informed, a woman who truly fears God.

This violent persecution, which continued so many years, was partly owing to a woman, who formed an infamous and unlawful connexion with a certain gentleman in the commission of the peace, who resided at some distance from Ditton. This hireling lady complained to him about my preaching the gospel, it being so offensive to her; and indeed it was no wonder, when her unhallowed calling was so offensive to the gospel of Christ. No sooner was this virtuous complaint made, than attended to: for there came a man to me, just as I was going into my pulpit, accompanied with a number of others, to aid and assist him, if need required, who desired me to produce my license, and likewise the license of the meeting; informing me at the same time, that he was authorized to make this inquisition. After much threatening, I ascended the pulpit and preached from these words, "And now, Lord, behold their threatentings; and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, by stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus," Acts, iv. 29, 30.

The next time that I preached, the person above-mentioned came again, and desired to know my authority for preaching: I accordingly shewed him my license; but the man of the house where the meeting was kept refused to shew the license for the meeting: this caused much disturbance, and a great many threats. Notwithstanding this, I went up and preached from the following text, "Have we not charged you, that you should no more teach nor preach in this name; and behold you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and do you intend to bring this man's blood upon us?" Acts, v. 28.

These troublesome people came a third time, making the same kind of riot as before; upon which I preached from this text, "And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus Christ," Acts, v. 42.

At length we evidently saw one part of the church service, which is offered up by our persecutors, answered and fulfilled in our behalf, namely, "that those evils which the craft and subtilty of the devil or man worketh against us were brought to nought, and by the providence of God's great goodness they were dispersed; that we his servants being hurt by no persecutions, may evermore give thanks unto him in his holy church, through Jesus Christ."

It is to be feared that those gentlemen will be much cast down in their own eyes, when they appear before the Judge of quick and dead, having made themselves on earth as traps to ensnare souls for Sa 1803 tan. And these women can fare no better, who have hired themselves out in the service of sin, the wages of which is no less than "death in all its latitude," Rom. vi. 23.

Since I quitted my house at Ditton, the woman I allude to has been delivered of a child, and afterwards deserted by her keeper. And another of those mockers at the glorious Gospel of the Son of God, has been found drowned in a pond:

Providence frowning on his circumstances, and he being involved in debt, have led people to suspect that he was his own executioner. Another ring-leader of this unlawful host has since eloped with a sum of money, not his own property, leaving a wife and family to the mercy of an inhospitable world. Several others, too, who were the most unwearied in persecuting us, seem to lead a most desperate life of rebellion against God; and no wonder; for if the gospel be not "a savour of life unto life, it is a savour of death unto death," 2 Cor. ii. 16. Therefore, they that preach that gospel, are a "sweet savour unto God, both in them that are saved, and in them that perish," 2 Cor. it. 15.

When I left the parish of Ewell (mentioned in the former part of this treatise), there were two men who had been very bitter enemies to the gospel which I had preached among them. One of these men frequently assaulted me on the high road, made wry faces, or, as his insolence termed it, looked me out of countenance, and used every effort to provoke me to anger. His wife frequently attended my ministry; which circumstance gave him great offence, and for this he often beat and abused her. At one time, in particular, he took her out of bed, beat her in the most cruel manner with a large staff, and afterwards turned her out of doors naked on Ewell Common, and thus exposed her to the rigour of a frosty night. In the morning following he went in search of her, and was under some apprehensions that she had perished through the severity of the weather. At last he found the poor suffering woman, who had taken shelter in a hovel, among some straw, scarcely alive, where, in all probability, had she remained a little longer, she would have fallen a victim to his brutality. But an all-seeing God suffered him not long to reign: he was soon after visited with a long and severe fit of illness, during which time he desired to see me. I accordingly attended him once or twice from Ditton: he seemed much distressed, read and wept continually, but appeared very ignorant of the plan of salvation

to the last moment of his life. "Thus man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" Job, xiv. 10. This man's name was Sargant.

Another man was likewise a great opposer of the gospel, though in a private manner; he would not insult us publicly, but circulated many dreadful falsehoods, to make us and religion to appear contemptible. The holy scriptures, prayer, and every thing that is sacred, he treated with derision: he affirmed that our praying consisted in our crawling after a cat, in order to see who would catch her first; and this gross absurdity he declared was a truth; and that he himself had been an eye-witness to the ceremony. The bent Bow of God, however, soon stopped this rebel tongue; for as he was one day driving, as it is termed, a stove of gun-powder, consisting of many barrels, the drying-house took fire within, which communicated the flames to the sieves of powder; all then immediately went up, levelled the building with the ground, and dashed the poor scoffer at the word of God and prayer into eternity in one moment, without so much as allowing him to call on his name. His name was Gatten.

We may truly say with David, "How terrible art thou in thy works, O Lord: through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee!" Psal. lxxvi. 3.

I shall rest satisfied with adducing the foregoing instances of the goodness and mercy of God to me and my little flock. Through all the threatnings, stonings, and fightings with which we were assailed, God still preserved us. And surely, "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us; then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us. Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth," Psal. cxxvi. 2, 3, 6.

Thus, Christian reader, have I briefly related how "God bent his Bow, and made it ready," Psal. vii. 12; and how he "shot out his arrows, and destroyed the persecutors," Psal. cxliv. 6.

If my reader is one of the number who can open his mouth against the religion of Jesus Christ, he had better sit down first, and consult with himself, whether he is able, hand joining in hand, although to the number of ten thousand, to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand. If he is not, he had better send an embassage of confession and prayer, while he is a great way off, and desire the conditions of gospel peace, Luke, xiv. 31. Real religion is the cause of God; and whoever opposes it, God will defend it. No opposer can conquer in this battle; the God of armies will ever keep the field; and every enemy of this great King shall find that "his arrows are sharp," Psal. xlv. 5.

Perhaps, reader, thou art one who are happily delivered from this impious war, and made willing to be a good soldier of Jesus; if so, then rejoice with Paul, and say "he hath shewed forth all long-suffering and patience in me, as a pattern to others who shall hereafter believe on him to life eternal." But if thou art one of the persecuted, take encouragement from hence, stand fast in the Lord, and watch his hand; "God shall shoot at thy enemies with an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded. So they shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves; all that see them shall flee away. And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doings," Psal lxiv. 7,8, 9.

William Huntington

The Last Will and Testament of William Huntington(1745-1813)

IN THE NAME OF GOD THE FATHER, GOD THE SON, AND
GOD THE HOLY GHOST. AMEN.

I WILLIAM HUNTINGTON, Labourer in the Lord's vineyard at Effingham, Woking, and Richmond, in Surrey, and at St. Mary-le-bone and Sunbury, in the county of Middlesex, being at this time at my residence in Winchester-row, in the county of Middlesex aforesaid, and, through rich grace, in my right mind and memory, meditating on my certain approach to death, and the house appointed for all living, I do make and declare this to be my Last Will and Testament, holograph, this tenth day of June, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-three, in manner and in form following: That is to say, Imprimis; I commit my soul into the hands of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the exercise of that faith which peculiar to God's elect; and, glory be to his name, without any doubt of my interest in his Everlasting Covenant. And I desire to bless the Father of all mercies, and God of all comfort, for his everlasting love to me a sinner - for putting my worthless name in the book of life - for putting me into the hands of his dear Son for ordaining my everlasting salvation, life, and glory by him - for drawing me to him, accepting me in him, and for begetting me to a lively hope through his glorious resurrection from the dead.

And I desire also to render equal glory to Christ Jesus, my Lord, whom I believe to be co-equal, Phil. ii. 6, co-essential, Heb. i. 8, and co-eternal, Rev. i. 17, with God the Father, and distinct only in personality, office, and name; whom, though in divinity he be without descent, Heb. vii. 3, yet is he the Eternal Son of God the Father in covenant-character, Heb. i. 5; his begotten Son by his spiritual conception, Acts, xiii. 33, Luke, i. 35, his obedient Son both in life and death, Phil. ii. 8, and declaratively so with power, by his resurrection from the dead, Rom. i. 4. My soul adores this Friend of the friendless for accepting my worthless name and person - for assuming my nature, and taking my sin upon him - for substituting himself

my surety, and paying lily infinite debt; for an everlasting righteousness by faith in his spotless life - for pardon and peace by faith in his blood - for persevering grace and strength by faith in his arm - for revealing himself to me, deigning to dwell within me - and for a blessed hope of my eternal existence with him in glory.

Nor can I forbear rendering equal glory to Jehovah the Holy Ghost for his illuminating and quickening influence - for leading me into the truth, and shedding the precious love of God abroad in my heart - for deigning to operate on my soul as the Spirit of prayer, the Spirit of faith, and the Spirit of divine consolation; for sealing my soul, for bearing his testimony, operating and appearing an earnest of the eternal inheritance. To the ever-blessed and glorious Trinity in Unity, be the glory of all my free full, finished, and everlasting salvation, for ever and ever Amen.

And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I shall lose nothing - but should raise it up again at the last day.

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. 4, 39, 40.

Secondly, I commit my body to my most merciful Saviour, who is the resurrection and the life; who has deigned to dwell in it, and promised to raise it, change it, fashion it like his own, and fill it with all his fullness at the end of time; to be dissolved at his own appointed time, by what means he pleases; and to be deposited where his infinite wisdom shall think proper; firmly believing, that through rich grace my flesh will rest in hope of a glorious resurrection.

Houses and riches are the inheritance of lathes, and a prudent wife is from the Lord, Prov. xix. 14.

Leave thy fatherless children, if will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me. Jer. xlix. 11.

Thirdly, MARY my wife, the most valuable head of all my living stock, I give and bequeath to Christ Jesus, my Saviour and rich provider, who, from all eternity, appointed her for me, and in a marvellous manner brought her to me; whom I took to have and to hold, and have no great cause to repent of the bargain. I do leave and bequeath her, with all that she has, if she should survive me, to my aforesaid Saviour, to continue in

widowhood after my decease, or to be given to another, just as my Executor shall appoint.

And now, O Lord, I beseech thee to hear me in her behalf. Thou knowest how warmly attached she has ever been to MOSES, and what narrow and vain searches she has made, in order to find out his grave; which thou, in infinite wisdom and mercy, hast thought meet to conceal. Let it please thee to carry on the begun divorce - and effectually crucify her to all hope in a dead husband, and to all hope in a killing covenant; and let her no longer be a joint-wife in partnership with Hagar. And as for the few wretched remains of self-righteousness which she has ever been doatingly fond of - I beseech thee to spoil, together with all the rest of her own manufactory, that she may embrace the Rock for the want of shelter, Job, xxiv. 8. Amen.

Lo children are an herbage of the Lord; and the fruit of the womb is his reward, Psalm, cxxvi. 3.

Fourthly, My eldest son, GAD (whose name signifies a troop), whom I so named by reason of a wonderful deliverance from a heavy persecution, after a long and wearisome engagement: - I do leave and bequeath my said son, to the all-conquering Captain of salvation; alias, the Lord of hosts, mighty in battle. And now, O Lord, I entreat thee to hear the prayer of the poor frail testator make my son a standard-bearer in the camp of thy saints, and let the banner of everlasting love be displayed over his head: Do thou clothe him, feed him, arm and protect him. And blessed for ever shall he be that enlargeth Gad. O let him dwell as a lion in thy strength, and be thou his high tower of safety, his shield of defence, and his offensive buckler. Make him a valiant advocate for Eternal Election; that he may tear the broken arm of Free-will, and the high arm of oppression, and help to demolish the whole crown of Pride, Deut. xxxiii. 20.

Then were brought unto him little children, that he should lout his hands on them, and pray; and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of God, Matt. xix. 13, 14.

Fifthly, EBESZEE, my second son (whose name signifies a helpful stone), whom I so named to perpetuate the memory of God's kind providence appearing in a time of deep poverty, at his birth. And I do give and bequeath my son Ebenezer to Christ Jesus, the only rock of stability, against which the gates of hell shall never prevail And, now, O Lord, the Stone of Israel, my executor, and ever-blessed legatee, who hath led me

to believe that thou art the only foundation of Gospel Zion, to bear the whole weight of Mercy's fabric - Thou ever-blessed and chief Corner-stone, whose omnipresent power unites the whole living temple together, though some of the materials are, in heaven, some on earth, and some in non-existence; whom my soul believes that the heavens will one day reveal, in all the glorious majesty of Deity; as the omega, Faith's finisher; the ornamental top-stone, to crown the building, and bear the ever-lasting glory, while all the redeemed millions, when filled with the dazzling beams of thy tremendous glory, shall burst forth in celestial exclamations, Grace, grace unto it, Zech. iv. 7. Oh that my son may live before thee, and be made a lively stone in thy mysterious building, if consistent with thy sovereign will and pleasure! and do thou watch over him with all the parental care of an everlasting, ever-living, and ever-loving father! Amen.

That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth: that our daughters may be as corner-stones, polished after the similitude of a palace, Psal. cxliv. 12.

Sixthly, RUTH, my eldest daughter now living (whose name signifies filled), whom I so named, because my wife was taken in labour, as she was gleaning wheat after the reapers in the field; and was obliged to travel home, and that with great difficulty, even before she had filled her lap with corn. And when the time came for naming the child, we made a little feast; and the second course was made of the corn gleaned by my wife, which would have been more abundant, if little Ruth had not been quite so hasty. I do give and bequeath my daughter Ruth, whether for life or death, to the ANTI-TYPICAL BOAZ, late of Bethlehem-Judah, in the land of Canaan, but now King of kings in Jerusalem, whom I believe to be the only husband of the chosen daughter of God. And now, O Lord, my Saviour, my soul's near kinsman! Thou who didst not disdain us in our low estate, but willingly assumed our nature, and did the kinsman's part, when the angels (who were nearer related by creation) stood silent half an hour, Rev. viii. 1, not daring to speak in our behalf! No; it was Thou, thou ever-blessed Bridegroom, who opened the decreative will, and undertook to perform the conditions belonging to a covenant of eternal wedlock! Rev. v. 5. Yea, it was Thou, who betrothed our souls in mercy, when our FIRST HUSBAND was dead, Rom. vii. 2. Thou didst disdain to be called the man who hath his shoe loosed, Deut. xxv. 9, 10; though thy enemies spit in thy face; thou hast married the wife of the deceased, Deut. xxi. 5; redeemed the mortgaged inheritance, and raised up an everlasting name that shall never be cut off, Isa. lv. 13; surely, thou hast done worthily in Ephratah, and been famous in Bethlehem! O Lord, make my daughter like Ruth, the Moabitess; and though thou hast cast out thy shoe over Edom, Psal. lx. 8,

yet condescendest to stand in the shoes of Moab; and let poor Ruth glean among those who gather fruit to eternal life. O Lord, let her keep close to thy maidens. Prov. ix. 3; and let Satan never catch her in any other field, Deut xxii. 25; and when thou shalt take thy fan in thy hand to purge thy floor, O let her lie safe, as Mary did, at thy feet, covered with the skirt of thy righteousness; let the spiritual reapers, who receive the wages which grace allows, drop many handfuls for her to glean, until she appears in the bundle of life, 1 Sam. xxv. 29; as a part of that shock fully ripe, coming in season, Job, v. 26, as thy first-fruits, James, i. 18; that thou who hast so bountifully sowed, and those who have diligently reaped, with all the weak in faith, who have gleaned, may, to all eternity, rejoice together! o let a full reward be given her of thee, thou sovereign Lord of Israel, under whose wings my faith would fain bring her to truth! Amen.

A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children and the wealth of the shiner is laid up for the just, Prov. xiii. 22.

Seventhly, My daughter Naomi, the youngest daughter now living (whose name signifies agreeableness), and whom I so named to perpetuate the memory of God's providential care at the time of her birth. I had left my employ, and a ready-furnished lodging also, and had removed to Ditton, where I could get no accommodation but an empty room, though in expectation every day of my wife being taken in labour; but God raised up a few friends to furnish the place, and make it agreeable for my wife by the time it was wanted. Thus God caused the morrow to take thought for itself: Therefore Agreeableness is the name of the child. And I do give and bequeath my daughter Naomi to the God of our father Abraham, before whom I have walked; the angel who hath redeemed me from all evil; the God of grace and providence, who hath fed me all my life long unto this day, and fixed the bounds off my habitation.

And now, O Lord God, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great compassion, who hast in answer to prayer brought my daughter back from, the gates of death, I most humbly beseech thee to accept her at my hands; and enable my faith to engage thy kind protecting care over her! Be thou her guide and guardian, her father and her friend; and let not thy blessed hand go out against her, nor suffer her name to be called Marah. O make her one of thy honourable women, and a gracious mother in Israel; guide her through all the dangers which attend the giddy in their youth, and keep her free from being taken by any of the snares which are set to entangle souls for Satan! Are not children an inheritance that cometh of thee? and is not the fruit of the womb thy own reward? Art not thou the author of her being, and the preserver of her life? To whose care,

then, can I commit her but to thine; who art so well known by the endearing names of a father to the fatherless, a husband to the widow, a friend to the friendless, and the aid of those who have no helper! All which characters thou art the truth of in the superlative degree, and in every sense of the words!

I will not ask temporal wealth, honour, beauty, pleasure, or long life, but beg thyself only as her portion. Thy love shed abroad in the heart is the best inheritance; thy immensity satisfies every boundless desire that the most enlarged spirit is capable of, and thy eternity sends every thought back to the believing breast sweetly laden with infinite satisfaction. O that my daughter may live before thee, and be brought to know the God of her father; and let thy blessings on my offspring exceed the blessings of their progenitor; even to the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills! Amen and Amen.

And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified, Acts, xx. 32.

Eighthly, All the poor sheep which thou hast called by me, and those over which the Holy Ghost has made me an overseer, together with all those whom the love of Christ has constrained me to love, care for, or to feed, I do leave them, and the sole care of them all, to the Chief Shepherd and Bishop of Souls, Christ Jesus, my Lord, to whom they belong by donation, by purchase, and by conquest: - as the gift of his Father, the purchase of his blood, and the trophies of his victory.

And now, O Lord God, the Ancient of Days, and the End of Time, Time's Alpha and omega, our everlasting Father, who, from all eternity, was set up to be a future head, and a gathering shepherd; who received our names, persons, and the number of them, even before chaos was conceived, or order born; Thou great I AM; Thou one eternal Now, and Eternity's only CENTRE; whom no space can measure, and in whom the past and future are ever lost! O Thou, who art incomprehensible, and yet well known in Judah; though invisible, yet faith discerns thee; and though the only possessor of immortality, yet thou dwellest with mortals; I humbly entreat thee ever to appear the watchful, careful, and tender Shepherd of Israel; gather them from among the goats, bring back, that which is gone astray, heal that which is sick, bind up that which is broken, and feed that which is faint; let not even an ear be lost, Amos, iii. 12, or a hoof be left behind: and as thou hast appeared unblemished in every co-venant-

character, from age to age, and hast established thy words to a thousand generations; be pleased to strengthen, establish, and settle thine elect in the strongest faith of it!

And now, O Lord, deliver them all from that God-dishonouring and dear-bought insensibility of the Deist, Ezekiel, viii. 12; And from the damnable delusion of the Arian, 2 Pet. ii. 1; from the fleshly confidence too, and rash presumption of the Antinomian, 2 Cor. xiii. 2; and from the galling and severe yoke of the self-sufficient Arminian, Acts, xv. 10; from the voluntary service of worldlings; and from the woful and unexpected end of the whole tribe of Pharisees. Amen and Amen.

As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth.

Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate, Psal. cxxvii. 4, 5.

Ninthly, The child that is coming, and all that may come, whether many or few, males or females; I do give and bequeath, all, and every one of them, to the Father of the spirits of all flesh, alias the second Adam, the quickening Spirit, the Lord from heaven, the ever-blessed Immanuel, our God, and God with us; to be kept by his power, governed by his sceptre, and to be at his absolute disposal only.

And now, O Lord, who didst not despise the simple sacrifice of the infant tribes, when in the temple they offered their unknown HOSANNAS to thee; but didst sharply rebuke, and wonderfully still thy enemies, by the lips of babes and sucklings, out of whom thou hast pre-ordained strength and perfected praise; O let the rising generation join in the innocent and holy acclamations of Hosanna to the Son of David; that is, save Lord, we beseech thee! yea, let them rise up and call thee blessed. Thou hast richly dispensed thy invaluable benedictions on various of thy chosen ones, in every age of their life; some have been filled with the Holy Ghost from their mother's womb, others from their childhood have known the Holy Scriptures; others were ordained prophets before they were conceived, or born; and two thousand infants at one time fell martyrs to thy truth, sealed it with their blood, and died in Gospel hope; others at the eleventh hour have found the Messiah; and the poor thief on the cross felt the convictions of sin, and the pains of death, go hand in hand, and apparently keep pace; so that a spiritual travel and a lingering death met both together in one chosen vessel, and at one time: but, blessed be thy name,

the spiritual birth out-stripped the dart of death. Surely, this was a double deliverance, or an unproclaimed jubilee, to see the carcass of a thief hang on the gibbet, while the soul was singing celestial anthems in Paradise! But these are some of the discriminating acts of sovereign grace. O Lord, grant that our offspring may see, and know for themselves, many of these wonderful displays of thy unmerited and everlasting love; and let the Spirit thou has put upon us, and the word thou hast put into our mouth, never depart out of our mouth, nor out of the mouth of our seed, nor out of the mouth of our seed's seed, from henceforth and for ever! Amen and Amen.

Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase.

So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine, Prov. iii. 9, 10.

Tenthly, All the worldly substance I now have, or may have, whether little or much, at home or abroad; or all that in future I may become entitled to, whether in money, books, houses, or land; together with all my chattels and personal effects, whether and with all my dead stock, to what value or amount soever, I do leave, bequeath, and give the whole, of every of them to JEHOVAH-JIREH, The Lord who PROVIDES; and that for the benefit of the wife and children which he has given me, humbly beseeching him to multiply, sanctify, and bless these effects to their necessary uses.

And now, O Lord, who has promised us all things pertaining to life and godliness, and by the gift of faith hath made us heirs of the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come; I most humbly beseech thee to hear the imperfect petition of thy servant, which cometh not out of feigned lips! Art not thou the universal guardian of spiritual widows, Rom. vii. 3, 4, orphans, 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18, and lunatics? 1 Cor. iv. 10. Didst not thou give the land of Canaan freely to Israel, and didst thou not defray their expenses thither with honour? yea, their clothes waxed not old, their shoes wore not out by the way, their feet never swelled with the journey, the rock afforded water for their thirst, and the dreary desert a channel for it to flow after them. The heavens afforded them angels' food, and Leviathan was smitten in the waters to be meat for thy chosen inhabiting the wilderness. the heavens poured down feathered fowls as the sand of the sea, and flesh till it stopped up the doors of their tents. O astonishing providence! but they sinned yet the more! O cruel ingratitude! Lord, what is man! Give us heaven freely, and bear our charges to it. Amen and Amen.
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Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it, Psal. cxxvii. 1.

For every house is builded by some man, but he that built all thirsts is God, Heb. iii. 4.

Eleventhly, The Chapel which the kind, the undeserved, and unexpected Providence of God has given us, and on which account it bears its present name, I do commit the whole management of to the Lord Jesus Christ; likewise the management of the managers - the management of the pulpit - the management of the preachers - the management of their doctrines - the management of the flock - the management of their hearts - the management of their ears, and - the management of their manners. I do commit it solely to the all-wise Super-intendant of all beings, and all things - the supreme Monarch of all that is visible or invisible; whether in the celestial or terrestrial worlds: who is the omnipotent Creator of heaven and earth, and the absolute Disposer of all events. And now, O Lord, whom the heavens, nor the heaven of heavens, cannot contain, much less the little house which we have built, let it please thee to hear thy servant's prayer, and bless the house; and let thine eyes and thy heart be there perpetually, and make it a Bethel to thousands. Direct the steps of sabbath-breakers, blasphemers, and the basest of mortals to tread its floors; let sovereign grace and dying love be displayed in their greatest power, and in their fullest latitude; and grant that when thou writeth up the people, it may be said of millions, that this and that man was born of God there. O Lord, make the pulpit like Aaron's golden bell; and let every tried and faithful preacher's tongue be like a golden clapper; so that joy and gladness may be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody. Let no dry formality ever be established in it. Let no ecclesiastical crafts-man ever be heard there. Let no priestcraft ever prosper therein. Let no carnal inventions, however pleasing to flesh and blood, no human traditions, however ancient or highly esteemed; nor any doctrines of devils, however deep, or of whatsoever date, be ever heard in it. But let thy truth be credited by that faith which is thy own gift. Be thou ever addressed and supplicated in the language of thy own most holy word, ever adored by thy servants in the happy enjoyment of thy own eternal love, ever admired in thy own illustrious and most glorious light: and be thou ever worshipped in thy own spirit. O Lord of all lords, be thou our ALL IN ALL; and grant that all preachers of every denomination, that preach thee as the sinner's only, present, and everlasting portion, may be blessed with thy internal testimony, thy supporting hand, the unutterable comforts of thy Eternal Spirit, and crown their honest labours with ten thousand-fold success. Amen and Amen.

And ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit; which are God's, 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.

For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's, Rom. xiv. 8.

The Last Will and Testament of William Huntington(1745-1813)

Voluntary Offering

Twelfthly, All my strength, bodily health, and my appointed time, together with those abilities which God hath bestowed on me, as the God of nature; and likewise all the supernatural gifts, such as knowledge, faith, zeal, usefulness, utterance, fear, love, enlargement of heart, &c. which God is the best judge of, and which he hath freely and undeservedly bestowed on me, as the God of grace; as also the joy, peace, happiness, or felicity which he hath graciously given me in hope, as the God of glory; I desire with my whole heart to offer the whole of them up entirely to the service of my only master, Christ Jesus the Lord, to be disposed of to the honour of his own name, and the good of his own elect.

And now, O Lord, that heareth prayer, let my petition come before thee, and never suffer my lips to flatter thee, nor my perverse will to tempt thee. If I know any thing of my own heart, I can say, I have no desire after an episcopal see, but only that an effectual door should be opened unto me, 1 Cor. xvi. 9: Nor will I ever crave the authorizing hand of a spiritual lord, falsely so called, 1 Cor. viii. 6, to be laid upon me; but only that thy hand, thou ever-blessed Shepherd and Bishop of Souls, should be laid upon me; and that not once only, but in every time of need, accompanying it with, "Fear not, I am the first and the last," Rev. i. 17. As for my craving deaconies, deaneries, vicarages, or any other episcopal preferments whatsoever, they never shall be once mentioned in my prayers, as I do not desire to become a saint, but only a large field to preach thy gospel in, with that food and raiment, which my

heavenly Father knoweth I stand in need of before I ask him, Matt. vi. 8, and with this humbling grace also, to be therewith content, I Tim. vi. 8. As for ecclesiastical titles, or any other carnal dignity, I will never pray for them, but hope to be satisfied with the title of a faithful labourer; nor will I crave any other dignity - than that which thy word allows, namely, that of being thy son by faith, and an heir of thy eternal kingdom.

And suffer me, O Lord, to remind thee of the earnest petitions which I once put up with many tears, in a wood between Petworth and Horsham, in Sussex, and to which thou gavest me an answer of peace. Thou knowest I was moved to put it up, under the melancholy reflection of a certain man, who in persecution and oppression seemed strong in the faith, but in prosperity was fearfully fallen, and has appeared to fall ever since. Thou knowest I earnestly solicited the following blessings of thee, lest I should fall as he did. First, That thou wouldest bless me indeed with thy Spirit's internal testimony, thy supporting hand, and thy soul-comforting presence. Secondly, That thou wouldest make me abundantly useful in my ministry, and fruitful in my life; and bless me with diligence, knowledge, and zeal, to serve my generation while it is called to-day. Thirdly, That thou wouldest keep both my spiritual and temporal portion in thine own hands; but give me a strong faith to draw daily upon thee, as my soul, body, or family might stand in need. Fourthly, That thou wouldest defray my expenses, and the expenses of my family, through this life, so as to shield a liberal mind and a tender conscience, and give me daily an open heart, a bountiful hand, and a noble, generous spirit, as well becomes the gospel, and the preacher of it. And that I might not muzzle thy truth in the pulpit, to shield covetousness, nor pass the sentence of damnation on myself, when I preached against it; lest, while I teach another not to covet, I myself should commit sacrilege, Rom. it. 22. Fifthly and lastly, That thou wouldest enable me, at my dying hour, to commit my soul, my wife, and family, into thy hands,

in the fullest assurance of spiritual faith. To all which thou gavest me an answer of peace. So, O Lord, let it stand ratified in the heavens, and in thy own appointed time make it good on earth.

And whatever doctrines thou shalt think meet to reveal in answer to prayer, whether to preach, or to write; whether pleasing to sinners, or displeasing; O Lord, give me grace to preach them, or write them, without being lifted up with the applause of true brethren, or awed by the carnal fear of false ones. If all frown on me, do thou smile; let who will oppose, do thou lead me on; whoever condemns or accuses me, do thou justify; and if the whole world curse me, do thou bless; and under thy blessed wings I shall sing sweetly, and be safe enough from the fear of evil. If thou givest peace, who then can create trouble, whether it be against a nation, or a man only? O Lord, let the hypocrite never reign, lest the souls of the righteous be ensnared. Amen and Amen.

Mercy and truth be with thee, 2 Sam. xv. 2o. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others, 2 Tim. ii. 2.

Small Legacies

Thirteenthly, That most blessed book of God, the Holy Bible, together with an excellent treatise on the Sovereignty of God, written by that eminent servant of Christ ELISA COLE, the learned Boston's View of the Covenant of Grace, and that golden phoenix in its cage, called the Pilgrim's Progress, written by the Reverend John Bunyan, Doctor of Divinity, and Master of Allegorical Arts; I do will and desire to leave the above-mentioned invaluable books, unsullied, uncorrupted,

unaltered, and void of all notes, comments, annotations, or paraphrases whatsoever, to every heir of promise in the Christian world, as a rich spiritual treasure by Divine donation, to have, to hold, and to enjoy till death; and then to descend as an hereditary portion to their heirs and successors, or whosoever shall appear in this world to be of the covenant line, if they can prove their genealogy by the soundness of their principles, the purity of their spirit, and the uprightness of their practice; to be enjoyed by them till time it no more. And may the Lord, who teacheth man to profit, enable them in every age to see eye to eye, until they are enabled with all saints to know what is that height, depth, length, and breadth of the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord; which God of his infinite mercy grant to his own honour, their present safety, and eternal comfort. Amen and Amen.

That ye may suck and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations: that ye may milk out and be delighted with the abundance of her glory, Isa. lxvi. 11.

I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able, 1 Cor. iii. 2.

The Holy Bible, Luther's Comment on the Galatians, Mr. Bunyan's Discourse on the Jerusalem Sinner saved, together with his Come and welcome to Jesus Christ, with Mr. Romaine's Life and Walk of Faith, and part of Mr. Marshall's Gospel Mystery of Sanctification, I do will and desire to leave, as a choice breast of consolation to all the infant progeny of Zion, our most tender, affectionate, and ever-revered Mother, of ever-blessed and ever-lasting memory; to have and to hold, till they are established in faith, and then to descend to their infant race from age to age, as a rich supply, under God, of spiritual pocket-money; to be given to them quite sterling, as they are at present, without any adulteration, deduction, or

diminution whatsoever. And may the Lord bless the legacy to all his little ones, who are too weak to walk by faith, too scrupulous to trust a hiding God, and too much attached to self-confidence to launch forth upon sovereign mercy, through Christ, revealed in an unconditional promise. May the Lord of all lords indulge them with the sensible breasts of comforts, and not wean them until they are able to live absent from the body, and present with the Lord! Amen and Amen.

This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed unto him by God, Job, xx. 29.

Fourteenthly, The following books, entitled Mr. Baxter's Call to the Unconverted, Mr. Joseph Allen's Alarm, Thomas a'Kempis the whole works of the Rev. Mr. Goodwin, together with all the thunder-bolts of popery, I do leave and bequeath to the numerous bastard-race of gospel-mockers, the whole family of that insolent strumpet Hagar, to be distributed among them within two hour's after my death, or as many months before as the Pope of Rome shall think proper: this I leave as a lash of scorpions to all eye-servants, who cannot work without the whip, to those who halt between the service of God and mammon, and to every one who rejects the easy yoke of Christ, for the yoke of bondage, and cleave to the strong hold of Satan, rather than accept of gospel liberty, upon the easy conditions of self-denial, and the heart-felt humility of an insolvent debtor freely cleared by a Surety. And may the God of all comfort make the heirs of such legal trumpery as sick at heart of it as he has made my poor soul, and effectually teach them to beware of the doctrines of the Pharisees, which are hypocrisy, and no better than binding grievous burdens on men's shoulders, which they never touched with one of their own fingers.

Fifteenthly, The following books, entitled Seneca's Morals, the old and New Whole Duty of Man, and all those productions of

ignorance entitled the Week's Preparations, that friend to Moses called the Practice of Piety, that highly esteemed composition of carnal invention entitled the Christian Monitor, the Crumbs of Comfort, Sherlock upon Death, the Annotations of Fleetwood, Stackhouse, and Southwell, together with that blasphemous piece of deception called. the Turkish Alkoran, with all the Apocryphal books, except the book of Wisdom; I desire to will and leave every one of them to be equally distributed among all those Pharisees in the kingdom of Great Britain, who reject the sovereign grace of God, and deny the blessed inspiration of God the Holy Ghost, as a proper nurse to their present pride, and a certain prelude to their everlasting confusion; but to be enjoyed by them no longer than while they remain in a state of ignorance and unbelief. If at any time any one of the aforesaid legatees be converted to the Christian faith, they shall immediately forfeit all their right and title to the above-mentioned legacies, and shall by no means enjoy any part thereof any longer than while they live and remain in legal blindness of mind, and hardness of heart.

Lastly, The comments and other works of that immortal and most miserable Doctor, Samuel Clarke; as also the books written by Mr. Elliot, and Mr. Lindsey, if they are found in my study at the time of my death, I will and desire that the same may be burnt at Tyburn, within two hours after my interment, by the hands of the common hangman; for which act no more shall he be given than thirteen-pence halfpenny.

Having waded through the settlement of these my various effects, I do now, in my present decline of life, in presence of these witnesses undermentioned, vow and declare, that all the aforesaid articles are bequeathed and settled exactly agreeable to my mind and will; and which I never intend to disannul, make void, cancel, or revoke; and as a proof hereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal this Tenth Day of

March, in the year of our Lord one Thousand Seven Hundred and Eighty-four.

WILLIAM HUNTINGTON.

Witnessed by

Mr, HATRED-TO-BONDAGE, AND Mr. LOVE-TO-LIBERTY.

Poem to the Christian Reader

I.

PRIVATE GOOD Christian, if thou hast perused
my Will,
In search after learning, good language, or skill,
Disappointed you are, no learning is there,
My weakness has met your surprise:

But what tho' the author and language be mean,
You know there are readers as foolish as him,
Yet if the Almighty should bless it to them,
Pray why should the scholar despise?

II.

Illiterate Christians may read and may pray;
And lead the benighted to stand in the way;
And each in his station be bless'd in his day,
But authors they never must be.

Truth is not confined to Masters of Arts,
The aged nor learned, nor famous for parts;
She's known by the chosen, and dwells in their
hearts,
Her gracious instructions are free.

III.

A fable in elegant language may pass,
And dangerous errors, if learning's their mask;
Yea, the arrantest falsehood in many a class,
Shall meet with the highest esteem:

But Truth, if she's naked, can never be sham'd;
If you make but distinctions, she cannot be
blam'd;
But tho' she brought heaven wherever she
came,
She too oft has met with disdain.

IV.

No ploughman, nor joskin, nor whimsical head
To touch Holy Orders must ever be led
But credit the clergy whatever be said,
If reason and virtue be there:

No feelings of enthusiastical fools,
But science and logic distill'd at the schools,
With Jewish traditions and heathenish rules,
These only must furnish the seer.

V.

Good Enoch and Abel were otherwise taught;
The patriarchs with faith and with patience were
faught;
No chanting devotions by prophets were taught,
They never adopted the mode:

They worshipp'd the Saviour with only his own;
And preach'd him without either rocket or gown;

Sure none will deny but their gospel was sound.
And all their devotions were good.

VI.

Divine revelation was given of old,
And miraculous gifts to apostles foretold,
But visions of faith we are not to behold,
Nor to inspiration pretend:

Our British divines, with their excellent parts,
Invested with titles and fitted with arts,
Have prescribed a rule for worshipping hearts;
The whole is established by men.

VII.

Jehovah's a Spirit the scriptures declare,
And Christ hath insisted on spiritual care;
No worship can please if the Spirit's not there,
All carnal religion is feigned.

He instructeth the foolish and opens their eyes;
The preachers with matter he richly supplies:
He teaches the fool what he hides from the wise;
Without him all preaching is vain.

VIII.

Priests fitted with science all nature reveres,
They predict eclipses and reckon the stars;
Such read Fortune's frowns, and the smiles that
she bears,
But won't let her aspects be mixt:

They unswaddle Nature's mysterious folds,
And describe how the globe diurnally rolls,

Yea, and measure the line that reaches the
poles,
And tell how these axes are fixt."

IX.

To gospel astronomy I can agree,
For Jesus, the Day-star is pleasing to me;
The rays of that Sun and the balm they convey,
Delighteth the wisest of men:

The art of astrology who can reject?
To cast a nativity, is to reflect
If Jesus and conscience are found to compact,
It predicts a peaceable end.

X.

The science of botany surely is sound,
Where Jesus appeareth the Plant of renown:
To describe that Root is a knowledge profound,
To deep for blind nature to scan:

The art of anatomy none should despise,
Because it is practis'd by none but the wise;
No art shall excel it that mortals devise,
If it can dissect the old man.

XI.

The art of geometry none can disprove;
It fathoms the deep, and soareth above;
it grasps Omnipresence, which all Christians
love;
And fixes the whole in the mind.

Geology describeth the parts of the earth,
And leads to the mountains - the place of
Christ's death,
If it leads to a Bethel, or spiritual birth,
That art shall be good in its kind.

William Huntington

A Divine Poem on a Spiritual Birth

William Huntington - 1745-1813

PART I.

How keen are the pains of a Spiritual Birth,
When its dreadful attendants invade!
The soul is a stranger to music and mirth,
A companion for none but the dead.

But spiritual travail is life in disguise,
Though with imminent dangers beset;
The voice of the prophets calls flames from the skies;
Yea, and Moses pursues us for debt.

All crimes from the cradle come fresh to the mind,
Transgressions presented to view;
While Satan accuses for every crime,
Yea, and conscience repeats it is true.

Jehovah erects his tribunal within,
And the criminal trembles with guilt;
The billows of wrath stir the motions of sin,
And the arrows of vengeance are felt.

His feigned profession is totally marr'd,
Both torments and terrors invade;
The door of kind Mercy seems bolted and barr'd,
And the gates of Destruction display'd.

All friends stand aloof, and acquaintances hide,
And the soul is refus'd to be known;
Our intimates curse us, and scorers deride,
Yea, and fathers and mothers disown.

I envy'd the brutes which dissolve with the day,
And reflected with wrath on the womb;
The pains of the damn'd rack'd my mind with dismay
And I wish'd I could end in a tomb.

I cavill'd with Mercy, and trembled at Fate,
While distraction was raging within,
And envy'd the angels their innocent state,
For I knew they were strangers to sin.

This fearing, and doubting, and hoping between,
While the Tempter, he never gives out;
His dreadful blasphemies how cutting and keen,
When my life hung impending in doubt!

My follies were link'd like a chain to my soul,
And as bound for the realms of the dead:
I look'd for a friend, or for some to condole,
But my friends and companions were fled!

On my wearisome bed I courted the day,
And at morning I woo'd for the night;
I mourned to think in what darkness I lay,
And yet trembled as much at the light.

If I made my confession in private alone,
Then the worst of temptations began;
And, though I petition'd with many a groan,
Yet I fain would have tled from his hand.

The horrors of justice, and terrors of death,
And mad desperation within!

How dreadful to travel this perilous path,
With a conscience polluted with sin!

This sorrowful travail, what will it avail,
While my heart's too contracted to yield!
Despair and distraction must, doubtless, prevail:
My wound is too deep to be heal'd.

My cruel companions, they daily deride,
And I'm chafed with the plague of my heart;
My prayers to heaven have passage deny'd,
And this wounds more than dagger or dart.

Can such a conception be found in the dead?
And, if quickened, why under the curse?
Hope springing within me must prove that I'm wed,
And, if barren, then why am I thus!

But, though of all strength I am wholly bereav'd,
And deliverance hid from my view,
Yet, still in child-bearing the spouse must be sav'd.
Old Adam must yield to the New.

My Saviour perceiv'd me when sunk in distress,
And his love could no longer refrain;
He yielded to prayer, and granted redress,
And my mountains were sunk to a plain.

He deliver'd my spirit by knowledge profound,
And rescu'd my Mind from her smart:
The balm of his rays stopp'd the rage of my wound,
And dissolved the stone of my heart.

The Saviour perceiv'd me to melt in the flame;
Then he scatter'd his odours abroad:
He perfum'd my soul, and revived my frame;
And I call'd him my Lord and my God.

Now, Moses, from bondage my soul is enlarg'd;
My Redeemer has cancell'd my debt;
My fatal arrears are now wholly discharg'd,
And kind heaven has sent the receipt.

I thought you my friend: and you knew I was poor,
And you gave me long credit, 'tis true;
But, had I suspected your rigour before,
I had ne'er struck a balance with you.

To deceive and to strip is but to defraud,
Though it does not become me to rail;
Yet I must relate to my neighbours abroad,
The deception that lies in your veil.

Your tribes of disciples may boast of their head,
And the flock of the Saviour deride:
Jehovah hath told us their leader is dead,
Though he speaks to accuse them of pride.

I thought to have rais'd your demand from my trade,
Till you brought in your fatal account;
But, when I Perceiv'd you arrested the dead,
O what enmity rose at the Mount!

A second discharge of a bill that is past,
Is a payment that never can end:
The sum for the which you arrested me last,
Has been fully discharg'd by a friend.

Why so many preachers I cannot devise;
How from death can your legions revive?
All trust in a servant I hope to despise,
As Jehovah the Master's alive.

Of help from the law I for ever despair'd,
When conscience and creditor met:

What mortal can think he with truth can be clear'd,
When sued for an infinite debt?

Vain rebels can sport with the rounds of the Mount:
Till by thundering threat'nings they're aw'd;
And wantonly dream of a balanc'd account,
Till they see the commandment so broad.

In open defiance, they daringly peep,
Till a terrible clap from the cloud
Instructs the presumptuous his distance to keep,
That Jehovah resisteth the proud.

They boast of escaping the deluge of wrath,
By obedience that felons perform;
And hope to get life from file sentence of death,
From the earthquake, the wind, and the storm.

They seek for a portion with glorify'd saints,
Where all must be silent in dust;
And call out for mercy, and urge their complaints,
In a way that all mortals are curs'd.

What wretches! to play at the fiery throne,
With the buckler of God at their heart!
Where beasts that approach must be slain with a stone,
Or must die by the thrust of a dart!

The glorify'd Judge shall assemble the lost,
And their towering Babel shall crack
And builders and buildings shall find, to their cost.
Their foundation disclos'd to the neck.

The archangel's trump, and the sentence shall blast
Yea, the fabric of nature be crash'd;
And mortals deluded convinc'd at the last
When in infinite ruins abash'd.

PART II

How sweet are the joys of a Spiritual Birte,
How delightful the comforts within,
When weeping and mourning are silenc'd by mirt
And the conscience disburden'd of sin!

All doubtings and rearings are made to subside,
And submit to the triumphs of Love;
The fetters are broke, and the bondage unty'd,
And exchang'd for the wings of a dove.

Stern Justice refuses to carry the suit,
When Jesus, the Ransom, appears;
The debtor's amaz'd when the creditor's mute;
The insolvent is drowned in tears.

All torments and terrors take flight and are gone,
And divine consolations succeed;
Believers and Jesus how happy alone,
When Elias and Moses are fled!

Regardless he seem'd when he wrote on the ground:
But, as soon as he lift up his head,
The Law, Sin, or Satan, could neither be found,
For all mine accusers were fled.

"Hath no man condemn'd thee," he cry'd with condole,
"Though guilty by every plea?
Nor will I condemn thee, thou penitent soul,
Nor permit them to pluck thee from me."

"Peace be unto thee and an end to the strife,
For I am the First and the Last:
I pardon thee freely, and raise thee to life,
Nor upbraid thee for aught that is past?"

Thus wounded with sorrow, and melted with love,
A victim to Mercy I fell;
Amaz'd he should come from the regions above,
With the keys both of death and of hell.

My clouds of transgressions were chas'd from the skies
By the radiant beams of the Sun;
By faith in the Saviour from death we arise,
Then is life everlasting begun!

The heaven of heavens desist from their lour,
The tempest is hush'd to a calm;
The kingdom of heaven is taken by pow'r,
And the victor is crowned with palm.

He's led to the Rock by omnipotent hand;
In the secret cliff he can sing:
The voice of the turtle is heard in the land,
And his winter exchange'd for a spring.

My God, in compassion, did sweetly appear,
And dictated my song as I sung:
I thought all the angels stood silent to hear,
While the melody dropp'd from my tongue.

I wept with rejoicing, and sung in my grief,
And I fainted, and melted with love;
I coyly refused his gracious relief,
But he made all my bowels to move.

All nature look'd gay, and afforded delight,
And proclaim'd divine wisdom abroad;
The heavens themselves would admit of my flight,
When I fled to commune with my God!

I yielded my soul as a captive to grace,
When the banner of love was unfurl'd;

My spirit dissolv'd iu the rays of his face,
And I died to the charms of the world

My jealousy fled, and my mind was compos'd,
When my soul to my Saviour was wed:
I charged my eyes to refuse to be clos'd,
Lest my husband should slip from my bed.

I us'd my entreaties his bowels to move,
For I trembled for fear he'd depart;
And gently woo'd him, and call'd him my love,
And I crown'd him the King of my heart.

Through each silent watch still my bed he would keep,
With his love as profuse as her source;
My mind he employ'd when I sunk in a sleep,
And he charm'd me with mental discourse.

I thought of his birth, and amaz'd at the scheme,
While Faith was triumphant with palms;
And wonder'd my God and my Maker supreme,
As an infant, should live upon alms!

His wearisome journeys by faith I could trace,
And his footsteps my tears would bedew;
The truths he then taught he would freely rehearse,
And I set to my seal "God is true.

The supper I view'd when the table was spread,
And I thought, as a guest, I was nigh;
And, when he foretold that he must be betray'd,
I answer'd, "O Lord, is it I?"

But, when I beheld him as rack'd on the cross,
And reflected my sin gave the wound;
I found for some minutes my senses were lost,
Yea, I fainted, and dropp'd to the ground.

I wonder'd to see such a victim appear,
And was griev'd that his foes could deride;
But, oh! when they pierced his heart with a spear,
I could fancy a pain in my side.

But when on his throne I perceiv'd him supreme,
With his garments all cover'd with gore;
I said, "He hath finished the tragical scene,
And my Saviour can suffer no more!"

The nature of angels was never so high,
As with crown and with sceptre to reign
The seraphic host, who inhabit the sky,
Must adore and attend as his train.

The wondering millions all cast off their crowns.
And acknowledge their glory from his;
While rays of divinity blaze from his wounds,
And illumine the regions with bliss.

The brilliant, seraphic, and ransomed race,
Appear in majestic array;
While Jesus emits, from the rays of his face,
The perpetual springing of day.

They shine in his glory, and bask in his beams
While Immanuel smiles on his Wife,
And leads her by pleasure's unchangeable streams,
Which flow from the Fountain of Life.

O, when shall I join the harmonious throng?
From corruption when shall I be free!
And sing that delightful and rapturous song,
Of redemption, by Jesus, for me!

But I must withdraw from this ravishing scene
For the boon is deny'd which I crave;

Mortality's veil is a dropping between,
And my soul must return to her cave.

I gradually sunk from the views of the Mount,
For my wings were too feeble to hold;
The pleasures of heaven I cannot recount,
Its felicity cannot be told!

Let weeping, and mourning, and sorrow, be gone,
Bid adieu both to doubting and fear;
For Jesus, the head, hath ascended his throne,
And his members shall surely be there.

Thrice happy the soul that has God for his sire,
And his heart, with his treasure, above!
Who inwardly burns with that hallowed fire
Which proceeds from the fullness of love.

Let such with submission their station abide,
Till they rise from their cottage of clay:
On a cherub they mount and to paradise ride,
And inhabit the regions of day!

Their journey from Egypt will clearly be view'd,
And the intricate paths they have trod:
They'll admire the methods that wisdom pursu'd:
And the tender regard of their God.

The doom of a rebel they'll perfectly know;
And with love and amazement behold,
And acknowledge the story related belowñ
But the tale was imperfectly told.

What thought, or conception, or language, can paint
Or describe this celestial estate!
This Solomon's fame to a glorify'd saint,
Exceeds all that mortals relate!

How precious is hope at the end of the race,
While the Object of faith is in view!
It strengthens the heart, and emboldens the face,
In the perilous paths we go through.

The comforts of union and foretastes of bliss,
Refresh and ennoble the mind;
All earthly enjoyments, compar'd but to this,
Are as empty and fleeting as wind.

In the path-way of life there can be no death;
Consecrated it lies through the veil:
Nor shall death him destroy who travels in faith,
Till Faith and her Object can fail.

Assisted with strength, and enlarged with love,
And led by Omnipotent Hand,
He still eyes the city that's founded above,
And he longs for the promised land.

The presence of God, and his tokens for good
The staff, and the chastening rod;
All sharpen his hunger for heavenly food,
And he thirsts for the vision of God

This path is above to the man that is wise,
Who departs from the regions beneath:
The way that is hid from the vulture's keen eyes,
Is reveal'd to the children of Faith.

Each cherub of Jesus who preaches the word,
Guards the Path-way that leadeth to life:
The Sixty that handle the spiritual sword,
Attend both the Lamb and his Wife.

They cast up the road, with the banner display'd;
And their land-marks they set by the way

And daily exhort her to cleave to her Head,
Lest she from her husband should stray.

The world may oppose, yea, and fiends may engage,
And dangers and threat'nings dismay;
But still they pursue, in defiance of rage
The righteous shall hold on his way.

From the bondage of Egypt they slowly proceed,
Yet the heavenly Canaan they find:
From the bond of corruption they all shall be freed;
Nor a hoof shall be found left behind.

The Dimension of Eternal Love

by

WILLIAM HUNTINGTON

"That ye may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and, length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge," (Ephesians 3:18,19)

My Brethren,

The apostle Paul is so profound a scholar, that I cannot pretend to follow him; every time I read him he sets me, as it were, a task impossible. I therefore am obliged to make up a sermon of bits and scraps. In the beginning of this chapter the apostle treats largely of the dispensation of the grace of God towards him. verses 2 and 3. 2dly. He speaks also of a mystery hidden in God from the world, which was, that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs with the Jews of the promise of life, ver. 6. 3dly. That he was made a minister of this grace to the Gentiles, ver. 7. 4thly. He expresses, with all humility, his unworthiness of this grace; and yet to him was this grace given, that he should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, ver. 8. 5thly. He informs us that even now is made known to the principalities and powers that reside in the heavenly places by the church the manifold wisdom of God, ver. 10. And the whole of this sprung from the eternal purpose of God, which he purposed in Christ Jesus, ver. 11; in whom, that is, in Christ, we have holy boldness,

and free access to God; and that with confidence of being accepted by the faith of him, in whom all the promises of God are yea and amen, to the glory of God the Father, ver. 12. The apostle desires that the Ephesians might not faint at the tribulation which he endured; signifying, that God did not set sufferings of his servants before them with a view to discourage, but to embolden them, and strengthen their faith; therefore they ought rather to glory in, than be dismayed at them, ver. 13. The apostle begins praying in the middle of this epistle, and addresses the Father of Christ, of whom all the elect angels, and all the elect of the human race, called the family of heaven and earth, are named, ver. 15. The blessing that the apostle craves of God is that the Ephesians might be strengthened by his Spirit's might in the inner man. By the inner man he means the whole work of grace which is in every renewed soul, and is called the new, or the inner man, as corruption and pollution are called the old man. It is as though the apostle had said, the grace and Spirit of God, which hath humbled and inclined your wills to choose Christ, in subordination to the will of God, has also appointed Christ to be your everlasting portion. And, as the apostle took it for granted that humbling had subdued their wills, and purifying grace had renewed them in the spirit of their minds, so likewise he judged that the love of God had influenced their affections, and kindled an intense desire after the enjoyment of Christ Jesus. The apostle wishes and prays that the sovereign and all-conquering grace of God might reign and rule in their hearts and consciences.

Therefore he desires the ever-blessed Redeemer to reign and rule unmolested, and without a rival, in their affections, as if they were seated with him on his throne. The apostle well knew that erroneous men would be busy in besieging their understanding's, and that carnal objects would be labouring, to engross their affections; vanity to entertain their minds, pleasures to attract their desires, and legality to entangle and

govern their consciences. Therefore he wishes their inner man to be strengthened with spiritual might; hinting, thereby that all our resolutions, efforts, and watchfulness, would not be sufficient bulwarks against the attempts and attacks of Satan, unless they were strengthened by the spiritual might of God Almighty.

The apostle well knew, by his own experience, that Satan would lay strong siege to such souls; and he knew for a truth that, if one sin found acceptance and entertainment in the soul, that sin, when it had engrossed the affections, would let in many more, and consequently leave a gap, or breach, for a whole troop of specious sins to follow.

When any sin has gained the ascendancy, it will influence the saint's conversation, and prove a stumbling-block to those who are weak in faith; for the life and walk of such a saint would appear froward, and the tongue perverse; as saith the wise man, "A wholesome tongue is a tree of life; but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit." (Prov. 15:4) When sin is indulged by us the Spirit of God suspends, in a measure, his fortifying influence, that the back slider in heart may be filled with his own ways. (Prov. 14:14)

When this is the case the hedge (to our feelings) is broken down, and we lie exposed to every temptation; as says the Psalmist, "Why hast thou broken down her hedges, so that all they that pass by the way do pluck her?" Ps. 80:12) When thus entangled we try to resist, but are still rebuffed or beaten back; this causes rebellion and murmuring to take possession of our hearts; and it is thus that "the foolishness of man perverteth his way, and his heart fretteth against the Lord." (Prov. 19:3)

We now expect Christ to step in to heal the breach, bind up the wound, and put all our false gods to flight; and for this we pray; but he says, No; "Where are thy gods?" And he adds,

"The back slider in heart shall be filled with his own ways." When in our back slidings we find this to be the case, we begin to cavil and contend with the Saviour, and to ask why he has withdrawn his former loving-kindness from us? He, being the injured rival, disputes the point with us, and we impiously maintain a contention with him, rather than bear the indignation of the Lord, against whom we have sinned. (Micah. 7:9) Thus, sin having separated between Christ and the soul, (Isa. 59:2) a contention with him seems to fasten the bar of infidelity; as it is written, "A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city; and their contentions are like the bars of a castle." (Prov. 18:12) If a contention with Christ is as the bars of a castle, bow much more so when rebellion strengthens them?

The apostle, knowing that this would unavoidably be the case where sin is indulged, earnestly prays that God would fortify each power of their renewed souls with spiritual might against all the invasions of the devil. (Eph. 3:16) For he well knew that, if their souls were strengthened with divine might, the dear Redeemer would keep his residence in their hearts, without any rival being let into their affections; which he hints at in the 17th. verse, by praying, that Christ might dwell in their hearts by faith.

The apostle desires that Christ, as their king, might have his laws loved, obeyed, and meditated on in their minds; and, as king of righteousness, that his blessed scepter might be swayed in affections and consciences; and, as he was their atoning Saviour that peace and pardon might be sensibly enjoyed in their souls and that the altogether-lovely Saviour might be enthroned, exalted, and admired in the throne of their hearts, "That Christ (said he) may dwell in your hearts by faith, that ye may be rooted and grounded in love," ver. 17.

The apostle well knew that Christ, as king of righteousness and king of peace, did not reign in the world; as it is written, "I came not to send peace upon earth, but a sword and a fire; and what will I if it be already kindled?" The whole world is not under the blessed sway of the scepter of grace; Christ reigns on Mount Zion; but all men are not come to Mount Zion, and the heavenly Jerusalem. The elect, and them only, constitute the gospel Mount Zion, as it is written, "The Lord hath chosen Zion, he hath desired it for his habitation." And hence it is that he displays his admirable beauty and omnipotent power; as says the Psalmist, "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." But there are some who plainly affirm, and still adhere to this, that they will not have this man to reign over them. And, if the Lord hold his peace at them when they make these vows, it is a dreadful sign that they are not elected; and consequently all their vows are established that they have bound their souls with, and all their vows shall stand. None can make their vows void but a father and a husband; and Christ is that father and that husband, who can make them void, so as for the Lord to forgive them. (Numb. 30:4-8)

But to proceed; the kingdom of Christ is not of this world, therefore it is not to be taken or defended by carnal weapons. It is true that Christ is the King of kings, and Lord of lords; and by him kings reign, and princes decree justice. But this is under his uncontrollable power as the universal monarch of nations.

But his spiritual kingdom is not of this world; the throne of grace is in heaven; his laws are from heaven, and written in the minds of all his subjects; his scepter is swayed over every justified soul that believes in his name for justification, and takes him for his everlasting righteousness and strength; his kingdom is set in the souls of believers, as it is written, "The kingdom of God is within you." This kingdom is altogether spiritual; for the kingdom is not in word, but in power; it is

righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Thus, my friends, the Saviour's laws are written within us, and he must have the pre-eminence in our affections, and sway his peaceable scepter in our consciences, which I trust is our soul's delight. But, if we speak of this, it appears a bane to the world; they cannot endure his binding laws; therefore they say, "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast their cords from us." But why? What are his cords and bands, that are so offensive to those who are so violent? Why; one of the bands is the binding cord of everlasting love, which the carnal mind, fortified with infernal enmity, cannot brook; as it is written, "The carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can-be." The other hand is the bond of gospel peace; as it is written, "Keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." But the sinner had rather have peace with his sins, and continue to maintain war with God, than cast down his rebellious arms, and send an ambassage, desiring conditions of peace. The other cord or girdle is truth, intended to gird up the loins of the mind, in order to make the sinner watch, and be sober.

However, the ungodly say, "Let us break these bands asunder, and cast away his cords from us." Well, if this must be the case, he that dwells in heaven shall laugh at such: "Then shall he speak to them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill." (Ps. 2:6)

And now we will proceed to consider the words of my text; "That ye may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge. In these words there seems to be something like a contradiction. In the first clause he wishes us to comprehend, and in the last clause he says it passeth knowledge. But does the apostle contradict himself here? By no means. He would wish that the

Ephesians should comprehend with all saints, &c. He means, he would wish that the Ephesians, who were children in the faith, should arrive at as high a pitch of knowledge, experience, and enjoyment of God's eternal love, as any other saints whatever. That ye may comprehend with all saints; that you may see eye to eye with the best of them. And yet he insinuates to them that, when they have arrived to the highest pitch of knowledge, they would then know but in part; for the whole of Christ's love passeth knowledge. His plain meaning, seems to be this; I would wish you to know, to your soul's establishment, as much of Christ's love as can be known; but I must tell you that the greatest part to be known only in the bright regions of eternal day; as it is written, "For we know in part, and prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. (1 Cor. 13:9,10) The apostle's meaning then amounts to this; he would wish that the Ephesians should know, or comprehend, as much as other saints ever did; and yet would intimate that their knowledge and enjoyment was nothing, when compared to that knowledge and enjoyment which the saints will have in the world to come.

Having thus briefly opened my text, I must beg leave to invert the order of it a little. The words are, "That ye may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." If I have obtained your leave to invert the order, I will now deliver my thoughts on the subject in the following manner.

1. I will treat of the love of God.
2. Of the length of this divine love.
3. Offer my opinion on the breadth of it.
4. On the depth of this love.
5. On the height.

And conclude the whole with a word of application.

Where shall I begin in delivering my opinion on the subject? "I must begin with God, "for God is love." (1 John, 4:8) This is clearly revealed in the scriptures of truth, that the nature of God is love. But is this divine affection fixed on all the human race, so as to save them in Christ with an everlasting-salvation? That cannot be proved; for God says that multitudes are in hell already; as you read in the 31st and 32d chapters of Ezekiel. "God loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment." (Deut. 10:18) But the elect are not strangers. "I know my sheep (says Christ), and I lay down my life for them, and they shall never perish." It was self-moving, love in God to choose his own elect, and is the first cause of all our happiness. His own will was his councillor; as it is written, "He worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." That his wisdom drew up the plan of our salvation is plain from the word of truth; the gospel is "the wisdom of God in a mystery." And by his omnipotent power God performs what self-moving love secretly purposed in himself.

This love of God to his elect cannot be traced by us from its first rise. We can only go by the light of scripture, and affirm what God's witnesses have done before; viz. that God loved his elect with an everlasting love. But the idea of eternity will drown every thought that a mortal is capable of in launching forth into that unfathomable abyss. We may trace his word and works, and conclude as Job did, "Lo these are some of his ways; but how little of him is understood!"

In these profound depths of everlasting love we can find no bottom; like the dove, we must settle on the ark of the covenant, and then we shall be able to look about us.

First, then, God's love to his people is unutterable; we cannot express it, but can only furnish imperfect hints of its parts, as the scriptures do. For instance, "God so loved the world, that

he gave his only begotten Son," &c. (John, 3:16) And again, Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God! And it doth not yet appear what we shall be." (1 John 3:1)

The love of God to his elect is not only unutterable, but it is likewise inconceivable; and therefore called, in the last clause of my text, a love that passeth knowledge. It is a love that has been enjoyed by thousands, but cannot be fully described by any. This unutterable and inconceivable love is entirely sovereign. It lay entirely in the absolute and uncontrollable will and mind of God, whether he would create creatures out of the earth or not; and whether he would raise them to heaven (out of sin, when fallen) as the objects of his eternal love, or not.

It is sovereign, because fallen angels are excluded. And many of the human race are also excluded; as it is written, "Was not Esau Jacob's brother? Yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau." But when did this love and hatred take place, after Esau had sold his birthright? No, says God; "for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of him that calleth, it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the Younger. As it is written Jacob have I loved but Esau have I hated." (Rom. 9:11-13)

God's elect are said to be loved with an everlasting love. And there is a people that are to be called "The border of wickedness, and the people against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever." (Mal. 1:4) As this love of God is sovereign, so it appears to be entirely free in its fountain; as it is written, "But God commended his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us," Rom. v. 8. If God commended his love towards us while we were yet sinners, and reconciled us to himself when we were enemies

and without strength, his love must be free and unmerited, unless we can suppose that sin, enmity, and sinful infirmities, are meritorious in the sight of God.

As this love of God appears free in its fountain, so also it appears to be free in its administration. It cannot be purchased by human merit (falsely so called). "If a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would be utterly contemned." (Song 8:7) Simon Magus bid high for the Spirit of love; but the bidder and the price were both to perish together, for thinking that the gift of God was to be bought with money. So we conclude that Simon Magus, who wanted to buy, and the pope of Rome, who offers to sell, the gifts of God, are both "in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity." If that man is condemned who offers to buy the gifts of God, and if all the substance that a man offers for this love is to be utterly contemned, this love must be free; free in its fountain, and free also in its administrations.

This will appear still plainer if we consider the many work-mongers that have laboured in vain to obtain it. Some have strived for it; but none are crowned unless they strive lawfully. (2 Tim. 2:5) And none can strive lawfully till that love that fulfils the law be in their hearts. Some have run for it; but "the race is not to the swift." (Eccl. 9:11) No, says the Saviour, "Many that are first shall be last." (Matt. 19:30) Others have fought for it in heavy persecutions but "the battle is not to the strong." (Eccl. 9:11) The victory of faith is nowhere promised to the strength of the free-will or the power of the human arm. No, "Let the weak say I am strong." (Joel 3:10) Herod did many things, but never got the gifts of God for his labour. The Pharisees fasted often; they made many prayers, and long ones too, and honoured God with their lips, and yet were rewarded with the greater damnation for their pains. (Matt. 23:14) The young man in the gospel told the Saviour that he had kept the law from his youth up, and was sent away with

the sorrow of the world (that worketh death) in his heart. Esau wept for it; but got it not, "though he sought it carefully with tears," Thus it appears then not to be of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth nor of him that fighteth, nor of him that worketh, nor of him that striveth, nor of him that weepeth, nor of him that buys, nor of him that sells, "but of God that sheweth mercy." "I will heal their backslidings, I will love them freely." Hosea 14:4) This will appear still plainer if we consider what those who obtained it had to recommend them.

Let us see what God's elect have done to merit this love of God. Pray what merit was there in Mary Magdalen? How had she improved her supposed talent, will, power, or light within, or stock in hand, or by whatever other name you are pleased to call this phantom? The scriptures say she was possessed with seven devils; but her being a habitation for devils could not recommend her to the love and favour of God; nor could that possibly merit it at his hands. And, as for her body, that was a hacknied vehicle for every son of Belial who chose to hire it. Yet this woman received the gift of gospel repentance, the forgiveness of all her sins; and she loved much, because she was much beloved; as it is written, "We love him because he first loved us." Simon the Pharisee disdained this humble suppliant, and censured the Saviour as not being of God, because he supposed him ignorant of Mary's character; however, the Lord stopped his mouth by bringing him in debtor fifty pence, without a farthing to pay his debts. But Mary received her full discharge first, though she owed five hundred. Thus the harlot got the start of the Pharisee; as it is written, "Publicans and harlots enter the kingdom of God" before the Pharisees.

If we turn to Nicodemus, he is the most likely of any to merit it at the hands of Christ; for he took his part among the council and complimented the Lord when he came to visit him. But the Lord doth not commend him for these things; and we

know he had no other merit to plead, unless we allow that the fear of men and ignorance of real religion can be accounted meritorious.

First, there is no merit in the carnal fear of man; for "the fear of man bringeth a snare." And, as to ignorance, it is never supposed to merit any thing either at the hand of God or man. It merits nothing, at the hand of God, because the law allows a sacrifice for the sin of ignorance, which presupposes that ignorance is sin instead of merit. (Numb. 15:25)

Pray what did the harlot Rahab do to merit this love of God? Why (says the workmonger) "she received the spies with peace." Yea, but she was a daughter of peace before she received them: as it is written, "And into whatsoever house ye enter, say, Peace be to this house; and if the son of peace be there (mark that, if the son of peace be there), your peace shall come upon it." But suppose there be not a person ordained for peace in that house! Why then peace has nothing to do there; for if the son of peace be not there it shall return to you again, Luke, 10:5,6; and you shall carry it to its right owner. Thus, then, her receiving the spies was only the blessed effect of an eternal cause, which is the eternal council of the Trinity ordaining peace for us in Christ: for thus saith the Holy Ghost to the prophet, Christ shall be a priest upon his throne; "and the counsel of peace shall be between them both;" (Zech. 6:13) that is, between the Father and the Son; and thus Christ is our peace. And that Rahab had no merit to boast of but her receiving the spies, is plain; for her very name, Rahab, is one given by Isaiah to the devil, and to Egypt; and applicable enough, for it signifies furious pride. This woman was a heathen by nation, a harlot by trade, and a devil by name; and yet she tumbled into the bosom of everlasting love. Thus the love of God appears to be sovereign, discriminating, and free, in its fountain Jehovah; and it is likewise sovereign, discriminating, and free, in its

administrations under the dispensation of the Holy Ghost. But I pass on to my second general head, which is to treat of the length of this love.

On this subject I must be permitted to make an extended, or even improper, use of words.

The dimensions of this love that I am to treat of are fourfold. It is height in a superlative, and depth in an infinite degree; its two axes or poles may be compared to two eternities; and thus we must measure, if I may be allowed the expression, the length. Immensity seems to be its circumference; but our business is with the diameter, which the apostle calls the breadth.

However, Paul allows that it passeth knowledge; and indeed it is better felt and enjoyed than described; for this pleasing theme has employed, more or less, the tongues and pens of all God's eminent servants for many ages past, and I hope our tongues will never be silent on the subject.

You know, my dear friends, that I am called an enterprising man; I will therefore venture to say what I find warranted by the word of God, notwithstanding our utter inability to find it out to perfection; only let me observe the golden rule, and I will proceed. First, then, let it be noticed that God is love. This love shines from pole to pole, and is from everlasting to everlasting; as says the Psalmist, "from everlasting to everlasting thou art God." (Ps. 90:2) We will begin with that everlasting which is behind us, and to which the word from is prefixed-from everlasting; and so travel on till we come to the other eternal pole, which has the preposition to prefixed. Do not be startled at my adventurous flight, for we are most surely concerned in these two eternities. Let us begin where the scriptures declare God has begun. His glorious footsteps of mercy and love towards his elect are dated from everlasting; as it is written, "But the mercy of the Lord is from

everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him." (Ps. 103:17) And the Redeemer's going forth in covenant undertakings for the elect bears the same date: whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting." (Micah 5:2)

But to proceed: The first step that the Father took, in the path of love to his elect, was in treating with Christ in their behalf, and appointing him to be their head, their husband, their surety, their mediator, their father, and their brother. But when was this living head, surety, husband, mediator, father, and brother, elected, ordained, and appointed? Why, it is dated from everlasting; as the Saviour declares, "The Lord possessed me in the beginning, of his way (mark, here are his goings forth from everlasting, called to beginning of his way), before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there was no depths, I was brought forth when there were no fountains abounding with water: before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth." (Prov. 8:22-25) Thus it appears that Christ was elected, appointed, pre-ordained, and set up from everlasting to be future man and mediator; and was delivered to death for his elect by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Thus God the Father makes known his electing and everlasting love to his chosen people, in appointing and giving Christ to them before the world was.

When he set up Christ for our living head he gave us eternal life in him; as it is written, "In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie promised before the world began." (Titus 1:1) Christ is the quickening Spirit, that quickens all his redeemed; for he is our life, who has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. In another passage he himself saith, "Because I live ye shall live also." (John 14:19) And it must be so; "For, as in Adam all (his natural seed) die, even so in Christ shall all (his spiritual seed) be made alive." But I proceed.

When Christ was set up he was appointed to be the husband of God's chosen daughter. And as man and wife they were viewed one in union from everlasting; for the covenant of grace is a covenant of eternal wedlock: as it is written, "A certain king made a marriage for his son." (Matt. 22:2) And thus likewise runs the tenor of the covenant of wedlock, as God the Father speaks to his elect, "Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzi-bah, and thy land Beulah; for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married. For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee." (Isa. 62:4,5) Thus the elect were chosen as the king's daughter-in-law from eternity." (Ps. 132:13) They are espoused in time; (2 Cor. 11:2) and the marriage shall be consummated in bliss, when the mystery of God is finished; as it is written, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." (Rev. 19:7) And then she shall be clad in gold of Ophir, and be brought with joy and rejoicing to enter into the king's palace. (Ps. 45:15)

This mystery was exhibited by Eve's existing in Adam before she was extracted from him; so our life was hid with Christ in God. And, when Eve was taken out of Adam, she was a helpmeet formed for him; so the elect are created anew in Christ Jesus. When Eve was formed, God brought her to Adam; so no man can come to Christ except the Father draw him. When she came to Adam he received her as God's gift; so the elect are given to Christ. Adam and Eve are said to be one; so also are they that are joined to the Lord one spirit. Adam said, "Man shall leave, his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife;" so Christ came forth from the Father, leaping upon the mountains. And, when some of the Saviour's followers said. "Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand

without, desiring to speak with thee; he answered, Who is my mother and my brethren? And he stretched out his hands towards his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!" Matt. 12:47,48) Thus Christ left his father and mother, and clave to his wife. Adam had one wife brought to him and no more: so Christ says "There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number; my undefiled is but one." (Song 6:8,9) When Eve fell Adam was in the transgression, though he was not deceived; so when the elected spouse fell, Christ was not deceived, yet he was made sin, "and was numbered with the transgressors." (Isa. 53:12) When Adam and Eve fell, their marriage was not made void; so the fall of the elect did not break the bond of God's everlasting covenant, but rather paved the way to display eternal love towards the miserable. It appears that both Adam and Eve were chosen vessels; and, when they fell by eating the apples, they fell into soul travail, and were shortly after born again. Eternal love raised them up under the same tree where they fell; as it is written, "I raised thee up under the apple tree: there thy mother brought thee forth, there she brought thee forth, that bare thee." (Song 8:5) This mother (according to Paul, Gal 4:24) is the heavenly Jerusalem; and the heavenly Jerusalem; is the covenant of grace and God's elect in it; both typified by Sarah and her son Isaac. To Adam and Eve was the first promise of the covenant of grace revealed; and by the application of the promise were they brought forth from black despair to hope in God's mercy through Christ.

I shall conclude this head with the apostle's mystery, "For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church. For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife; and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the Church."

(Eph. 5:29-32) This therefore is another blessed effect of God's everlasting love. But, as a surety Christ was set up from everlasting; as it is written, "But Christ was made with an oath by him that said unto him The Lord sware, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament." (Heb. 7:21,22) First, Christ, as a surety, was to pay the debt of perfect obedience to the perceptive part of the law for his elect; as it is written, "He will magnify the law, and make it honourable." (Isa. 42:21) "So by the obedience of one (Jesus Christ) shall many be made righteous." (Rom. 5:19) As a surety, he was to pay the penal sum of suffering for his elect, by dying in their room and stead; as it is written, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave, I will redeem them from death." (Hosea 13:24) And thus it behooved Christ to suffer these things, because he had undertaken our cause. And by his precious blood he blotted out our transgressions as a thick cloud from the book of God's remembrance, agreeably to the following text, "I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day." (Zech. 3:9) "Who then shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" (Rom. 8:33) This is another blessed effect of everlasting love. But Christ was set up from everlasting, to be a mediator between God and the elect; as it is written, "But ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel." (Heb. 12:22-24)

Christ, as our mediator, appeased the wrath of God, removed the curse of the law from us by his death, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in an everlasting, righteousness. He appears both our peacemaker and our peace; as it is written, "He is our peace, who hath made peace for us by the blood of

his cross." (Col. 1:12) Thus we are reconciled to God by the death of his Son. This is another blessed effect of God's everlasting love.

Christ was also set up from everlasting to be a second Adam, or an everlasting Father; as it is written, "And his name shall be called wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." (Isa. 9:6) And, as a Father of the elect family, he received the promise of eternal life, together with the promise of the Spirit of God, for all those who are called his seed, agreeably to the following scripture: "As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; my Spirit that is upon thee, and my words that I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the month of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever," (Isa. 59:21) Thus God shewed his eternal love to the chosen seed in Christ before the world was. But in this covenant he made a parental reserve for himself; as you read, "But, if his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgressions with a rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless, my loving-kindness I will not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail: my covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips." (Ps. 89:30-34) Then, saith the Saviour, "Behold, I, and the children whom the Lord hath given me, are for signs and for wonders from the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth in Mount Zion." (Isa. 8:18)

And now the prophet puts forth a riddle to the world, when he says that Christ "was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living. " (Isa. 53:8) "Yet he shall see his seed" v. 10. And blessed be his name, he has got a glorious offspring out of the spoils of death, as saith the Psalmist, Unto

God the Lord belong, the issues from death." (Ps. 68:20) And this is the seed that shall serve Christ, and be counted to him for a generation." (Ps. 22:30) And that seed shall all one day appear in the blessed image of the second Adam; as it is written, "And, as we have borne the image of the earthy (Adam), we shall also bear the image of the heavenly: (for) as is the earthy (Adam), so are his seed also that are earthy; and, as is the heavenly (Adam), such are they also that are heavenly." (1 Cor. 15:48,49) And this is another blessed effect or result of God's eternal love.

Christ too in this eternal covenant is called the first-born: "I will make him, my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth; that in all things he may have the pre-eminence." And God promised to be to Christ, in human nature, his "Father, his God, and the Rock of his salvation." Ps. 89:26 God having, promised to be the Father and God of Christ, this blessing was transferred to the elect when the Saviour had finished the work of redemption, and was risen again from the dead; as it is written, "Go, tell my brethren that I am risen; and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." God therefore is become our God, and we are heirs of him, as our eternal portion; as it is written, "And, if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." (Rom. 8:17) In this covenant Christ and his elect brethren are said to be of one; as it is written, "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren." (Heb. 2:11,12) The glorious result of all this is to bring many sons to glory. (Heb. 2:10) This therefore is another blessed effect of God's everlasting love. But I proceed.

As God's servant Christ was set up from everlasting to serve under the law, and to redeem them that were under the law; and then to gather together in himself all the elect sheep, as

their chief shepherd; as it is written, "Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth," &c. As a shepherd he was appointed to redeem and gather in the sheep that were given to him; as it is written, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and I lay down my life for the sheep." And again, "This is the will of my heavenly Father, that of all that he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day." It appears plain, in the word of God, that Christ received the sheep, their names, and the number of them, before all worlds as it is said, "In thy book were all my members written when as yet there was none of them." This appears very plain; for God calls them sheep before they were either redeemed, or called, or born: "He shall gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." (Isa. 40:11) And this fulfils the ancient prediction, "And to him shall the gathering of the people be," Gen. 49:10) "I will (says God) set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David: he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd." (Ezek. 34:23) This doctrine will be proclaimed on the judgment-seat; as it is written, "He shall separate them, even as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand. Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Matt. 25:32-34) This also is another blessed effect of everlasting love.

Thus God has shewn his everlasting love to the elect in appointing them such a glorious head, set up from everlasting; in whom he has given them eternal life, and eternal union with him as a husband, an honourable discharge by him as a surety, peace by him as a mediator, adopting grace in him as an everlasting father, and an eternal portion with him as an elder brother. So much for the eternal and unchangeable love of God the Father.

But my dear hearers may object and say, Your text treats only of the love of Christ. I answer, When we speak of the love of Christ we do not exclude the love of the Father, nor of the Spirit, for it is one love. The glorious Trinity loved the elect from everlasting. But of each of these in particular.

Of God the Father's love I have treated already; I next proceed to speak of the love of Christ.

The Saviour manifested his love to the elect in undertaking their cause, accepting their names and persons, and substituting himself in their room and stead from everlasting; in veiling his infinite Deity in flesh and blood, suffering Shame, reproach, and ignominy, to procure our eternal salvation in time; and lastly, in laying down his life to redeem us from all evil; as it is written, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13)

The dear Saviour had much to suffer; the flood gates of wrath were opened on him, the floods of death compassed him about, and also the floods of temptation. All these met together on the dear Redeemer's head; and our frail nature, and the infirmities of it, with which he was compassed about, shrunk back at the thought of the approaching tragedy: "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." However, love was strong as death, and stronger too; for many waters could not quench his love, neither could the floods drown it. (Song 8:6,7)

Is this the eternal love of Christ to his elect? It really is; "Who then shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." (Rom. 8:35-37)

I next proceed to shew that the love of the Spirit appears from the same date; I mean from everlasting.

The Holy Ghost shewed his eternal love to the elect, in bearing witness to this everlasting covenant; as it is written, "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one." (1 John 5:7) He not only appeared a witness of the covenant, but the seal and sealer; as it is written; "And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne, a book written within, and on the back side, sealed with seven seals." (Rev. 5:1) Thus the Spirit undertook to bear witness to the covenant, to ratify it, and to reveal to all God's elect the glorious benefits arising from it; as it is written, "He shall take of the things that are mine, and shall shew them unto you." (John 16:15) And, blessed be his name, so he does; he leads us into all truth; works faith in us; sheds abroad the Father's love in our hearts; and I believe that love, joy, and peace, are the firstfruits of the harvest of glory; and the Holy Spirit himself is the earnest of our eternal inheritance; and he is to abide with us for ever, as a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Thus we see the Holy Spirit's love; as it is written, "Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit." (mark that, the love of the Spirit) (Rom. 15:30) "But the fruit of the Spirit is love." (Gal. 5:22)

Thus, my friends, we have gone through the second head. I will next shew you the stability of this covenant; and then proceed to consider the third head.

This blessed covenant is signed and witnessed by the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; ratified by the sevenfold sealer and seal of heaven; confirmed by the oath of God, and by the blood of Jesus Christ the immutable testator; and thus it is made sure to all the seed. (Rom. 4:6) How sweetly are the elect secured from the wrath of God, blessed with eternal love, and a sweet

foundation laid for a strong consolation in all our troubles! First, they are secured from wrath; as it is testified, "For this is as the waters of Noah unto me; for, as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I will not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee." Oh blessed and sweet security! His loving-kindness too is as strongly secured. "For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee." It is true, the elect may be tossed in the storms of affliction, and be almost drowned at times in distress; but their situation can never alter the covenant: "O, thou afflicted, tossed with tempests, and not comforted, behold I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and thy foundation with sapphires." This, I think, means all the attributes of Jehovah, which are engaged in behalf of the elect, and who are secured in this covenant; for it immediately follows, "In righteousness shalt thou be established." (Isa. 54:9-14) Thus the covenant is signed and witnessed by three immutable and unchangeable witnesses; sealed and ratified by divine veracity; and confirmed by the oath of an immutable God, who can never be perjured. Eternal life is promised by him who cannot lie, and confirmed by the efficacious blood of him who is without variableness or shadow of turning. (James 1:17) Surely then these immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to falsify his word, are sufficient to afford us the most solid ground of comfort; as it is written, "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong, consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner hath for us entered; even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." (Heb. 6:17-20)

Having offered you my thoughts on this divine love from the eternal source, I shall now proceed to the South Pole, which is before us, namely, to everlasting. This is a natural inference drawn from the length of this love mentioned in my text. In doing this I will hereafter touch on the benefits of this covenant, and their being a free donation, as well as of their eternal duration.

I know the Arminians affirm that we may be children of God today and children of the devil to-morrow; but this is rendering God worse than ourselves; for I, who am evil, could not deal so in a natural sense with my children. If what they affirm be true, the length of God's love mentioned in my text, which is said to pass knowledge, is but four-and-twenty hours long at best. But I leave those liars and their lies to the father of lies, and proceed to speak of what God says, for we know that he is true though every man be a liar. (Rom. 3:3) It plainly appear in scripture that the everlasting God chose the elect in his Son Christ Jesus, and that the covenant was sealed by the eternal Spirit in heaven: and it is as plain that everlasting love moved them to it; therefore the covenant is called an everlasting covenant, and we shall find all the blessings of it to bear the same date.

I will therefore consider them distinctly, and only take notice of them as I find God hath mentioned them.

First, then, as God remembered us in our low estate, he hath promised not to forget us; but to remember us for good, and to establish us; as it is written, "Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance." (Ps. 112:6) Therefore there is no fear of being forgotten before the Lord.

And, as all the elect were condemned by the law, the Lord Jesus has brought in an eternal righteousness to justify them;

as it is written, "He shall make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness." (Dan. 9:24)

But you will say, We are dead in law, and dead in sin. I know that we are all in that state; but in this covenant the elect are pre-ordained to eternal life; as it is written, "And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Acts 13:48) Thus the elect are quickened here, and brought to live by the faith of the Son of God; and their eternal life, which is given us of God, is hid with Christ, as our head, in God; as it is written, "I give my sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hands." John 10:28) "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." (John 6:47) There we see the blessings of this everlasting covenant bear the same date as the covenant doth. But to proceed.

The Almighty knew how the devil, the God of this world, would blindfold us in order to lead us to the bottomless pit, and that Satan would send many blind guides to lead us on from one dark mountain to another, that we might follow the devil's doctrine, and so be damned at last. I say the Lord knew this, for "known unto God are all things;" therefore in this covenant he has promised to be an everlasting light to all his people; as it is written, "But the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." (Isa. 60:19)

In this covenant God hath provided a righteousness for the elect, though by nature they were ungodly. (Rom. 4:5) This righteousness was wrought out for the elect by Christ; as it is written, "By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." (Rom. 5:19) This righteousness God accepted of our surety, he "being made of God unto us righteousness." (1 Cor. 1:30) This righteousness God also imputes freely without any pre-requisite in us; as it is written, "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works." (Rom. 4:6) The Spirit

of God brings this righteousness near to us in a preached gospel, and reveals it to the eye of faith; as speaketh God by the prophet Isaiah, "I bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off." (Isa. 46:13) This righteousness is revealed in the gospel for every believer: "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith." (Rom. 1:17) Faith puts this righteousness upon the poor sinner for his justification before God, as a righteousness procured by God: "But now 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 unto all and upon all them that believe." (Rom. 3:21,22)

Remember, this righteousness is given freely, therefore woe be to that man that thinks to merit it, or add something, of his own thereto; which Christ calls putting a piece of new cloth upon an old garment, that will make the rent worse. I say it is given of God, and cannot either be bought or sold; as it is written, "They that receive abundance of grace, and the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." (Rom. 5:17)

Thus, my dear hearers, Christ wrought out this righteousness for us; God the Father accepts it of Christ, and places it to our account, and imputes it freely. The gospel reveals it, the Holy Ghost applies it to the hand of an appropriating faith, and makes it manifest to the sinners conscience; conscience enjoys it, and finds peace to be the effect of it. Thus we, "are justified freely from all things from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses." (Acts 13:39)

This righteousness too bears the same ancient date of the covenant; for "seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and

to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring, in everlasting righteousness." (Dan. 9:24)

I next proceed to shew that persevering strength is most surely promised to the elect in this covenant; or else Satan would soon throw us down, even were we as strong as Peter supposed himself to be when he promised never to forsake Christ, though all the rest did; as it is written, "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heavens in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." (Deut. 33:37) Therefore "trust in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." (Isa. 26:4)

God's elect are not to be left comfortless, though they are so much opposed and hated in the world; for this covenant secures our consolations also, and they bear the same date as the covenant does, as it is written, "Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and establish you in every good word and work." (2 Thess. 2:16,17)

Our joy and glory are also secured in this covenant; as it is written, "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." (Isa. 35:10) And there is another eternal blessing beyond all these, and that is an eternal weight of glory in the presence of the Lamb; which is likewise to be enjoyed for ever and ever.

Thus, my dear hearers, you see what everlasting love has done for us. Remember that this love is to endure for ever; as saith the church, "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." (Jer. 31:3)

Having thus discoursed of the length of the love of God, and proved the date of it to be from everlasting to everlasting, I come now to my third general head, which is to treat of the breadth of his love.

By breadth we may understand its universal extension to all the elect, whether Jews or Gentiles.

In the antediluvian world the love of God was known but too few families, and they sprung from the loins of Seth; the family of Cain seem to have been kept quite ignorant of it. It was much contracted likewise in the administration of it in the days of Noah; and after the flood it seemed to flow in a very narrow channel, and confined itself chiefly to the descendants of Noah: in short, it ran in one contracted channel till Jacob's family multiplied in Egypt, and then it began to extend itself, and to widen most sweetly at Israel's deliverance from bondage. And here and there a poor Gentile was pulled in by this cord of everlasting love: but the greatest part of them were left to go on in their own ways.

It continued with Israel some hundred years, and the partition all that encompassed them seemed to stand firm for many ages; as it is written, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." In the days of David it extended itself gloriously among the Jews; and after that again it fell into a narrow channel, and continued so for many years, till the golden days of the Son of Man appeared, and then it widened greatly; but was still seemingly confined to the Jewish nation; as it is written, "These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt. 10:5,6) But, though this everlasting love seemed so contracted in its administrations in those ancient days, yet it was broad in the secret purposes of God. That the Gentiles should be saved, was a part of the

great mystery of godliness; as it is written, "Preached unto the Gentiles," &c. But at last the dear Redeemer broke down the middle wall of the partition that separated between the Jewish nation and the Gentiles; and sent his servants forth to preach the gospel to every creature. On the glorious day of Pentecost this everlasting flame of divine love was wonderfully kindled in the twelve apostles, who were appointed to be the twelve ministerial foundations of the gospel church and from them it was communicated to the uniting of many lively stones to the chief corner stone Christ Jesus; the only foundation for faith and hope to build their expectations on.

The dimensions of this love in my text were sweetly revealed to Peter in the vision of a great sheet knit at the four corners. Four of the glorious attributes of God knit the corners, and sweetly agree in letting down to the earth this sheet of everlasting love; as it is written, "Mercy and truth are met together." These two attributes hold two opposite corners. "Righteousness and peace have kissed each other." And after that mutual kiss they agreed or harmonized together to hold up the other two opposite corners. Thus "mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other." (Ps. 85:10) In this sheet were The elect Gentiles chiefly exhibited. It contained "all manner of four-footed beasts" (mark that, all manner of four-footed beasts). Their species was human, but brutal by sin, "Every man is brutish in his knowledge." (Jer. 10:18) "I am more brutish (saith Agur) than any man." (Prov. 30:2) Yea, the whole human race are emphatically called beasts; as it is written, "that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts." (Eccl. 3:18) These were the beasts represented to Peter in this sheet, four-footed beasts. Some sinners are also called dogs, as Christ called the Gentile woman. (Matt. 15:27) Some are called swine. (Matt. 7:6) Some are called wolves. (Matt. 10:16) Some lions. (Zeph. 3:3) Some calves. (Mal. 4:2) But "the wolf shall dwell with the Lamb (of God),

and the leopard shall lie down with the kid: and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child (or babe in grace) shall lead them." (Isa. 11:6) That sheet contained all the elect from eternity, and is their rest and divine solace when grace has tamed them, as is represented by their lying down with the Lamb.

There were creeping things also in the sheet, as well as beasts; some sinners are called serpents, some vipers, Matt. iii. 7; and some are called worms. (Micah 7:17) And there were fowls of the air in the sheet also (mark the elect are called doves; (Isa. 60:8) eagles; (Isa. 40:31) and speckled birds. (Jer. 12:9) These were the living creatures in Peter's sheet: "And there came a voice to him, saying, Rise, Peter, kill and eat:" take the sword of the Spirit, and kill them to all hope in the law; crucify them to the world, that they may be dead unto sin: (Rom. 6:2) kill them to all confidence in the flesh, that their old man may be crucified with Christ; that they may become dead to the law, and be married to another. (Rom. 7:4) "Arise, Peter, kill and eat."

I told you, at the well of Samaria, that I had meat to eat that we knew not of, and that my meat was to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work, John. (4:32,34) I have made thee, Peter, a minister, and the conversion of these sinners must be the meat and drink of thy ministerial appetite, or thirst for souls.

Mine elect in this world are compared to fish in the great sea. (Ezek. 47:9-11) And I told thee, Simon, I had made thee a fisher of men. (Mark 1:17) Suck, therefore, of the abundance of the seas, Peter, for that is the food of the minister. (Deut. 33:19) "For the abundance of the seas shall be converted unto me; the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto me." (Isa. 60:5) Mine elect are a treasure hid in the sand. (Deut. 33:19) "Though Israel be as the sand on the sea-shore, yet a

remnant shall return." (Isa. 10:22) "Arise, Peter, kill and eat;" suck of the abundance of the seas, and of the treasures hid in the sand. (Deut. 33:19) "Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles," (Isa. 60:16) "And in their glory shall you boast yourselves." (Isa. 61:6)

"Arise, Peter, kill and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean." Oh wretched construction! Too carnally understood. "And the voice spake unto him the second time, What God hath cleansed, (mark that, it is spoken in the past tense) what God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." Peter's last comment on the vision proves what I have asserted, when he says, "But God hath shewed me that I should not call any man (mark here, these beasts and creeping things are called men) common or unclean." (Acts 10:21)

Let it be observed that, when this sheet was let down, all these beasts were in it. It was let down from heaven, and the beasts were in it, to shew their election and eternal union with Christ in the bond of everlasting love, represented to Peter by the sheet. And afterwards these beasts were drawn up again in the sheet, to shew their safe arrival in glory in the same sheet or bond of eternal love.

And, though they are compared to beasts, Yet they were all in the sheet, and said to be cleansed, though they were not called by grace: for they were not dead to the law, nor were they alive by faith no, they were to hear from Peter the word by which they might live. And the sheet was let down thrice; to shew, first, their eternal union with Christ in the bond of everlasting, love; and therefore they are said to be "preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." (Jude 1:1) Secondly, this sheet is let down at conversion, as appears by the Holy Ghost falling on them when Peter spake to them. And, thirdly, it shall be let down again at the general resurrection of their bodies: for their

bodies, as well as their souls, were represented by four-footed beasts, if not more so; and, though they snuffed up the wind at their pleasure, like a wild ass in the wilderness, (Jer. 2:24) yet were they let down from heaven in this sheet, and cleansed in Christ, who is their sanctification, and who sanctifieth them; "For he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are both of one." (Heb. 2:11)

Some of these four-footed beasts were knocking at Peter's door at the same time that the vessel was drawn up to heaven again: "Now, while Peter doubted in himself what this Vision should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon, and stopped before the gate, and called, and asked, whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there. While Peter thought on the vision the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee; arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing, for I have sent them." (Acts 10:17-20)

Thus this love extended itself in its administrations far and wide, until it gathered some from the east, some from the west, some from the north, and some from the south; and will bring them at last to "sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God." (Matt. 8:11) "God gave the word, and great were the company that published it." Even when the devil raised a persecution against the apostles of God, this was made an instrument, in his wisdom, for promulging his divine law; as it is said, "They went every where preaching the gospel." Legions of poor souls got hold of these sweet cords of the everlasting love of the Trinity. And some ran one way with it, some another, until they fulfilled this prediction, "Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations; spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left, and thy seed shall inherit the

Gentiles, to and make the desolate cities to be inhabited." Isa. 54:2,3)

And this eternal love in its breadth shall never leave the earth, till "the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ." (Rev. 11:15) And then "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Hab. 2:14)

I now come to the fourth head proposed, viz, the depth which is mentioned in my text.

The profound depth of the love of Christ may be subdivided into three heads. It was deep in the eternal counsel of God; it was a mysterious depth in the agonizing sufferings of Christ; and deep in the manifestation of it to poor mortals who were deeply fallen.

First, it is deep as considered in the eternal counsel of God; deep, because it lay hid from everlasting, until it was made known to God's elect by the Spirit. All the wisdom and learning of the world could never have discovered, much less have fathomed it. It lay concealed in the eternal mind, and would have lain there undiscovered to all eternity, if God had not discovered it by the light of his Spirit. Who among all the race of Adam could have imagined an eternal affection in a just God toward self-condemned rebels, upon the grounds of truth and justice, if God had not revealed it by his Spirit? "As it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love of him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, even the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." (1 Cor. 2:9-11) But

I next proceed to shew that the depth of divine love was wonderfully displayed in the singular sufferings of Christ Jesus. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." John 15:13) This depth will appear still more conspicuous, if we consider the many enemies with whom the love of Christ had to combat. First, our sins lay as a dreadful burden on him; for, "the Lord laid upon him the iniquity of us all." (Isa. 53:6) And the Saviour "bore our sins in his own body on the tree." (1 Pet. 2:24) Secondly, the infernal malice and fury of devils: "The prince of this world cometh, but he hath nothing in me." Yea, even the wicked enlisted under his banner: "This is your hour, and the powers of darkness." (Luke 22:53) Thirdly, the cruel insults of the Jewish rabble, who derided and blindfolded him, smiting him on the face, crowning him with thorns, bowing the knee before him, putting a reed as a mock scepter into his hand, arraying him in a gorgeous robe, sending him to Herod; and afterward, when under the greatest anguish, commanding him to come down from the cross, and they would believe him. We may add to this the cup of wrath that was given him to drink; the soul-piercing, curse of the law that he was to bear, in order to redeem us from that: the disciples forsook him and fled; and, that vindictive justice might get a full satisfaction, the Father hid his face from him, yea, forsook him. The Saviour bore all the rest with silence; but this extorted so bitter a cry from him, that both heaven and earth answered it; the inanimate rocks opened their mouths; the graves disclosed the dead; the bowels of the earth were moved, and the sun was veiled in sackcloth: these things wrestled hard against eternal love. The infirmities of our flesh made him fear and sweat, and stand sorely amazed: "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak," said the dear Redeemer. But everlasting love waded through all these rapid floods of opposition. Nor could the floods of temptation, of wrath, of persecution, nor the cold floods of death, in the least quench or impede his permanent, divine, and everlasting affection to his own elect: as it is

written, "Many waters cannot quench love, nor can the floods drown it," "for love is strong as death." (Song 8:7) Surely love must pierce deep in the Saviour's breast, or he never would have veiled his glory, faced the storm, and waded through the pains hell, to get at the object loved, if love had not been well rooted. Is this the eternal love of Christ to us? So it seems. "Who (then) shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." (Rom. 8:35-37)

But let us consider the depth of this love in its administration: in bringing many of its objects up out of the various depths into which the devil and sin has sunk them; some of whom justice has seemed to turn as it were to destruction; but everlasting love has prohibited their entrance there, and led them back to God with the greatest placidity; as it is written, "Thou turnest man to destruction, and sayest, Return, ye children of men," (Ps. 90:3) Some have been almost deluged in guilt, horror, wrath, and anguish of soul; and, when their souls have been over-whelmed within them, eternal love has appeared, and led them to the Rock higher than they; (Ps. 61:2) put a new song in their mouths, and established their goings. (Ps. 40:2) Others have been exercised on their beds with pain, and the multitude of their bones with strong, pain; insomuch that their life abhorred bread, and their souls dainty meat; their flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen, and their bones that were not seen stick out. Then says Love, "Deliver them from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom. Their flesh shall be fresher than a child's; and they shall return to the days of their youth: they shall pray unto God, and he shall be favourable unto them; and they shall see his face with joy." (Job 33:19)

Others have been possessed with legions of devils; some sunk into black despair; others have been bowed together by Satan; and some have been both mad and dumb; some in the shadows of death; others in the horrible pit. But love has still dived beneath them, and brought them up as on eagles' wings. This precious cord of everlasting love angled sweetly after poor Jonah, when fatherly displeasure had raised a storm, and cast him overboard, and at last brought him up from the bowels of hell. In short, there are no depths that the elect of God have fallen into, where love hath not waded after them, and brought them up. It brought Manasseh up from the magic depths of Satan; and David from deep calling unto deep, the very echoes or resoundings of hell itself.

Other poor souls have sinned against light and love, after they had tasted that the Lord was gracious. Some, under such circumstances, have cried out, "My hope is perished from the Lord: (others, that) there is no hope; (some, that) I am cast out of his sight;" and others have cursed the day in which they were born, and the man that brought tidings of their birth. Some dejected souls have declared they were as sure of hell as if they were in it: and others have wished they had been there, that they might know the worst. But not one of these that I allude to could, with their dying breath, charge immutable love with the failure. No; love has appeared to make their bed in their sickness. (Ps. 41:3) And the everlasting arms have been under neath them. (Deut. 33:27) Love has sweetly rekindled her expiring flame; and conscience has compelled them to set to their seal that God is true to the irrevocable promise that he has given them: "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save; he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love; he will joy over thee with singing." (Zeph 3:17)

The height of this love may be subdivided into three heads, Firstly, God's love to Christ, and to the elect in him: this is

plain, by his ordaining them to glory by him. Secondly, in God's exaltation Christ in human nature as our head. Thirdly, our exaltation with him and in him.

Firstly, then, God's love to Christ; as it is written, "For thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." (John 17:24) And God loved us in Christ, and by the bond of eternal love made us one with him; and the result of this love was giving us eternal glory in Christ Jesus, and ordaining us to it by him; as it is said, "I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me." (John 17:23) And the glory that God gave us in Christ is transferred to us by him; as it is written, "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one." (John 17:22)

Secondly, The height of this love may be considered, and clearly seen in the Father's exalting, Christ so high in our nature, as the glorious representative of all his seed. God raised up from the dead his son Jesus Christ, without suffering him to see corruption; and then he glorified him, "The God of our fathers hath glorified his son Jesus." (Acts 3:13) He not only raised him up, and glorified him, but he hath "highly exalted him." (Phil. 2:9) Highly exalted him indeed! For he is ascended above all heavens; yea, far above all heavens; for "he that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things." Eph. 4:13) God set him "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." (Eph. 1:21)

Thus, my dear hearers, you see God the Father's love to us in Christ, in setting, him up to be our head from everlasting. 2dly, In preparing him a body in time to be taken into union with his Godhead. 3dly, In not suffering that body to see corruption,

but raising it from the dead. 4thly, In giving him glory, or glorifying him. 5thly, In raising him up, and exalting, him far above all heavens; and putting all things in subjection under his feet.

But you will say, Where are the elect all this time? I answer, When Christ died we were crucified with him, "Knowing that our old man is crucified with him." (Rom. 6:6) "I am crucified with Christ," says Paul. And, when Christ was raised from the dead, the elect were raised also: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise." (Isa. 26:19) Yea, and when Christ ascended the elect ascended; and, when Christ took his seat far above all heavens, the elect took their seats in him, and sat down with him; as it is written, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love (mark, his great love, this is the bond of eternal union) wherewith he loved us (mark that, loved us) even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (mark the union, quickened us together with Christ) by grace ye are saved." Now mark the resurrection and ascension; "And hath raised us up together, (mark the union again, raised us up together) and made us sit together, (mark the union again, made us sit together) in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." (Eph. 2:4-6) This is no new doctrine; for it shone sweetly in the old laws, where God commanded the Israelites to bring the first sheaf of their wheat harvest to him; "When ye be come into the land which I give unto you; and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest." (Lev. 23:10) This institution of the gift of the sheaf of the firstfruits was in order that the harvest might be consecrated, and also to secure the promised blessing of God on the field. (Deut. 28:3) Let us now see the Holy Ghost's meaning in all this. That sanctuary into which the sheaf was carried was typical of heaven; as it is written, "The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made

manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing, which was a figure for the time then present." (Heb. 9:8,9)

As that sanctuary was a type of heaven, so the first sheaf offered was a type of Christ; and the harvest under God's blessing was a type of all God's elect. First, Christ calls himself a corn of wheat, before his death: "And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but, if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." (John 12:23,24) Mark here, before Christ died he calls himself a corn of wheat that shall bring forth much fruit; after his resurrection, by reason of our union with him, he is called "a handful of corn in the earth, upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof (mark that, the elect are called the fruit thereof) shall shake like Lebanon; and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth. His name shall endure for ever" (mark here, the handful of corn is called a person; his name shall endure for ever.) And now mark the fruits also, "His name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men (mark, there is the fruit of this handful of corn) shall be blessed in him; and all nations shall call him blessed." (Ps. 72:16,17) We now follow this sheaf, Christ Jesus, up to the heavens, for Jesus is entered into the holiest of all, now to appear in the presence of God for us; and there we find Christ is received as the first fruits; "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits (mark that, become the firstfruits) of them that slept." (1 Cor. 15:20) There Christ, the firstfruits, has ascended far above all heavens.

But you will say, Where are the elect all this time? I answer, They ascended in him as in their head; and are personally to follow him in their spiritual form and order; as it is written, "But every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming; then cometh the end." (1 Cor. 15:23,24)

Christ, having entered as the firstfruits, has promised to send his angels to reap his harvest, that is, "to gather together his elect from the four winds, from the one end of heaven to the other." (Matt. 23:31) All these elect persons are called sheaves, and, when bound in the bundle of life, shall be gathered into the same sanctum sanctorum as Christ Jesus the firstfruits was; as it is written, "Now also many nations are gathered against thee that say, Let her be defiled, and let our eye look upon Zion: but they know not the thoughts of the Lord, neither understand they his counsel, for he shall gather them as the sheaves into the floor." (Mic. 4:11,12) Thus he shall gather his wheat into his garner, but he shall burn up the chaff with fire unquenchable.

I now proceed to the third branch of this general head of discourse, viz. the height of this love in the personal exaltation of the elect at the glorious resurrection.

God promised to Christ the fullness of the Spirit in the eternal counsel; and promised likewise that the same Spirit should never depart from him, nor from his seed. This blessed Spirit is called the promise of the Father to Christ; and Christ sends that Spirit upon all the elect in the appointed time: "Jesus being exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear." (Acts 2:33) The Holy Spirit is to make the elect know their privileges, by leading them into all truth. He searches the deep things of God, and makes them known to the chosen; he washes, sanctifies, and cleanses them; he resides in them as the earnest of their future inheritance; and he seals them up to the day of eternal redemption; he sheds abroad God's love in their hearts, and shall at last quicken and raise up our mortal bodies; as it is written, "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." (Rom. 8:11) Let it be observed,

brethren, that the Holy Ghost, which is given to us, is the earnest of our future inheritance, and is coupled together with glory, whenever he takes up his residence; as it is written, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you." (1 Peter 4:14) Here then you see the Spirit and glory of God rests upon the elect. The same Spirit is to quicken our mortal bodies; yea, our vile bodies are to be changed, and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ. Thus they are to bear the image of the heavenly Adam, and to mount up and meet the Lord in the air, and then to sit down on the judgment-seat with our dearly beloved head, as his mystical body; that all out persecuting enemies, both men and devils, may be judged by the elect of God; as it is written, "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? Now much more things that pertain to this life?" (1 Cor. 6:2,3)

Thus the elect are to appear on the judgment-seat with Christ their head, who comes to avenge his and their wrongs; as speaketh the Holy Ghost, "Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand; to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the Lord." (Ps. 149:5-9)

The judgment being finished, and the doom of the wicked for ever fixed, the elect shall see a new heaven and a new earth; the first heaven and the first earth shall pass away in a flame of fire, prefigured by the destruction of Sodom and the adjacent cities; "The elements shall melt with fervent heat," and the wicked be chased away with it; whilst the Judge shall

render his vengeance with fury, and his rebukes with flames of fire; the heavens being dissolved, and the elements melted; as Peter says. (2 Pet. 3:12) Then shall the new heaven and the new earth appear; which, according, to his promise, we look for, wherein shall dwell righteousness, (2 Pet. 3:13 or righteous persons; and these shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years: "But the rest of the dead (that is, the wicked dead) lived not again" till the thousand years were run out. This is the first resurrection, in which the blessed and the holy have their part; and at the close of the thousand years will all the dead be judged: "Then shall the king say to them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." And now comes the ultimate end of all our blessedness; every enemy will be destroyed; the Saviour's regal scepter, which was swayed over the militant church, will be laid by; and the triune Jehovah, or Elohim, will be all in all. (1 Cor. 15:28) Then, my brethren, we shall understand something of the height of this love mentioned in my text.

Having endeavoured to wade through the length, breadth, depth, and height of this love, I shall just mention some species or dimensions which weak believers are apt to think contrary to what I have laid down; and which they are ready to imagine will, some time or other, separate them from this love of God; and then pass on to the application.

Paul the apostle seems to defy the king, of terrors. I mean death, to cause a separation; and he defies life also, whether prosperous or adverse; and angels, whether good or bad; emperors, kings and princes; judges, magistrates, present troubles, and future judgments: the highest pitch of joy or prosperity, and the deepest abyss of horror, trouble, tribulation, or poverty, to bring about a separation between God and the elect, or break the bond of his love, which is the bond of eternal union; as it is written, "For I am persuaded that

neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. 8:38,39)

I come now to the application, for I reckon that your patience is almost worn out: but blessed be God, we do not work by the day.

What know you of this love? Is it shed abroad in your hearts by the Holy Ghost? Do you know experimentally the pardon of your sins? Christ said that Mary Magadalen's sins were many, and that they were forgiven her, and she loved much; and, where little is forgiven, the same will love little. Thus you see that love always attends a pardoned soul. And, if you say "I love the Lord," and feel a most cordial affection for him, for his people, his word, and his worship; remember thy love is nothing but a reflection from his love to thee; as it is written, "We love him because he first loved us." But, perhaps, some of you may say "You are too high; we cannot come up to that experience." Stay where you are, and I will come nearer to you. Do you find a disinterested love to them that savour most of Christ Jesus in the world? - "Why (say you) is the word disinterested put in? What do you mean by that?" I mean that a hypocrite may love a godly man for what he can get from him, and not for Christ's sake; as Pharoah loved Joseph for unfolding his dreams, and saving his country from perishing; and as the king of Babylon loved Daniel; and as Potiphar's wife loved Joseph, with the carnal and damnable love of a whore. I ask, therefore, If ye love the children of God because their knowledge, their life, and conversation in holiness, appear amiable in your sight? Perhaps you say "No: I love all people alike, whether they fear God or hate him whether they are orthodox or heterodox." If so, your love has not holiness for its object; it bears no other stamp than merely the

impression of the old man. Let me shew you the word of the Lord on this point: "Who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He in whose eyes a vile person is contemned (mark that); but he honoureth them that fear the Lord." (Ps. 15:1,4) But some will say "I bless God, I can stand the trial of that pure disinterested love which you describe." Very well, so far good: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." (1 John 3:14)

But again, my friends, do you feel sin a plague and a burden to you? Is this your greatest grief; even the unholy motions that are felt from the living, corruptions of your heart, because you cannot subdue them, nor keep your thoughts and mind pure, and stayed on the Lord, as you are exhorted to do? Do you answer "Yes, I hate the former, and I love the latter?" What saith the Psalmist? "I hate vain thoughts; but thy law do I love." (Ps. 119:113) And again, "Ye that love the Lord, hate evil." Ps. 97:10)

Again, brethren, Do you feel a hatred to erroneous doctrines, which are so dishonourable to God, and destructive to men? I mean such as Arminianism, Deism, Antinomianism, together with all other doctrines of devils? And are your wills brought into subjection to the will of God, so as to consent to wholesome doctrines, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ? If you say "Yes," and conscience says the same, hear the word of the Lord, "Through thy precepts I get understanding, therefore I hate every false way." (Ps. 119:104)

But again, some will say "I bless God, I can say I love him; for I have been as poor as ever Job was, but his providence has blessed the work of my hands, so that I have abundance laid up in store for my use, while I can see many poor souls destitute of both house and home; yea, and even some of God's people too, who have hardly food to eat, or raiment to

put on; therefore God's love has appeared discriminating to me." Stop, don't you run away; I will come a little closer to you. Your love seems to be more fixed on the providence of God as to the body, than in the discriminating grace of God in Christ revealed to the soul; and has a little of the tincture of those who followed Christ over the sea of Tiberias for the loaves and fishes, and were sent back with an empty belly and a killing reproof. Suppose God should destroy all your substance, as he did the substance of Job; how then would you stand afflicted to God? But further; if you were to take your wealth, family, friends, neighbours, with every benefactor, and lay them in one end of the balance, and Christ alone in the other, which, thinkest thou, would gain the draught in the balance of thy affections? Nay, do not start back at this question. I say, which would then gain the draught? Upon a proper examination, canst thou say with the Psalmist, "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee?" (Ps. 73:25) If Christ was to put the question to you as he did to Peter, when he said "Simon, lovest thou me?" Couldst thou answer in the affirmative, "Lord, thou knowest all things: thou knowest that I love thee." (John 21:17)

But again, another may say "I cannot say that I love Christ; I wish I could: but this I do find, that all things of this world will not satisfy the boundless desires of my soul; there is a secret anxiety in my mind, which cannot be satisfied by all created and sublunary enjoyments. These are all broken cisterns that can hold no water; (Jer. 2:13) they disappoint rather than satisfy me; and increase my thirst rather than supply my wants; therefore I know that my thoughts are hovering about a more satisfactory substance." Is this thy case? Then "commit thy works unto the Lord (in humble confession and prayer), and thy thoughts shall be established." (Prov. 16:3) But perhaps you proceed and say, "I have heard so much from the pulpit about the amiableness, the suitableness, the

sufficiency, the fullness, and the love of Christ to poor sinners, that if I thought I should have no part or lot in him, I should view myself of all mortals the most miserable. Thou hast got love, but it lies in the ashes, covered over with darkness, doubts, fears, and unbelief: be patient, be diligent, and hope for a saving, manifestation of pardoning love; for truth hath said, thou shalt not be disappointed of thy hope. The disciples going to Emmaus were in thy case; but, when Jesus drew near and walked with them, he blew away their ashes, and rekindled the expiring flame: "Did not our hearts burn within us when we communed with us by the way?" (Luke 24:32)

But again, some will say "My desires are so intense after Jesus, springing from a deep sense of need, and from some glimmerings of his excellent worth, that I cannot rest till I am persuaded of my soul's interest in his eternal love." Yours is love in the smoke; therefore don't fear, it will not go out; for God says he will not break the bruised reed, though its melancholy jarring sound is not so musical as "the voice of doves tabering, upon their breasts." (Nahum 2:7) I say, God declares that he will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax, till he has brought forth judgment unto truth." (Isa. 42:3) "But (say you) I long to enjoy a sense of his atonement in my conscience, and to find an heartfelt union with him, and a joyful love to him; to say as the spouse does, "My beloved is mine, and I am his or, with Peter, "Whom having, not seen ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory." (1 Pet. 1:8) This joy that you have mentioned is love in the flame; be thankful for the former, but aim at the latter, "that ye may know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." (Eph. 3:19)

Let me shew you one great reason why you are kept in perpetual suspense, and tossed about with unbelief, doubts, and slavish fears. Deal faithfully with your own consciences,

and try yourselves by what I am going to advance. - Your troubles spring from wrong conceptions of God, the fountain of all happiness. Don't you view God as arrayed in terrible majesty, with indignation against you as a sinner? Don't you conceive him to be an inexorable judge, comparable to a devouring flame or consuming fire? Are you not afraid, day after day, that he will cut you down as a cumberer of the ground, and bring you to judgment, and at the last day expose you before angels and saints as a polluted sinner, with all your secret and unclean sins disclosed to all the host of heaven? If you say, "Yes, these are my thoughts and my conceptions indeed, you have described my case; and pray how you find all this out?" Leave that to God; and view God as speaking to you by me.

You say that what I have said are your conceptions, and therefore you are filled with a slavish fear of God; and this fear is attended with tormenting cogitations; and the workings of your mind are what Job calls tossings, "I am full of tossings to and fro."

If I have mentioned your conceptions aright, let me tell you that you view God in his fiery law; and he is that judge, that terrible sovereign, and that consuming fire, which I have mentioned, as considered in his violated law, and out of Christ. And while you conceive thus of God you will be tormented; as it is written, fear hath torment; he that feareth is not made perfect in love." (1 John 4:18)

If what I have mentioned be agreeable to your experiences, you err in your conceptions; I say, as an awakened and quickened sinner, you err in your conceptions; and that holds you down a captive to slavish fear and unbelief. Let us look a little at the back parts of God; (Exod. 33:23) seeing we cannot see his face and live. (Exod. 33:20) I say, let us view his back parts, as Moses did. And we will suppose ourselves in the

rock Christ, as Moses was in the cleft of a rock at Horeb, when God shewed him his back parts; which rock certainly was a type of Christ; and we will endeavour for a while to give credit to what God says in his word; as it is written, "In that day the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish Leviathan, the piercing serpent, even Leviathan, that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea." Now we will suppose that this prophecy means destroying the works of the devil in the elect by Christ Jesus, which it certainly does, "In that day sing ye unto her, A vineyard of red wine: I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day. Fury is not in me," (mark that, fury is not in me). (Isa. 27:1-4) But we will still proceed to view the back parts of God while we are in the cleft of the rock Christ; and let us hear what God says to us in this situation, "And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long, suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth; keeping mercy for thousands; forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin; and that will by no means clear the guilty," (Exod. 34:6,7) without a surety; who is Christ, the end of the law for righteousness. Now what do you think of the back parts of God? "Why (say you), blessed be his holy name, he is better to follow than to meet." Why then "be ye followers of God as dear children;" (Eph. 5:1) and thou shalt not see Peniel, the face of God, till the corrupted vail of mortality shall be swallowed up, and then thou wilt not want to shun that transporting sight; "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." (Matt. 5:8)

Again, brethren, if you view God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing your trespasses unto you; but sending his son to bless you, by turning every one of you from your evil ways; and that the flame of God's wrath is quenched in the Saviour's blood; his sword of justice sheathed in the body and soul of a dear Redeemer; and the law disarmed of

its dreadful curse; death disarmed of his sting; the devil himself dethroned and cast down; death plagued; the grave destroyed; the gates of hell barred against every believers and the doors of heaven displayed to all that ask, seek, and knock; surely these things are sufficient to support a hoping soul: especially if we consider that our reconciled God is now our most propitious Father; yea, the Father of all mercies, and the God of all comfort; our husband; also our friend; a present help; our strong hold; our unchangeable lover; our God, guide, and guard; yea, our rich provider, the strength of our heart, our justifier, our Saviour, the shield of our help, and our portion for ever. Well, what dost thou now think of the ever blessed God? "Blessed be his name (say you), he seems altogether sweet and lovely, as those scriptures represent him which you have quoted." The word of God bears me out in all that I have said. And he is that blessed one to thee, if thou viewest him reconciled in the Mediator, and comest to him by Christ. View him as I have represented him from his own word, and thou wilt find him the perfection of beauty, and the best of friends; and this will disarm your souls of that slavish fear and torment; and sweetly soften, dissolve, and attract your affections to love him as the greatest of names, and the fountain of infinite happiness.

But some may say, "What is all this long harangue and strict scrutiny about love for?" Because the apostle says, "Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity," or love; and this charity, or love, never faileth. Beside, if all thy religion springs entirely from the fear of hell, without any hatred to sin, thirst for holiness, love to God, or desire after his favour all your religion is eye service; it is with you according to the Kentish proverb, "No longer pipe, no longer dance." I mean, you move on in your religion no longer than while conscience spurs you, vengeance drives you, or carnal gain or human applause allure you. You are an eye servant; you cannot work but while the whip is upo f0c n

your back. The very moment that your master Moses lays by the lash of scorpions you are gone to the alehouse, card-table, ballroom, rout, play-house, or some idle amusement or other. And, as soon as Moses comes in, then you set off to the sanctuary again, to offer to God a silly dove without a heart; (Hos. 7:11) or else to mock him with a dry form of prayer; and every time you perform that task you offer thirty lies to God; and then you wipe your mouth, like the whore in the Proverbs, and say, "This day have I paid my vows." But, if you live and die in that state, God will requite you with the greater damnation.

Let me now appeal to your conscience in the sight of God. If you hear a preacher who enforces the Spirit's work on the soul; that preaches down human merit, will, and power, and insists on the application of truth, the love of the truth, the experience of truth, the enjoyment of the truth, the practice of the truth, or a walk in the truth; who treats much of the life of faith, the joy of hope, the liberty of the Spirit, the enjoyment of love, a heart-felt union with Christ, peace of conscience, and a tender regard for the honour of God; don't you despise and rail against such preachers and preachings? If Conscience is to be umpire or arbitrator, will she not say, Yes? As the Lord God of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, if you live and die a stranger to all that I have said upon these points, you cannot escape the damnation of hell. (Matt. 22:33)

But again; I will come with another appeal to conscience. Are you not fond of hearing a thundering law preacher, who deals chiefly in the vengeance of heaven, and fetches all his artillery from the fiery law of God? And don't you find that discourse is most descriptive of your legal feelings that savours most of death, judgment, destruction, damnation, and the very flames of hell? "Yes (say you), while this storm is going, over my head, I am all religion; and while it is preaching, I think in my own mind, O, how will I watch, and work, and pray, and

perform my task, &c. when I get home again!" Ay; but before you get your feet over the threshold of your own door, the sound of the thunder is gone out of your ears, and all your blind zeal that was awakened, and the working frame that was communicated to your spirit, are gone; and you are immediately taken captive by the devil, and led into some besetting sin; and by that secret sin you are held a prisoner all the year round. This you know is truth; let Conscience do her office. "I cannot deny (say you) but that this is the case; and how you find it out I know not." No, nor are you likely to know: but this I tell you, in the church of God there are both servants and sons: "The servant (says the Saviour) shall not abide in the house for ever, but the Son abideth ever; and, if the Son make you free, then are you free indeed." If you are a servant, you will stick to the rod of Moses, till your spirit and conscience will be hardened like a blacksmith's anvil: but, if you are a son of God by faith in Christ Jesus, the undeserved love of the Father, and the dying love of the dear Redeemer, when preached, applied, and enjoyed, will make your soul like melting wax before the flame, until your softened spirit will become susceptible of every divine impression, and your tender conscience will feel the least sin heavy indeed: every just reproof will be then an excellent oil; yea, one reproof from the lips of the gracious will enter deeper into your heart, as a wise child, than an hundred stripes into a fool. (Prov. 17:10)

God own and bless the few hints that I have dropped among, you, to his own honour and your eternal comfort. I add no more