

couragement to us under the experience of our desparate depravity; but the preceeding statement is liable to several objections.

It proceeds upon the assumption of a totally inadmissible principle, namely, that repentance may be a sinner's duty *at the time that he has not power to perform it*. If power should be imparted, whether by the Holy Spirit or in any other method, then unquestionably it might be his duty; but this idea of praying for power to perform a duty implies that the obligation exists *before* the power is received, which we conceive to be impossible and absurd.

This assumption is also contradicted by a part of the statement itself. *A man can pray, it is alleged, and therefore he ought to pray, and will be justly blameable if he do not*. Most admirable and undeniable! But the converse surely follows, that as man *cannot* repent, he is under *no obligation to repent*, and for impenitence is *liable to no condemnation*. Else it might be equally affirmed that men ought to pray though they could not pray, which this hypothesis very carefully and very wisely avoids.— Yet why should we be more willing to say that they ought to repent when they cannot repent, than that they ought to pray when they cannot pray? Is not the principle in both cases the same? The statement shows an apparent desire to avoid this inconsistency; yet by this very principle it destroys itself. Indeed error is always a suicide.—*Hinton*.

THE GIFT OF FAITH.

Who can tell us what FAITH is? No one. To be sure, definition upon definition has been afforded by systematic divines.— But they only throw the difficulty one step forward: and when pursued, the answer is—Faith is the *gift* of God. Still, it may be asked, what is the *thing* which is given? and in what sense is it a *gift*? Does God bestow faith upon us, as he gives us our daily bread? Or are these as different in the manner of their acquisition, as in their nature? Must we believe what we do not see, do not hear, do not understand? Or is it as John says—“That which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life, declare we unto you?” If it be, then we receive our ideas through our corporeal senses, acting upon material objects of which our spirits take cognizance, and judge, understand, are convinced, and believe. But in that case there is no difficulty or mystery about the matter. For in this view, faith is the *gift* of God, as our daily bread is the *gift* of God: i. e. we secure our daily bread by a divine blessing upon our daily labour; and so