

selves, and therefore cannot be justly condemned. We cannot now turn aside to present the proper answer to this objection. What we affirm here is, that if it be well founded, it overthrows the whole doctrine of grace. It rests on the assumption that men have some claim on God for Gospel grace. One may claim what another has, and all may claim a certain amount, or they are unjustly treated by their Creator, if He hold them accountable for their conduct. If they have no claim, where is or can be the injustice? The very term unjust implies a claim disregarded. It excludes necessarily the idea of grace. It rests upon merit or obligation. If, therefore, God cannot give what He chooses to some without wrong to others, or if he cannot properly withhold from some what He bestows on others, it must be because they have some claim to his favour. But if they have a claim, where is the grace of that influence to which they are entitled? Its bestowment is not grace but justice. When, therefore, Arminians assert that election makes God unjust, they do therein deny and subvert the doctrine of grace.

We have still another proof that Arminianism subverts grace. Its abettors affirm, as we have seen, that God could not justly have passed by all men, leaving them to perish in their sins. He was bound in justice to provide and offer salvation, and give the strength to receive it. But mark what follows. After God has done all this, they hold that notwithstanding all the influence he can exert on the sinner's mind, he has power to resist it,—that even those who have been renewed by grace in the divine likeness, may undo the work of God in their hearts, in spite of all he can do to preserve them. Thus, Dr. Fisk, in his tract on Predestination and Election, (p. 16,) says, "Man's obedience or disobedience, if it has any just relation to rewards and punishments, must rest in its responsible character, upon the self-determining principle of the will.* And if this view of the will be correct, there is an utter impossibility of an unconditional election; for the very act of God, imparting this self-determining principle to man, renders it impossible in the nature of things, for the Almighty himself to elect a moral agent unconditionally. . . . This would imply irresistible grace, and that would destroy man's accountability." *i.e.* Man has a power of deciding his own will, "independent of any cause without himself;" or he is not ac-

* President Edwards defines this self-determining power or principle to be "a certain Sovereignty the will has over itself and its own acts, whereby it determines its own volitions; so as not to be dependent in its determinations on any cause without itself nor determined by any thing prior to its own acts." Dr. Alexander calls it a power of deciding "independent of all motives and uninfluenced by any inclination."