

receive still greater light; and swells unutterably full of gratitude, of love to God: but, as brevity is necessary, we shall notice in the

4th. Idea; that fire possesses the property of separating metals—of dividing and separating the pure metal from the grosser particles of the ore. So, also in this respect, is the spirit of God like fire. The soul, by nature, is like ore in the bed! It is emphatically “a pearl of great price”—above all value, but it is mingled with much of the dross of sin, and covered deep in the bowels of the earth. Though this be the Natural condition of man, yet, by the atonement made by the Lord himself, the ore may be said to have been brought to the surface, where it may be operated upon by that power which is calculated to separate the good from the bad, the grosser from the finer particles. Hear what the spirit itself saith! “who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth? for He is like a refiner’s fire, and like a fuller’s soap, and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the son of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver that they may offer unto the Lord an offering of righteousness.” Hear the same spirit again through the mouth of the Prophet Isaiah. “I will ease me of mine adversaries and avenge me of mine enemies, and I will turn my hand upon thee and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin!” yes, if the spirit be allowed to remain in the heart, and be not quenched, it will effectually cleanse it from every dead work, purify it and make it meet for the master’s use.—But, again:

5th. Fire, or heat is absolutely essential to animal or natural life; without the presence of this element the body would immediately become a lifeless lump of inanimate matter, like a log or a stone; distinguished from either, only by its form. As heat, or fire is to the *natural man* so is the Holy Spirit to the *moral*. “It is the spirit that quickeneth the flesh profiteth nothing” and the spirit giveth life. “A man out of Christ is morally dead—Dead in trespasses and sins,” at least so the Scriptures declare him to be. And to set the declaration beyond a controversy, the Apostle to the Gentiles observes that “to be *carnally* minded is death, but to be *spiritually* minded is life, and peace.” We come now to notice the next general idea arising from the text which is:—

SECOND, The doctrine infered, viz. that the spirit may be quenched—we are not insensible to the fact, that some, and those men of talent and piety, have contended that the spirit could not be by all entirely or effectually quenched. This idea seems to grow out of that system of divinity which teaches that God has, unconditionally, elected and by an irresistible, and special influence of the Holy Spirit, brought some sinners to the enjoyment of eternal life, while the residue are left without that spiritual influence, and are required to perform certain conditions in order to the attainment of that which was given *unconditionally* to another. This sentiment is so perfectly derogatory to the character of JEHOVAH, and so at variance with his *revealed will*, that we do not deem it necessary to occupy time or space in counting it; unbiassed reason, under the enlightening influences of God’s blessed spirit, must reject such an absurdity; as it is opposed to common justice. We would, however, just observe that if the spirit cannot be quenched, we can see no manner of propriety in the injunction of the text. The Apostle

* Eph. ii 1. & Col. ii. 13.