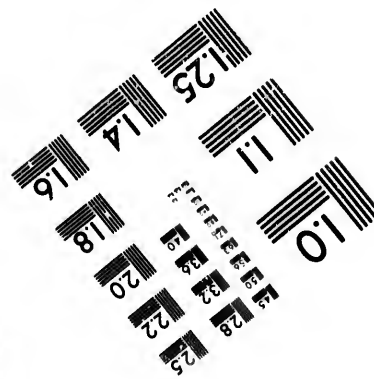
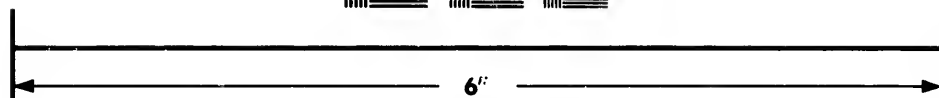
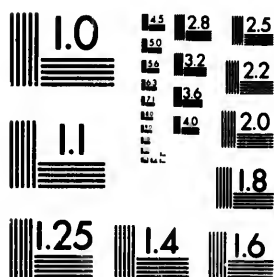


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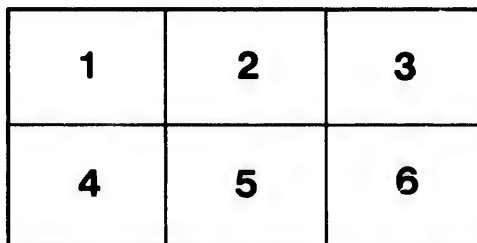
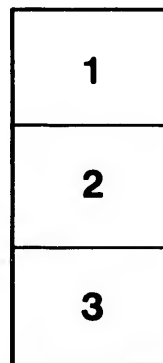
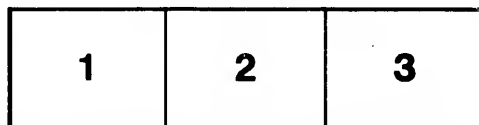
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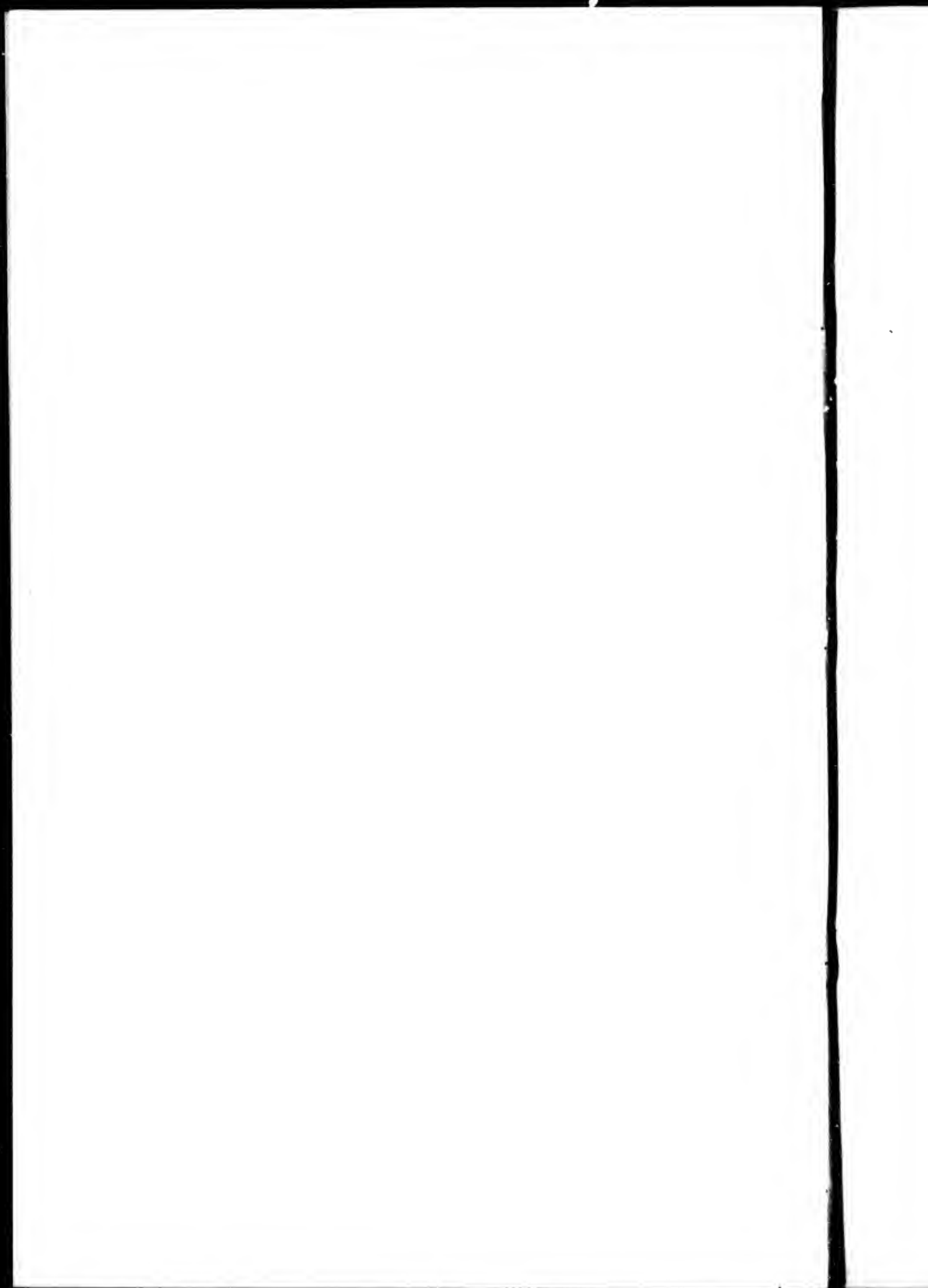
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A REVIEW

OF THE

REV. C. H. SPURGEON'S

TWO BRIDGES OF CALVINISM AND ARMINIANISM,

BY

THE REV. DANIEL MACAFEE,

WESLEYAN MINISTER.

Montreal :

RE-PUBLISHED BY E. PICKUP.

1858
(A)

REV. C. H. SPURGEON'S

Two Bridges of Calvinism & Arminianism,

Delivered in Belfast, Ireland.

FIRST LETTER.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—You seem very anxious to ascertain my opinion of the Rev. Mr. Spurgeon, and the dogmas he so boldly announced to the community in his sermons lately preached in Belfast, and now published at large. To give it publicly, I can form no objection, but what arises from the high respect I entertain for many Ministers and laymen, who may, at least in part, approve of the sentiments he advanced. Several of these are among the excellent of the earth, having hearts filled with faith and love—principles which develop themselves in zeal for the glory of God and the benefit of the whole human family. However I may differ from such in minor points, I cannot but esteem them in love for their works' sake; and hence, I shrink from giving offence to the generation of God's children. I trust, nevertheless, this will not be the result—that the same right to think, speak and publish, which good men accord to Mr. Spurgeon, though a young man, will not be denied to one who has something of age and experience, and who, if he judges rightly, ought to be fully as well acquainted with the subject in hand as one who is but a student of yesterday. I am happy to find I cannot give offence to Mr. Spurgeon himself, seeing he declares in his first sermon, that “it does not signify to me the turn of a finger what any man existing chooses to think of me.” This relieves my mind greatly in appearing before the public. This is, certainly, a very independent declaration. It equally sets the scorn of an enemy and the sympathy of a friend aside. It seems to set the world at defiance. It would, therefore, be a work of super-erogation for any friend to sympathise or offer assistance to one so careless, reckless, independent, and even infallible; and thus cast a reflection on his wisdom and sincerity in giving utterance to the conscious sense he entertains of his own gigantic strength and position. Dr. Johnson said of “Gulliver's Travels,” “It defies criticism, because there is nothing else in the world to which it can be compared.” It would seem as if Mr. Spurgeon entertains the same notion of himself. Dean Swift thought the man who talked in this style was a mere braggadocio. The celebrated Doctor just named considered the individual not sufficiently endued with wisdom, who dissents from the universal sense of mankind, and affects to despise public opinion. The

pinions, or opinions, of this young man are so strong, and his flight so high, that he has no fear of a shot, even from a Minie rifle. While he looks down with indifference on all below, a tinge of modesty might have prevented him from giving utterance to the sentiment now quoted. It would appear, however, that this commodity was scarcer in the region of his birth than Tyrian dye was among the ancients. That he is possessed of talent, no one can deny; but, like a wild colt, it requires training. It refuses the bit and bridle of regular discipline, and raises clouds of dust by eccentric movements. A sturdy intellect, a retentive memory, a luxuriant imagination, a simple Saxon style of words, a familiar mode of address, a knack of telling old and new stories, and a large stock of the most consummate effrontery, that any young man ever possessed, constitute the nucleus of his popularity among the high and low vulgar, such as attend his ministry in the Surrey Gardens. His voice is loud, clear and distinct—not a word is lost to his audience; and his whole ministration seems to be a medium between the stage and the pulpit. At one time he depicts the Father and Son holding a dialogue from eternity about the elect; at another, Justice and Mercy are engaged in the same manner; and perhaps in the same discourse a dialogue takes place between Tommy and Jenny. In one sentence he is an apostle, in another a poor sinner. To-day he is little David, with a sling and a stone going forth to meet Goliath; and to-morrow he will appear as Goliath himself, with a staff and a spear, bidding defiance to all opposers. Some of his audience are astounded, others seem edified, and many are amused. Thus one thinks him inspired, another says he is an original, a third says he is much indebted to the Puritan authors, and a fourth is shocked at his familiarity with things sacred and divine, and charges him with inordinate self-conceit. It is not for me to say who is right or who is wrong in his estimate of the man. It is rather my object at present to point out the injurious tendencies of his dogmas and misrepresentations.

My dear young friend, I wish you seriously to consider your position and relative influence in society, and especially on the rising generation; you are, I believe, heartily identified with the Wesleyan Church, having received a change of heart through the means which it furnishes; you are a member of the Young Men's Association, under the guidance of the Minister stationed on your circuit; you are a distributor of tracts and a teacher in a large and important Sunday-school. It is therefore of the utmost importance that you should have settled principles: ones that will always terminate in good and practical results. The Apostle furnishes a rule of judgment, by which you need never mistake. Here it is: "*The doctrine which is according to godliness.*" How is this applied? In this way. Take any doctrine, dogma, or opinion whatsoever, and ask yourself the question, what is the tendency or result it is calculated to produce? Will it terminate in *godliness*? Will it make our thoughts, words or actions *like God*? If it has not this tendency, discard it at once; it does not come from God, and hence cannot lead to Him or His image in the soul. All doctrine revealed by God must have a God-like influence that assimilates to Himself. Hence, there is not one speculative doctrine revealed in the Holy Scriptures; all is experimental and practical. Anything proposed in the shape of doctrine that is useless, frivolous, absurd, or that leads the mind into mere speculations, without flowing into personal and appropriating faith in Christ, love to God and

mankind, and the final conversion of the world, cannot possibly be from God. It is but a puff of Satan's breath, a mere "wind of doctrine," a cloud without rain, a well without water, and a tree without fruit; it bears the vine of Sodom, and the grapes of Gomorrah. Hence the necessity of trying all doctrines by this rule, plainly laid down by God himself. True, the mind may be puzzled by knowing parties whose fruit is good, while principles are entertained that are not evidently in accordance with this rule; but you must take into account that such possess good principles, that neutralise the evil ones, and therefore they will always be better than their creed. Besides, false principles are imaginary, and the good Spirit of God operates on the settled faculties and affections, so that imagination is cooled down in the conversion of the heart and the fruits of holiness that result. Apply this rule to the *peculiar* doctrines of Calvinism and Arminianism. There are principles common to both. Never mind these in the present subject which we have in hand; pass by the universal corruption resulting from the fall of man, justification by faith, the indwelling of the Spirit, and His various fruits, holiness of heart and life, and the doctrine of reward and punishment; these are *common to both*. Confine your mind *exclusively* to the *first* and *peculiar principles of both systems*. If you find the *Arminian creed* sets the *common principles aside*, then *have done with it*; it is *not according to godliness*. If, on the other hand, the *peculiar principles of Calvinism* have *no tendency to godliness*, set them aside as *vain and imaginary*.

Try Mr. Spurgeon's peculiar dogmas by this rule. Never mind the excellencies—the common principles which he advanced. These are common to all evangelical parties; attend to his peculiar dogmas. Pass by his confident manner and figurative language, and look at the marrow of his teaching. He comes to Belfast, and is heard by thousands. His first sermon in Dr. Cooke's church is rather unexceptionable. He invites, persuades, points out the way of salvation, and leaves you to think it is free for all. In fact, he there seemed to belong to the church universal; and a Primitive Methodist might have mistaken him for the man who was instrumental in his conversion, if he had not heard the story. "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God," was his text. It had the same object in view as John Wesley's on "the almost Christian," though greatly inferior in arrangement, Scriptural knowledge, and critical acumen, to the Fellow of Oxford College. Observe, I make no comparison between one and the other. Wesley was a scholar, a logician, a poet, and a man of taste. His next discourse was on "Heaven," about the one hundred and forty and four thousand that stood with the Lamb on Mount Zion. According to him, *not one can be added, not one lost*. What, then, is the use of his preaching? His next is on "the True Seekers," in which he gives a glowing, or rather dark, description of a reprobate. He is a man "that has not a friend anywhere." God, angels, the elect in heaven and earth, the very hills, valleys, trees, fields and all kinds of beasts, are his enemies; and why? Because he is a sinner, and does not belong to "the definite number." In this he announces the doctrine of election, of which so "many are afraid." Fools that they are! for, if elected, they are saved; if not they are lost. Fear, therefore, is useless in both cases. Why, then, did God implant a useless passion in the human mind? and why torment both elect and reprobate before the time? Does God delight in misery? His fourth sermon, in the Botanic Garden, com-

pletes the course. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." In this he attacks free-will, as if he had none of his own! gives a taste of imputed sin and righteousness; decries Antinomianism as the fruit, and yet waters its root; characterises Christian perfection as hump-backed; preaches up final perseverance, and finally illustrates the whole by stating, *ex cathedra*, that "Arminianism is a very broad bridge, but it only goes halfway across the stream, and shoves the people out. Calvinism is a narrow bridge, but it goes the whole way. Let them put their foot on it and they are secure. Give them a firm footing at the first, and they shall have a firm footing to the end. They shall never perish, neither shall any person pluck them out of the Saviour's hands." I feel obliged to Mr. Spurgeon for this illustration. It is capital. I would ask no better. In the meantime, can an erection be called a bridge that reaches only halfway? If this figure be worth anything, it means, first, that none of the elect are on the Arminian bridge; and, secondly, that all on it perish; for when halfway it "shoves them" into perdition. Such is Mr. Spurgeon's charitable judgment in relation to Arminians! Could he not have saved at least a few of them by sending them along his own narrow bridge, and thus save them in their ignorance? Are there no Arminians, or Wesleyans, who personally believe in Christ? His illustration says not. Is this according to Godlike love? I am sure it is not. If this be the spirit of his gospel, I hope he will have few imitators. Surely there might be some Arminians on his iron bridge who fancy, that, like the ark, it is made of gopher wood. The Papist claims exclusive salvation, and he does the same. His charity (or want of it) would be a capital qualification for an inquisitor. It would suit the cell, the pulley, the thumbscrew, and the saubonatto painted with flames and devils. This was the frock in which the *reprobate* martyrs were burned to death by the holy inquisitors at an *Auto da fe*. Perhaps Mr. Spurgeon's heart is better than his imagination. It drowns both his logic and charity. He is but a young man, and a still younger divine, and it is not improbable that his boyish imagination lifted his creed while he played at hop-step-and-jump. It is now time for him to revise it; and in doing so I would not feel astonished if he would ultimately sprinkle his neighbours' children: and erect a statue to the shade of the great and learned Arminius. Napoleon's new battering-ram will be nothing to the one he will then bring against Calvin's iron bridge. The thundering noise of every stroke will reverberate from Surrey gardens, throw down half of the houses in London, and blow up the Crystal Palace.

Let us now turn back to the two bridges—that of Calvin and that of Arminius. You may not be well acquainted with the architecture of either, and it is my duty at present to place each before you. You may then judge which is human or which Divine. They stand professedly on different buttments, and each in common has five arches, called by some divines the five points. You are not to fancy that there are actually two bridges; for if the one be real, the other is imaginary—the one is but the shadow of the other, seen in the deep broad waters. Each of them, according to its author, was planned in eternity. The Scriptures alone contain the draft and design, and must determine which is the original, and which the spurious, invention. It would be unbecoming either candour or honesty to give you a second-hand sketch of my own, when the originals are at hand. As Calvin's name

is engraven on the one and that of Arminius on the other, it may be best to let each, or their most judicious followers, give the description. Let the great and the world-wide famed Calvin speak for himself. He does not descend to describe the arches minutely. He speaks of the bridge as a whole, and leaves the particulars to minor men like Mr. Spurgeon. If I don't mistake, he has but *one* buttment—namely, the sovereignty of God. In this case, it is something like those drawbridges—that is, moved in or out of its place, as the elect or reprobate come forward. When the elect approaches it is fixed and steady; but when the reprobate draws near it moves on an invisible spring and leaves a chasm. Mr. Spurgeon invites all to try, finds great fault with those who do not, and yet he tells us, in effect, if one not in the hundred and forty and four thousand makes the attempt, he may sink into perdition while one foot is on the bridge and the other off. The master now speaks; let the scholars listen. The great author of Calvinism says:—

1. "*Predestination* we call the *eternal decree* of God, by which he hath determined in himself what he would have to become of every individual of mankind. For they are *not* all created with a *similar destiny*; but *eternal life* is fore-ordained for some, and *eternal damnation* for others. Every man, therefore, being created for one or the other of these ends, we say he is *predestinated* either to life or death."

2. "As Jacob, without any merit yet acquired by good works, is made an object of grace, so Esau, while yet unpolluted by any crime, is accounted an object of hatred. If we turn our attention to works, we insult the Apostle, as though he saw not that which is clear to us. Now, that he saw none is evident, because he expressly asserts the *one* to have been *elected* and the other *reprobated*, while they had *not yet* done any good or evil, to prove the foundation of Divine predestination not to be of works."†

3. "When the human mind hears these things its petulance breaks all restraint, and it discovers a serious and violent agitation, as if alarmed by the sound of a martial trumpet. Many, indeed, as if they wished to avert odium from God, admit election in such a way as to deny that any are reprobated. But this is puerile and absurd; because election itself could not exist without being opposed to reprobation. God is said to separate those whom he adopts to salvation. To say that others obtain by chance, or acquire by their own efforts, that which election alone confers on a few, will be worse than absurd. Whom God passes by, therefore, he reprobates, and from no other cause than his determination to exclude them from the inheritance which he predestinates for his children. But, now, we have heard that hardening proceeds from the divine power and will as much as mercy. Unlike the persons I have mentioned, Paul never strives to excuse God by false allegations; he only declares that it is unlawful for a thing formed to quarrel with its maker. Let the reader observe that, to preclude every pretext for murmurs and censures, Paul ascribes supreme dominion to the wrath and power of God. This, however, I maintain, which is observed by Augustine, that, when God turns wolves into sheep, he renovates them by

*Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion, translated by Allen. Book III., Chap. 21, Sec. 5.——†Chap. xxii. 11.

more powerful grace to conquer their obstinacy ; and, therefore, the obstinate are not converted, because God exerts not the mightier grace, of which he is not destitute if he chooses to display it.”*

4. “Observe: all things being at God’s disposal, and the decision of salvation or death belonging to Him, He orders all things by his counsel or decree in such a manner that some men are born, devoted from the womb to certain death, that he may be glorified in their destruction.”†

5. “The perplexity and hesitation discovered at trifles by those pious defenders of the justice of God (observe, he speaks ironically,) and their facility in overcoming great difficulties, is truly absurd. Imagine, again, how it came to pass that the fall of Adam, independent of any remedy, should involve so many nations, with their infant children, in *eternal death*, but because such was the will of God. Their tongues, so loquacious on every other point, must here be struck dumb. It is an *awful decree*, I confess ; but no one can deny that God foreknew the future, final fate of man before he created him, and that He did foreknow it because it was appointed by His own decree.”‡

Such, my young friend, is the sketch drawn by the masterly hand of Calvin himself, in reference to the bridge—the narrow bridge without a hole—of which Mr. Spurgeon makes his boast. He may try to paint or polish its irons, and make it as pleasing to the eye as possible ; but as Calvin denominates it awful or horrible, so we may call it the bridge of horrors. Calvin tells us that God foreknows because He decreed. The Apostle says, Rom. viii., 29, that He predestinated because He foreknows. This makes an essential difference. This bridge, however has its arches. These are delineated by the followers of that great man. The Synod of Dordt sat in 1618, and gives them to us as reported by Dr. Womack, in the trial of Tilenus. The Arminians appeared there as remonstrants, and exhibited their bridge and its arches, as recorded by Mosheim. Let us place the two in juxtaposition, so that you may judge of the one by comparing it with the other. The simple question will then be, which of the two is worthy of the skill, goodness, mercy, and love of the Divine Architect ?

ARCHES OF CALVINISM.

1. That God, by an absolute decree, hath elected to salvation a very little number of men, without any regard to their faith or obedience whatsoever; and [hath] secluded from saving grace all the rest of mankind, and appointed them, by the same decree, to eternal damnation, without any regard to their infidelity or impenitency.

2. That Jesus Christ hath not suffered death for any other, but for those elect only ; having neither had any interest nor commandment of his

ARCHES OF ARMINIANISM.

1. That God, from all eternity, determined to bestow salvation on those whom he foresaw would persevere unto the end in their faith in Christ Jesus ; and to inflict everlasting punishment on those who should continue in their unbelief, and resist unto the end His divine succours.

2. That Jesus Christ, by his death and suffering, made an atonement for the sins of all mankind in general, and of every individual in particular ;

* Chap. xxiii., Sec. 1.

† Sec. 4.

‡ Sec. 7.

Father, to make satisfaction for the sins of the whole world.

3. That, by Adam's fall, his posterity lost their *free-will*, being put to an *unavoidable necessity to do*, or *not to do*, *whatsoever they do*, or *do not*, whether it be *good or evil*, being *themselves predestinate* by the *eternal and effectual secret decree of God*.

4. That God, to save his elect from the *corrupt mass*, doth *beget faith* in them, by a *power equal to that* whereby he *created the world* and *raised up the dead*; inasmuch that *such unto whom he gives that grace cannot reject it*; and the *rest*, being *reprobate*, cannot accept of it, though it be offered unto both by the same *preaching and ministry*.

5. That such as have once received that grace by faith can never fall from it finally nor totally, notwithstanding the most enormous sins they can commit.

that. However, none but those who believe in Christ can be partakers of their divine benefit.

3. That true faith cannot proceed from the exercise of our natural faculties and powers, nor from the force and operation of free-will, since man, in consequence of his natural corruption, is incapable of thinking or doing any good thing; and that, therefore, it is necessary to his conversion and salvation that he be regenerated and renewed by the operation of the Holy Ghost, which is the gift of God, through Jesus Christ.

4. That the divine grace or energy of the Holy Ghost, which heals the disorders of a corrupt nature, begins, advances and brings to perfection every thing that can be called good in man; and that, consequently, all good works, without exception, are to be attributed to God alone, and to the operation of his grace; that nevertheless, this grace does not force the man to act against his inclination, but may be resisted and rendered ineffectual by the perverse will of the impenitent sinner.

5. That they who are united to Christ by faith are thereby furnished with abundant strength and with succours sufficient to enable them to triumph over the seductions of Satan and the allurements of sin and temptation; but that the question "whether such may fall from their faith, and forfeit finally their state of grace," has not yet been resolved with sufficient perspicuity; and must, therefore, be yet more carefully examined by an attentive study of what the Holy Scriptures have declared in relation to this important point. Here Doctor Mosheim very justly remarks, that the Arminians, in process of time, positively affirmed that "the saints might fall from a state of grace."

Such, my young friend, are the two bridges which Mr. Spurgeon's luxuriant imagination exhibited at a glance in the Botanic Gardens. I am

almost certain that, up to this day, he never rightly measured the arches of either one or the other. Say, that he has not, it follows, that he was making a show of terms without understanding the subject to which they refer. Say that he has, then it is evident that, to serve a purpose, he wilfully and disdainfully caricatures the bridge of the Arminians. There have been some people in this naughty world who have despised the place and circumstances of their birth. It is hoped this is not the case with Mr. Spurgeon. It seems from his own statement, that God neither honored a Calvinistic minister or a Calvinistic place of worship in his conversion. The simple plan of salvation was pointed out to him by an Arminian preacher, and in an Arminian place of worship, and also from an Arminian text of Scripture—"Look unto me and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth." How, then, comes it to pass, that he is now so earnest in warning all who hear him against putting their foot in an Arminian place of worship? Has he found out the advice, "Look! look! look!" was false, and his experience a mere delusion? Was his conversion real, and did the Spirit of God apply the word from the lips of an Arminian? Then, how can any man sincerely and conscientiously advise another against what might lead to a similar result? As the elect must be saved, it cannot be very material who is the instrument, or what the place of worship, or even what the creed. No danger can arise in relation to what was decreed from eternity. If the Divine being decreed that an Arminian preacher and not a Calvinistic one should be instrumental in Mr. Spurgeon's conversion, why should he now decry the whole class to which such a one belongs? Has not God a right to use any means he pleases? "Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?" And may we not add, "Who art thou that repliest against God?" In that hour in which Mr. Spurgeon left the Primitive Methodist Chapel, he had no notion of decrying Arminianism. It was an after-thought with him. It arose from his creed; not from his changed heart. When the Spirit of God, who foreknows and searches all things, applied the word and sent him home with a light heart, it would seem to have taught him by the preacher, the place, and especially the broad principle contained in the text, that his present denunciations arise from some other quarter than the Holy Spirit of God. It never could inspire him to say what he uttered in relation to the Arminian bridge. According to him, it only reaches half over, and shoves all into the stream that travel on it. Here Mr. Spurgeon and I come to a complete issue. I consider the bridge of Arminius is a solid, Scriptural, and real construction, and that the other is a mere phantom. Like the Flying Dutchman, it exists only by reflection. There is a "high mystery" in predestination, because the heights and depths of human imagination cannot be fathomed. All the perfections of God, the four sides of a pyramid, are equal. Calvin and Spurgeon give him the head of a giant and the body of a dwarf. A wild imagination depicts the Lord of Love as all power and sovereignty, without the attributes of justice, mercy and truth being taken into account. This gives one side to the pyramid instead of four. From this spring absolute predestination and election, a partial atonement, denial of free-will, irresistible grace, and the final perseverance of the imaginary elect. All these are contrary to facts, reason, and revelation, and, hence, must be the evolutions of imagination. This will appear evident by entering into a brief examination of the five arches in Mr. Spurgeon's two bridges.—I remain yours, &c.,

DANIEL MACAFEE.

SECOND LETTER.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—We now proceed to the consideration of the arches. In doing so, let it be well observed that, if one of the five fall, the other four must topple down along with it. You will perceive also, that the sketch of each bridge is roughly drawn by those fathers in the controversy; still, they were honest and consistent, and did not mince the matter. In modern times you will find some wise architects, who make out a beautiful sketch of a bridge of their own devising, and represent honest John Calvin as the author; it has only three arches of his, with two borrowed from Arminius. They have absolute election, universal atonement, free-will, irresistible grace, and final perseverance. This bridge is made up of two facts and three imaginations. The great and good Richard Baxter built a bridge of his own, in which he had the first arch consisting of absolute election, and the other four were taken from Arminius; in this he rejects the side-wall of reprobation. Calvin, however, would have laughed at such a conceit. He was perfectly right and consistent in stating, that, wherever election is held, reprobation must necessarily be acknowledged to be its counterpart. No man can find out a mean proportional between the two systems. All those who have tried failed in the attempt; one or other must be received or rejected just as it stands. Tens of thousands, nay, I trust, millions, have travelled on the solid bridge of Arminius, while they thought it was Calvin's all the way till they came to the end; they, there entered into a region where imagination dissolved into reality, and perhaps sitting down beside Calvin and Arminius, Wesley and Whitfield, Fletcher and Sir Richard Hill, they found out, "That the Lord is good to all; and His tender mercies are over all His works"—yea, that "He willeth all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth."

You will perceive from this, that I do not wish you to imbibe Mr. Spurgeon's spirit, or imitate his example. He sends all Arminians into the gulf of misery; but this is no reason you should send him and multitudes of pious Calvinists into the same unhappy place. Your bridge is too broad for that; you are not to condemn a man, who has real heartfelt religion, because he happens to have a gloomy imagination, that was raised and cultivated in youth by his parents and minister. It is no new opinion of mine, that if Calvin's decrees were true and real, there could be no dispute about the matter. God, in His high and holy sovereignty, would have decreed one item that is evidently left out. He would have decreed that all men should believe it. Then, there could not have been the slightest suspicion, that there is such a thing as free-will; all would think alike, and be as passive as hills and stones. That free-thought and free-will are in being, we have the fullest evidence. Bring an assemblage together, even of those whose creed requires a denial of the free principle, and, if free expression be any proof, they show as much free-will as any other party. I should think Mr. Spurgeon himself is endued with a lion's share of this sturdy principle. Perhaps, if he had

less, he would be more charitable to poor Arminians. He is very apt at illustrations founded on hearsay or personal observation. Anecdotes are like pedlar's mirrors; they show the face too broad or too long, but still, they are better than a pool of water. The image, whatever it is, is steady, being unruffled by the wind. Several of his were among my collection, and exhibited many a time before he was born. I must treat you and him to one or two; they always enliven a dull subject. One of the most acute and ready reasoners was the Rev. Robert Crozier, a Wesleyan Minister, who died the other year at the advanced age of between 90 and 100 years. Leslie had a short method with Deists, and this venerable man a still shorter with his Calvinistic brethren. One of them, in argument with him, asserted broadly, boldly, and honestly, that God had decreed everything, and fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass. "Well, well, my dear friend," said Mr. Crozier, "you and I need not fall out or get warm on the subject, for if God decreed everything, then he decreed me to be an Arminian and you to be a Calvinist; therefore, if you are right I am right, and if you are wrong I am right, so that I am always right." Perhaps Mr. Spurgeon may tell you that mere ideas do not come under the influence of decrees—that they only relate to actions and results. If so, then thought is free, and I suppose words, also, as the expression of thought. What, then, about actions as the offspring of volition? Another anecdote is here quite in point. Rather a loquacious stranger was delivering an off-hand lecture on Predestination, in a railway carriage, a few years ago. He asserted, roundly, that God had decreed every action that comes to pass. A shrewd countryman was listening, but made no remark, although, happening to be an Arminian, he disliked that doctrine as unscriptural and absurd. The conversation soon dropped, as there appeared no opponent. The murder of a magistrate in a neighbouring county became the next topic, when the stranger launched out in no measured terms against the murderer. "Sir," said the countryman, "do you know if there be a reward for the murderer?" The other replied, "I believe there is." "Then I would recommend you to claim it," said the countryman. "Is it I?" said the other with astonishment, "I know nothing about it." "Yes, but you do," was the reply, "for you have told us that God decreed everything, and hence he decreed that, and you have nothing to do but call at the first magistrate's office you come to, and swear against your Maker, and get the reward." The force and point of this mode of applying a principle, and illustrating a dogma, came home with humorous effect, and, no doubt, taught the enlightened stranger to feel his way, before he launched out at large, among the simple people of the neighbourhood of Belfast. If I mistake not, Mr. Spurgeon committed a similar error in the Botanic Garden of that town. He addressed men there of more general literature, more theological knowledge, and, perhaps, of more refined taste, than he has as yet found around him, on any occasion, in Surrey Gardens. Many of them thought that the old story of "sanding the sugar," &c., was rather stale, and even ill-tasted. However, as Mr. Spurgeon cares about nobody, he will set their distaste down for what it is worth.

Now, my dear young friend, we are prepared to examine the several arches of Mr. Spurgeon's bridges. These, like the two over the Straits of Menai, are within view of each other. Fancy yourself stationed so as to command a view of the first arch of absolute decrees, and hence uncondi-

tional election and reprobation: "Is this a true, real, solid, and Scriptural arch, worthy of the Divine architect? I apprehend not. It cannot be the construction of God, because it is

1. *Contrary to His nature.* The express declaration in 1 John, iv. 8—15 is that "God is Love." This, then, is His very essence—pure, universal, eternal, and absolute love. Hence it is added, "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only beloved Son into the world that we might live through him." Mr. Spurgeon might here tell you, this relates to the elect. Well, be it so. Our Lord himself extends it beyond them in John iii. 16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Here, the world is the express object of his love and pity. It relates to the intellectual world, to every soul of man. It means the same here as in Rom. v. 12, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." Sin and death extend to all, so does the love of God in the gift of His Son. The one is as extensive as the other. One side wall of the arch is now gone—absolute reprobation. If so, absolute election according to Calvin, is gone with it, for the one is counterpart of the other. Be it observed that the term world never means the elect, but the whole or major part of mankind. In the following text put the word elect in place of the world, and see how it will read:—"If ye were of the world, the world would love his own, but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." Try it now as I have stated—"If ye were of the elect, the elect would love his own; but because ye are not of the elect, but I have chosen you out of the elect, therefore the elect hateth you." See John xv. 19. This absolute election and reprobation are repugnant.

2. *To God's perfections.* Reflect on his goodness. "Thou art good and doest good." "O praise the Lord! for he is good, and His mercy endureth for ever," saith the Psalmist. He is the "Father of lights, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift," saith the Apostle James. Paul declares "The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance." He is good in His nature, good in all His perfections, and good in all His ways. Goodness is a disposition to communicate happiness. God is happy himself, and hence, He hates misery next to sin, and communicates happiness to all creatures according to their nature, instincts, and capacities. Is it a proof of goodness either to reprobate a portion of immortal and intellectual beings, or leave them out of the number of the elect? I ask, with all reverence, was it within the compass of His nature, as the God of love and goodness, to build the first arch of Calvin's bridge, and by his decree doom the majority of men to perish? If so, there must be a principle of evil in God as well as goodness. Mercy removes misery; then how could it be exercised to remove what infinite "wrath and power" contrived? Glance at the wisdom of God. It plans for worthy ends, uses the simplest and best means to obtain them, exhibits variety in harmonious connexion, and shows a good design in all things. Where is the wisdom of choosing anything without regard to its qualities? Will a merchant choose goods, a tradesman his tools, or an astronomer his telescopes, without regarding their qualities? Did God make man so? and did He himself choose the elect from all eternity without any foresight of faith or works, or without any regard to

qualities of any kind? Is it wisdom in Him to glorify His power, justice, and wrath at the expense of His other attributes in the decree of reprobation? At what was he angry from all eternity?—a mass of material of His own creation? Where is the wisdom of all this? It seems to answer no end, and certainly no good end, to the non-elect. It is rather caprice than wisdom. This arch of Calvin's bridge was evidently planned in the dark, for, according to his own statement, God decreed, and then he foreknew; whereas, the first arch of Arminius was foreknown, being the production of wisdom, and thus designed to answer a fitting end. How shall we reconcile the absolute decree with the justice of God? It is impossible to do so. Justice is essential to His nature. It necessarily makes its claims on all intellectual beings. It demands and distributes whatsoever is right and fitting in the nature of things. Goodness gives the talents; justice demands their right use. It does not require the use of ten, where goodness has only given one. Is it just, then, in God to demand faith, where He has given none? to require works, where there is no principle given, or that possibly can be obtained to produce them? Is it agreeable to justice to send a man to perdition, because he is not found in the number of the one hundred forty and four thousand, when God did not enrol him there? Would it be just in the Divine Being to require a man to fly without wings, or one with a broken leg to run a race, and then slay him for disobedience? The case of the man who came into the feast without the wedding garment is here in point. As Mr. Spurgeon is fond of illustration, here is one furnished to his hand in Matt. xxii. 11. This man was not one of Calvin's elect. God's decree provided no robe for him. It furnished one for each of the elect, but none for him. Christ did not purchase one for him in the shedding of His blood. He was conceived in sin, born in iniquity, and covered over with the guilt of Adam's sin, imputed to him by that God, who did not choose to decree him a better robe. Mr. Spurgeon invites him to the feast; he persuades, entreats, reasons, urges, and makes the walls of Surrey Gardens echo with his voice, softened down into a mellow tone. The poor non-elect listens, thinks, resolves. He cannot borrow a garment; he cannot create one; he cannot find one in the whole creation of God, visible and invisible; and hence, he concludes, I will go as I am, since I can do no better. The only way he knows to go to the feast is over Calvin's bridge. Mr. Spurgeon has taught him this; but while he is setting his foot on the first arch, the invisible spring is touched, a chasm is made, and the poor reprobate is cast into "outer darkness, where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth," to the praise of the glorious justice of God, that condemns him for not doing an impossibility! So much for Mr. Spurgeon's imaginary justice and decrees. They blow out a man's candle from all eternity, and then punish him for being in the dark.

3. This *first arch* of Calvin's bridge is *not* in accordance with the *will* of God. Calmly examine this. Who can understand the will of God but by His word? He cannot possibly have two wills—a secret and a revealed one. God has secret knowledge and revealed knowledge; but as he cannot have two understandings, so he cannot have two wills. A secret and a revealed will attributes to him two principles and destroys his unity. He is immutable. He cannot will one thing in eternity and another different from that in time. His will in the Old Testament Scriptures must be the same as

in the new. Whatsoever he wills in general relating to the whole can never be contradicted by any particular acts relating to a part. Here, then, is *His will* in reference to the whole human family, without exception. "I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for *all men*, &c. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who *willeth* all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is *one God* and *one Mediator* between *God* and *men*, the man Christ Jesus; who *gave himself* a ransom for *all*, to be testified in due time." 1 Tim. ii. 1-6. Here, then, is the essentially good, infinitely free, and unchangeable will of God, that is only circumscribed by His own perfections. He knows that all men require salvation—that they are ignorant of God and the way of salvation—that they are sinful, guilty, and liable to perish, and hence He wills their salvation. If so, he must will to give every man a talent, and render all capable of receiving salvation; He must will the means to obtain it; and also will that every man should use the means, repent and believe. Three reasons are assigned for this by the Apostle. 1. There is *one God*—one divine nature, and one class of attributes inherent in the one God—on whom all are dependent; as Creator and Preserver, to whom all are responsible; as Lawgiver and Governor, and by whom all shall be judged. If God did not will the salvation of all, it would eclipse His goodness as Creator, obscure his equity as Governor, tarnish his justice as Judge, and destroy the unity of relationship that subsists between Him and all men, as one race brought into existence by his power. 2. *One Mediator* between the two parties, God and men, having the nature of both, that he may bring God down to men, and raise up men to God. If God does not will the salvation of all, then Christ is not the Mediator of some, they have no blessing through Him, they did not require His aid, He did not take their nature, and consequently they are not "men." For He is the Mediator between God and men. 3. *One sacrifice*. Thus He became the *substitute* for *all*; presented a *divine, holy* and *human offering*; in behalf of all; *voluntarily* (John x. 18) made an *atonement* for *all*, and thereby rendered it possible for all men to be saved. If He did not, then the Trinity are not agreed—there is no unity between the Father and the Son; Christ did not assume the nature of all; the elect have one human nature, and the reprobate another; or else the elect sustained an injury by the fall that the others did not, and justice made a claim on the former that it did not on the latter, or else Christ would have satisfied for the one party as well as the other. On this point let us further observe. Justice is essential to God, its claims must be satisfied either in time or eternity, either by a substitute or by personal punishment. Justice is also an essential unity. Try and conceive two kinds of justice—one kind in God, another in men. You cannot do it. This justice relates to one race of men, one obligation of all God's creatures, and recipients of His goodness, and one injury as sustained by all; and hence, if justice be satisfied by the offering of Christ's sacrifice, it must either be satisfied for all or its unity must be impaired and divided. If Mr. Spurgeon says, it was satisfied for all, then Calvin's first arch is down and his imagination has settled into a fact; if he says, it was not satisfied for any but the elect, then he denies its unity, and represents God as having one kind of justice for the elect and another for the reprobate! In Surrey Gardens, or the Botanic Gardens, let him try his logic on this, and free himself of a dilemma in which his imaginary doctrines have placed him.

4. If the *will* of God is against his imaginary arch, surely the *oath* of God cannot be in its favor. Let us try: "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" Turn, now, at once, to a sentence of Calvin, the great, honest, and consistent author, or architect, of Mr. Spurgeon's long bridge with the narrow turnpike and the "firm footing." Compare this with God's oath--Imagine, again, how it came to pass, that the fall of Adam, independent of any remedy, should involve so many nations, with their infant children, in *eternal death*, but because such was the *will of God*." Such is genuine, unsophisticated Calvinism, without gloss or varnish. *As I live, saith the Lord God, this is false*---there is not one word of truth in it. Let no man in his senses receive it, who believes either my word or my oath; for '*I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked*,'

Nor have I doomed the unborn soul to hell,
Or damned him from his mother's womb;

and, least any should say I have done so, let them know I would rather *the wicked should turn and live*." Such is the import of this oath, sworn by the eternal, immense, and immutable existence of God. He swears by the life of his love, goodness, mercy, justice, holiness, and truth, that Calvin's peculiar doctrines are false; that the first arch of Mr. Spurgeon's bridge has no existence; that it is all imagination: and that that of Arminius is firm as the pillars of Heaven. Now if God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, he has declared himself "well pleased in his beloved Son," who "tasted death for every man." Hence, the declaration in 2nd Peter, iii. 9---"The Lord is not willing any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Here are His word and His oath. No other scripture can contradict them. Calvinism does, and it is therefore to be rejected as a creed. Mr. Spurgeon may try and revive it in England, and the Rev. Henry Grattah Guinness, the artistic divine of one or two and twenty Summers in Ireland. These are the two giants in theology---the prize preachers of the nineteenth century! Surely both must have got their peculiar knowledge by inspiration! How shall we otherwise account for the boldness, and, in the judgment of some, insufferable effrontery of both? Take an instance of the Rev. Mr. Guinness. He was invited by the Wesleyan Ministers of Dublin to preach in Abbey Street pulpit. Six of them sat behind him; Here the boy resolved to teach the man; and contrary to good taste and propriety, he availed himself of the opportunity to exhibit a skeleton sketch of Calvin's iron bridge; and exhorted them forsooth to "search their Bibles" and they were sure to find the black ore of which its bars and plates are made. Poor young man! He reminded me of a thoughtless hay-cutter on the banks of the Shannon. A fine salmon appeared at the water's edge. He made a dart at it with the pole of his bythe, and forgetting the blade was behind his neck, he unwittingly cut off his own head! At all events, no man can do good by preaching any doctrine that contradicts God's oath and word; and hence those divines are wise, who judiciously preach the essential truths of the Gospel; and keep as far from the bridge as possible.

5. My young friend, you will find that this arch of the bridge in question is quite repugnant to the commands and promises, invitations and declarations of the whole systems of revelation. A few samples may here suffice.

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to *every creature*." This command was first given to the Apostles, and is still binding on the ministers of the universal Church. What is this Gospel? Let Paul answer in 1 Cor., xv., 1, 4—"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried and rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures." Then, the minister of the Gospel is to say to every man—whether he dwells at Indus or the pole, whether his skin be white, or black, or coppered-colored—Christ died for thee, was buried for thee, rose again for thee. This is the same as to say Calvin's bridge is imaginary—there is no absolute decree. Can any man be said to preach the Gospel as Paul did, who denies universal atonement? He meets with one of Calvin's reprobates, and tells him what is not true, Christ died for thee. Again, "This is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his son Jesus Christ." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." John the Baptist "came for a witness of that light, that all men through him might believe." Here, however, is a non-elect; he is not one of the *definite number*; Christ did not die for him. If he does not believe, Mr. Spurgeon sends him to perdition; and if he does believe the Gospel—believe what Paul taught, *Christ died for me*—then, according to the same authority, he believes a *lie*. This kind of preaching was quaintly described thus—"You can and you can't; you shall and you shan't; and you'll be damn'd if you do, and you'll be damn'd if you don't."

Another command may be here noticed—"Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be ye saved." The elect look; they cannot help looking; their eye is strengthened and enlivened by the influence of the Spirit; and hence, with eagle eye, they gaze on the Sun of Righteousness and are saved. The reprobate, or non-elect, look also; but their eyes are heavy, there is a mist in the atmosphere, the sun is not at the meridian, he is only to be seen through a long body of condensed air, the decree is between them and salvation; and, consequently, they are blinded, hardened, and ultimately lost, because the Spirit neither enlightened or helped them! They are in the valley of the shadow of death, where the air is dense, cold, and without vitality. Their eyes are closed, but Jesus does not open them. This makes the difference! The *promises* are equally as vain as the *commands* by this teaching. There are promises of pardon, influences of the Spirit, and everlasting life. "Turn ye at my reproof; Behold I will pour out my spirit unto you; I will make known my words unto you. Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord and He will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. Incline your ear and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live." These are precious promises, indeed; but who can benefit by them? Only the elect. The non-elect cannot sufficiently turn, forsake his thoughts or ways, or incline his ear. The decree stands in this way; the Spirit does not work irresistibly, and God closed his ear before the science of acoustics was studied by our greatest philosophers. The same is the case with his *invitations*—"Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price; wherefore do you spend your money

for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Here the invitation is to the unhappy—to all who seek rest in wrong objects. The elect come; the Spirit irresistibly and effectually draws them. The non-elect are left to nature; it is faint and languid. Wherefore do they spend their money and energies for that which cannot satisfy? The answer is ready. The decree is either directly against them, or it is not on their side. They are all cripples, but Christ does not strengthen their feet and ancle bones. He invites them to come out of the prison-house of nature, but never unbars the gates. He calls them out of the horrible pit and from the miry clay, but puts down no ladder. He entreats them to come to the other side of the river, but they are stopped by the turnpike on Calvin's bridge. Thus the God of love and truth is exhibited as insincere, by inviting them to do what he has rendered impossible by his own decree, purpose or unwillingness. Attend now to a few of His *declarations*. "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life," saith our Lord. Again, "O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth chickens under her wings, and ye would not." St. Paul exclaims, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation." Why did they not come? The Spirit did not make them willing. If He had, some might have been added to the 144,000, and that would set the decree aside. "I would, but ye would not," saith Christ. Was he willing to break the decree, while they fulfilled it by not yielding?

In reference to the Apostle's utterance, how could the neglectors escape? The fatal decree binds them fast. They cannot break its iron chain. The Father neglected to put the reprobates among the elect; the Son neglected to die for them; and the Holy Spirit neglects to quicken and strengthen them; and hence, they cannot but neglect an unprovided and impossible salvation. "But this is spoken of believers." Be it so; the case is the same; they cannot neglect, and hence the warning is useless. Thus the number is definite. Not one can be added; not one taken away. All was settled before the foundation of the world. The day of judgment was then past. Mr. Spurgeon is one of the angels sent to gather the elect. He is a loadstone attracting steel filings from the midst of rubbish. He has a capital figure in his first sermon, with a little alteration. "Hark ye: the devil has many big nets, with which he goes a-fishing for eternal souls; but there is one big, black net, in which he catches more souls than in any of the others. It is stamped on the corner 'Procrastination,' and it is floated with many corks, every one of them marked with the word 'to-morrow,' 'to-morrow,' 'to-morrow.'"

"Bad as he is, the Devil may be abused,
Be falsely charged, and causelessly accused;
When Heaven, unwilling to be blamed alone,
Shift off those crimes on him that are its own."

Lift the first stamp, and under "Procrastination" you will find *Predestination*; lift the second, and under "to-morrow" you will perceive *absolute election*; under the third, *reprobation*; under the fourth, *partial atonement*; under another, *bound will*; under its neighbour, *irresistible grace*; and under the last, *final perseverance*. These corks have kept the net afloat since

the days of Calvin; and, if Mr. Spurgeon's dogmas be true, Satan is too wise to put himself to the trouble of fishing, when he finds all who are not in the 144,000 caught to his hand and ready for his fire. Surely Mr. Spurgeon must forget his creed in his earnest appeal to sinners. Can he persuade one of the non-elect by all his reasoning and illustrations? Will one of the elect be lost, in case he preached none at all? As he is an admirer of familiar anecdotes, perhaps he will forgive the following. I admire it on account of its good common sense. A negro, whose skin was as black as Satan's big net, went once to hear a popular minister preach in the United States. On his return, his master asked him how he liked the preaching: "Why, massa," was his reply, "me don't know. Ministe says God made bein' called man, and he gib one part of dese to Christ and all de rest to de debil. De ministe he go about seeking to get away some of de debil's, and he can't; and de debil he go about seekin to get away some of Christ's, and he can't. Me don't know, massa, which de greatest fool, de debil or de preacher." Now, I am far from saying that Mr. Spurgeon is a fool for his earnestness or illustrations. I do not believe in his peculiar principles. Earnestness is folly, if they be true. Whatever good he effects is not done by them, but by those that spring from a better fountain. Salvation by faith in Christ, the remission of sin, the witness of God's Holy Spirit, and holiness of heart and life belong to the pure Gospel, that was preached for ages before Austin of Hippo first broached these peculiarities.

I remain yours, &c.,

DANIEL MACAFEE.

THIRD LETTER.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—Having now disposed of the first arch in Calvin's iron bridge, and thereby shown that his decrees are unscriptural and absurd; that absolute election and reprobation, as the two side-plates, are mere non-entities, and, consequently, that the doctrine of conditional election and reprobation is the real and substantial arch of the Arminian bridge, we now pass on to say a few words about the second arch of partial atonement in the one, and universal atonement in the other. If God elected a certain number without any condition on their part, it would certainly be absurd that he should give his Son to die for any but that number. If he did not, there should be an express revelation on the subject; but there is not one text in the whole book of God which says he died only for a part of mankind, or that he did not die for the whole. True, it says he gave himself for the Church, and for the sheep, but, unfortunately for Calvinism it does not say

for them *only*. Want of space forbids long prefaces and numerous inferences, and hence, we must come at once to the point, and prove the universality of the atonement by Christ's death. Take the following digest on this subject. That Christ's atoning sacrifice was intended for all is evident.

1. From *its extent and remedial influence in relation to the fall of the first man*. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." By his one act he lost the image of God, and all lost it; he embezzled the family property, and all are reduced to poverty; he made himself a leper, and all his offspring are necessarily leprous; he cast himself into a pit, and all, descending from him, are born in it; he raised a stream of polluted water which he could not stem, and hence it still bubbles up and overflows the world. By this *one act*, termed the *offence*, the *offence of one*, in Romans v.; 12-21, he vitiated, altered, annulled, or destroyed the dispensation given to him: he forfeited the favor, life and Spirit of God. Corruption must ensue for want of the *Spirit of holiness*; spiritual death for want of the *Spirit of life*; and temporal death for want of the *tree of life*. All resulted as a punishment for that one offence. Without a remedy, all these must be perpetual and eternal; that remedy is found in the second Adam, Jesus Christ; he is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world; the merit of his blood extends from the cross back to the first pair; and forward to the last pair that shall appear in the world. He appeared to introduce a superior dispensation, founded on sacrifice, remedial in its design, gracious in its gifts, suitable in its nature, and vastly superior to that of Adam in its possibility of success. All these particulars are clearly placed before us in the passage referred to above. In contrasting the dispensations of Adam and Christ, in their influence and extent, the Apostle makes two exceptions. The first is in the 15th verse, "But *not* as the offence, so also is the free gift; for if, through the offence of one, *many* be dead, (does not this mean all?) *much* more the grace of God and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, *hath abounded unto many*." Here, we are plainly told that there is more of grace in Jesus Christ to save, than there was in Adam's sin to destroy, and that this grace *hath* actually abounded to the same number that he injured. The second exception is in verse 16, "And *not* as it was by one that sinned so is the gift; for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification." As the 15th verse shows an *amplitude* of provision *above* the dispensation of Adam, so this also displays a *superior privilege* of trial *beyond* that enjoyed by Adam. *One* sin sunk him for ever; we rise out of *multitudes* that cannot be enumerated. This one sin must have been forgiven, or the first man could not have been spared a moment; justice must have punished him at once unless there was an atonement. Suppose it spared him without an atonement, then justice is not essential to God. On the principle he was spared a moment; why not an hour, a day, a week, a month, a year? and why not forever? The atonement was made for him; his first sin was forgiven: all his posterity in his loins must have been forgiven that *one offence*. Christ, therefore, died for all by dying for the first offence: so saith the Apostle in verse 18, "Therefore, as by the *offence of one*, judgment came upon *all men* to condemnation, *even so* by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon *all men* unto justification of life." Here is no distinction between elect and reprobate. Are all condemned by Adam's sin; all are

acquitted from that first condemnation by Christ's righteousness; and yet Calvinism imputes Adam's one act to the reprobates, and damns them to all eternity for the sin that God forgave both Adam and them, according to the statement of the Apostle. He that is able to receive this must have a wonderful control in keeping reason asleep, while imagination is at play. What is the final testimony of the Apostle in this chapter? "That as *sin hath reigned* unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." Observe these two declarations: the one is in the indicative mood, asserting what is—sin hath reigned universally unto death; the other is in the potential mood, testifying not what *is*, but what *might be*. It follows, then, from this, that not one soul need have been lost; that the actual reign of grace might have been as extensive as the actual reign of sin; and, consequently, that Christ died for all, and that the second arch of the iron bridge is demolished. That He died for all, is equally manifest from those Scriptures.

2. *That relate to the World*—"The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein," Psalm xxv. 1. "All souls are mine," saith God; Ezek. xviii. 4. Let us see what He intends for His own. "God so loved the world," &c., John iii. 16. "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world, through Him, might be saved," Rev. i. 7. He was not sent to buy the existence of reprobates out of Adam's loins, and then leave them to perish. "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," John i. 29. It is not said the *sins*, but the *sin* of the world. So Isaiah says, "The Lord hath laid on Him the *iniquity* of us all." Both are in the singular, denoting the punishment due to iniquity or sin. He bore the result of sin or iniquity, lifted it up as a burden, that all might escape. He is called Christ, "The Saviour of the world," John iv. 14; "The bread of God is He that giveth life unto the world," John vi. 33; "My flesh which I give for the life of the world," Rev. v. 1; "I am the Light of the world," John viii. 12; "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," 2 Cor. v. 19; "We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world," 1 John iv. 14; "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the *whole world*," 1 John ii. 2. How amiable, beautiful and glorious are God and his Son represented in these passages! The one is not a tyrant, the other an executioner. Take the views of the *infallible* Synod of Dordt. God is a being of power and wrath—a capricious father, that loves one son and hates another, without why or wherefore. He did not love the world; did not send his Son to save all, and should not be called the Light and Saviour of the world. He did not give His flesh as the bread broken for the life of the world. He was not in Christ, reconciling the world, but only the elect, unto himself, and they testify that Christ was not the Saviour of all, nor the propitiation for the sins of any but the elect. John testifies that He is the propitiation not only for the Jews but the Gentiles, not only for the elect but for the *whole world*; but they choose to dissent, and prefer the testimony of Calvin to that of the beloved Apostle! Again, the universality of the atonement is proved, because

3. *It intervenes, comes between, or is substituted for every man*. So saith St. Paul: "We thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead," 2 Cor. v. 14. Here the universality of death, spiritual and temporal, is

inferred from the universal atonement. This shows that Calvin's bridge was not built in the times of the Apostles. The Arminian people of that day had never heard of it. Hear the Apostle again. "The man Christ Jesus gave himself a ransom for all," 1 Tim. ii. 6. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour, that He, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man," Heb. ii. 9. These declarations are universal—they cannot be evaded. The cup of death was put into every man's hand. All is emptied into that of the substitute, and thus He swallows up death in victory.

4. The universality of atonement is necessarily implied in those Scriptures that refer to apostates, and to those who do or who may perish. "Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died." "And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish for whom Christ died?" Here it is positive that Christ died for the weak brother; and it is equally so that this same may perish, or be destroyed for ever. If Paul and the strong brother addressed, believed in an absolute number of elect, and a partial atonement, how comes he to preach Arminianism, and leave the impression, that one of the elect might be lost? Did he not in this case advance an impossible motive? Might he not as well have said, "And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother" become a tree, a stone, or a mountain, or anything impossible in nature? As it regards apostates, let me place two facts before you. The first is from Paul—"Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite to the Spirit of Grace?" The second is from Peter—"For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it has happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." Now, these cases relate not to opinions or mere reports, but to facts well known to two inspired writers. Surely Christ died for the individuals here mentioned; and yet Paul tells "it is impossible" for those who have thus fallen, "to renew them again unto repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."

5. From the *universality* of the atonement we find the Scriptures full of facts, doctrines, and testimonies founded on the death of Christ. Briefly notice the following. There is *provision* for all—pardon, holiness and Heaven. "And on this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of marrow and of fat things." Our Lord saith, "I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready. But they made light of it, and went their ways." The elect are invited and *must* come; the non-elect *cannot*. Wherein consists the sincerity of the invitation? No wonder they made light of it; for they only did what they could. There are benefits conferred on all. Five facts stated by inspiration prove this. The first *fact*, not opinion: "Christ is the true light that enlighteneth every man that comes into the world." The second *fact*: "And when He (the Spirit of truth) is come, He will convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment." The third *fact*: "For the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared unto all men;" or, according to the

margin, "the grace that bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared." The fourth fact: "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the City of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." The fifth fact: "For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe." Now, Calvinism either denies these facts, or resolves them into mere opinions. Again God commands all to believe on his Son, and condemns all who do not. Does God ever command *any one* to believe a lie? Surely not. Will he ever condemn *any one* for not believing a lie? Certainly not. Then, he can neither command a non-elect to believe, nor condemn him for unbelief, because Christ did not die for him. The doctrine, therefore, that restricts the atonement to a part of mankind is not of God. Hence, the second arch of Mr. Spurgeon's bridge has dropped in the stream, where he sent the Arminians.

I remain, &c.,

DANIEL MACAFEE.

FOURTH LETTER.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—You must be aware of the difficulty to explain points so important, and press a vast mass of matter into a small compass. I must, therefore, be brief, and notice two of Mr. Spurgeon's arches together—free-will and irresistible grace. These two cannot coalesce in operation. If the will be free, grace cannot be irresistible; and if grace be irresistible, the will cannot be free. Mr. Spurgeon, therefore, must not admit free-will *in or on* his bridge, for if it cannot find a hole to slip through, it might climb over the side wall, and lessen the "definite number." Pass now, from possibilities and come to reality. It is acknowledged by all that Adam was a free agent—that *his will was free*. Let us understand this. God made him in His own image, intelligent free and holy. The intellectual faculty could perceive God and his works, but it could not contemplate. Without will it could not dwell on the object, or retain it in thought. Like a fixed and immoveable eye, it could turn to nothing and see nothing but what God placed before it. It could perceive premises, but draw no conclusions. Free-will was, therefore, essential to his happiness; and God united it to intelligence. He endued him with a principle of faculty, that could choose or refuse, move the understanding, direct it to various objects, enable it to contemplate or refrain, and render him capable, as a moral being, of moral obligation, praise, or blame; virtue or vice, reward or punishment. God honored the intellect by placing Himself and His works before it; he

equally honored free-will by placing it upon trial, and thus distinguished our first parents from the minor animals in creation. This faculty, as well as the understanding, was the gift of His boundless goodness, the plan of His infinite wisdom, and the production of His absolute power. Hence, he pronounced it with the rest of his works to be *very good*. God could, therefore, furnish motives, promise or threaten, entreat or protest, require or command, but *never force*. This would be to do and undo, and raise Himself up against His own perfections. Man was tried, and fell. God foresaw this. Did this foreknowledge influence his fall? Certainly not; or else it acted against His goodness, wisdom, and power. Did Adam's perception of the sun, moon, and planets, either cause or direct their motions? Do the calculations of an astronomer bring about the eclipse that he foretells? Neither does the foreknowledge of God influence any action, however contingent. All would be the same if unforeknown. Calvin says God decreed, and then foreknew. He simply represents Him as foretelling His own actions; and if the decree embraced the fall of Adam, then God is the author of sin. As God foresaw the fall of man, so He purposed to redeem him, gave His only begotten Son to "taste death for every man," sent down His Holy Spirit, made known His will in the Scriptures, and instituted the Christian ministry and means of grace for the recovery of the human family. Did God thus intend to counteract the effects of the fall, and place man again upon trial? Then, as Mr. Wesley expresses it—

"A will to choose, a power to obey,
Freely His grace restores,
We all may find the living way,
And call the Saviour ours."

If not, why does the Apostle tell us that our privilege of trial is better than that of Adam? One sin sunk him; we rise out of many. Why say that "where sin abounded, grace did *much more* abound?" The two prime faculties of the soul are understanding and will. The whole system of revelation is made to these two. There is knowledge for the one; motives for the other. If there be no free-will, why have we commands and promises, precepts and threatenings, exhortations and expostulations, invitations and obtestations? Why did the Saviour say to Jerusalem, "I would and ye would not?" The *laws* of all nations are founded on the principle of free agency. Every grammar of the babbling languages of the earth recognises the same principle—all have a *potential mood*, expressed or implied, signifying power, will or obligation. Every man in existence is *conscious* of freedom, of power to choose or refuse, of weighing motives and suspending volition; and even of making indifferent things agreeable by the power of choice. What is the use of reasoning against facts? Calvinism sets up free-will to deny its own existence, and excites ridicule in the attempt. President Edwards wrote a large octavo volume with this intent. Its whole argument is levelled against a man's own consciousness. You read it, close it, think for a moment, and consciously say, "This book is false. It contradicts a first principle of my nature. I feel I am free." This is a short argument for a long book. In addition to this, if there be no free-will in man, there is nothing in him capable of receiving free grace, of believing or disbelieving, obeying or disobeying, and hence, of being the subject of praise or blame.

What, now, is the highest exercise of free-will? I answer, to submit to be saved by free grace, and use it in obeying God. But would not this be doing something? Most certainly it would; but it is doing what God has commanded, and leaving undone what he has forbidden." "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." Here believing is spoken of as work of the heart. On this ground, would not the believer claim some merit to free-will? Oh! yes, to be sure, he will have the merit of opening his eye to see the light, and his ear to hear the most delicious music! The poor prodigal will have the great merit of returning in rags to his father's house, and of eating of the fatted calf to satiate his hunger! There is great merit in a man using his feet to run from danger, or a patient opening his lips to receive a potion prescribed by the great Physician to save him from death! This talk about the merit of free-will, in submitting to be saved by free grace is a mere cloud of words, raised to obscure a fact and support an imagination. Passing on from this digression, we return to the main point.

Every man must be capable of receiving or rejecting free grace, or else no man would be saved by faith or damned by unbelief. "It is of faith," saith the Apostle, "that it might be by grace." The one is suited to the other. It is evident from this, that grace is not physical power, else it could act as well without faith as with it. The physical power of God cannot be resisted; grace may. Is there physical power in perceptions, ideas, reasonings, knowledge, holy desires, advice, entreaty, invitations, and warnings? These are the cords of grace, not of physical power. These constitute the moral power of the Gospel and of the Spirit, and, hence, may be resisted. A few Scriptures will settle the point. "My spirit," saith God, "shall not always *strive* with man." Various terms are used to express this resistance. Thus we read of those who *despised* the "Lord" himself, his "judgments," his "statutes," his "word," his "law," his "goodness," and finally, his only-begotten son—"He is *despised* and *rejected* of men." And hence the Apostle calls out, "Behold, ye *despisers*, and wonder and perish." The same principle is exhibited as *rebellion*. Thus Moses tells us that Israel *rebelled* "against the Lord;" David says, "they *rebelled* against his *words*, and *contemned* the counsel of the Most High;" while Isaiah testifies, "they *rebelled* and *vexed* his Holy Spirit, therefore he was turned to be their enemy." Reject and refuse are terms used in the Divine word to indicate the same principle. Thus, "ye have this day rejected your God who saved you," says Samuel. "They have rejected the word of the Lord," saith Jeremiah. The Pharisees "rejected the counsel of God against themselves." "He that rejecteth me," says Christ, "receiveth not my words." God saith by Jeremiah, "they refuse to know me;" refused "instruction," saith Solomon. "The Apostle gives the solemn warning, "see that ye refuse not Him that speaketh." Another word is used in the strongest sense by dying Stephen, full of the Holy Ghost. "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and in ears, as your fathers did so do ye, ye always resist the Holy Ghost." Here is the direct testimony, of the Holy Spirit himself, showing that grace in varied forms may be unyielded to, despised, rejected, rebelled against, refused and resisted. It is nothing strange, then, that the Apostle should command, "Quench not the Spirit, grieve not the Holy Spirit of God," and beseech his hearers to "receive not the grace of God in vain,"

which he declares in relation to himself, "I do not frustrate the grace of God;" and that he "was not disobedient to the heavenly vision."

Four things are now demonstrated:—1. That absolute election is *false*, and conditional election is *true*. 2. That a limited atonement is *false* and unscriptural, and that universal atonement is *true*. 3. That bound-will is no will, and that man is a free agent. 4. That grace is not physical power, and therefore, is not irresistible. Where, now, are the several arches of Mr. Spurgeon's imaginary bridge? Four are gone, and one only seems to remain—the final perseverance of the saints. I do not intend to dwell much on this, for a reason shortly to be noticed. I would just glance at his statement in reference to the children of God. He ridicules the Arminian notion of a man falling away; and illustrates his doctrine by the prodigal son, begging his father to do what he had done from all eternity, according to his doctrine; and, also, the case of a returned convict. Now, there are three ways of being a son or child of God. 1. By creation. Satan, Cain, Judas and all the reprobates can never dissolve that relationship; for He was the Creator of all. 2. By the absolute decree. The elect were God's children from eternity; and, if that be true, not one of the definite number can dissolve that relationship. Hence, the elect *may* sin as they like; they can never fall finally. Their sins past, present and to come, were all cancelled before they were committed! 3. Believers are only the children of God by adoption and faith. The first is a natural relation, the second an arbitrary one, and the third a gracious and moral one. Satan, Cain, Judas, all the wicked, and, of course, the returned convict, belongs to the first, nobody to the second, and all who believe, such as the prodigal, to the third.

The first relationship cannot be dissolved by hatred, malice, wickedness, murder, betrayal of friendship, rash judgment, evil speaking, low, mean and hellish passions; and, according to Mr. Spurgeon's "beautiful doctrine," to use his own derisive phrase, neither can the third. Thus he confounds moral and physical relation, the character of the elect and reprobate, and represents the God of holiness as entertaining no higher notions of moral bonds and obligations than a washerwoman whose son was transported. And this is called fine and great preaching! Let him compare the high notions of Lynch, a former Mayor of Galway, in relation to justice and moral obligation, with his own, illustrated by the story of the convict's mother. The son of that man committed murder; it was proved against him; and, being sentenced to death, the father was so well-beloved, that no executioner could be found, and he hung him with his own hands. In this case the natural relationship was not dissolved; the moral was. Is the blind impulse of Calvin's decree made without foresight of the moral qualities of faith, love, and the various graces of the Spirit to baffle and set these aside and save a man after he has lost them? It is evident to every one acquainted with the Divine Word, dispensations, and ways, that relation of a moral nature may be lost. Satan lost it, Adam lost it by his fall, and, in fact, all who die in unbelief lose it by rejecting purchased grace. Many instances are recorded in Scripture of believers losing it and not regaining it again. On this point, however, I will not at present dwell. This work is already done in a pamphlet published in 1888, entitled "The Final Perseverance of the Saints Anatomised." In the year 1920, when the writer was not much older than Mr. Spurgeon himself, appeared another, in letters addressed to the late Dr.

Paul—a man whose talents, acute reasoning, memory, and character, I respect. Both of these will shortly be re-issued. As Mr. Spurgeon does not seem to be well-skilled in the art of bridge-building, perhaps he may try his hand on anatomy. Should he return to Belfast, he may dress up the skeleton of Calvinian perseverance with all the imagery that metaphysics, logic, modern divinity, and even poetry can furnish; but when the decorations, flesh, muscles, tendons, veins, and arteries are removed, the bones and ribs will exhibit the same dark materials as the bars of the iron bridge.

I remain, &c.,

DANIEL MACAFEE.

Lisburn, Sept. 1, 1858.

