

the glorious immortality of day in spite of all the principalities of hell or powers of the earth. And, when he has done this, what hand has the volition of the sinner in it? I see none. I am forced to say, I was made to hear your voice and enter while there was room.

Hear the devil's religion: Man says he can resist the influence of grace or comply with its suggestions. In other words, that external grace is necessary to excite the endeavors of men; but they have no need of the internal operation of God's Spirit.

I suppose they mean motives, persuasions, preaching, or all those outward calls of God—such as judgments, diseases, &c.,—which is in effect, directly denying the special, irresistible operations of the Spirit of God in the souls of sinners to make them saints and attributes the whole work of salvation to the free will or endeavors or co-ordinate exertions of a sinner with external means to produce salvation. And without such obedient free will, or such co-operation with external means no salvation have arminians maintained.

Nearly the same as saying, that in the conversion of sinners there is no such thing as irresistible grace.—Or in other words, that no sinner has such an influence exercised in him or upon his heart, but such as he might or may resist and render ineffectual to his salvation.

And the various religion sects swallow down these sentiments and call it gospel until this day. The pulpit and press are flooded with it. And they further speak of a sinner possessing a self-determining power in himself, either to comply with or render ineffectual the influences of the Spirit of God when he comes to work salvation in the hearts of sinners.

The Quakers believe there is a degree of saving light in every person which needs only to be cultivated, which will grow to perfection by nursing, and finally arise in eternal life.

The Methodists and Free-willers believe that the conversion of a sinner ultimately depends in the co-operation of an obedient free will, with external means and the influence of the Spirit, all combined—not willing to say all of grace, or all of the Spirit's power, or all of God. I will and you shall!

But, that the will of the sinner gives the casting vote to choose or refuse, on the free will of the sinner, it all depends whether the work of conversion or salvation shall be done or not; for he may render it all ineffectual if he chooses, by his will, or by refusing to co-operate with the Spirit. They also deny that God has, by an eternal and unchangeable purpose, determined to make the gospel effectual to the salvation of one sinner more than another. They also suppose that God chose believers to salvation upon a foreknowledge of their faith and obedience.

Thus you can see that their plan of faith and holiness or obedience is the cause why God chose them, and not that God chose them to be holy.—The very reverse of scripture; because Paul tells us that we were chosen

in Christ before the world began, to be holy. Then the choice is the cause of our faith and obedience, and holiness,—and not our faith and obedience the cause why God chose us. Then you will see again, that if God chose sinners on a foresight of their faith and obedience, perseverance or holiness, that all will rest here on the use that a man makes of his free will, or rather the use of self-determining power, that some men make of it, and not others. For God, foreseeing some men would not use their wills to choose good—those he would not elect. What a doctrine of men taught by the devil!

So far as I can see, there is nearly the same free will doctrine taught by the various orders of so-called Churches that are now prevalent around or among us, crying lo here, and lo there. Because they use in the same basis free will, and meet in the same point, for they all allow the same efficacy to divine influence in their system of free will or co-operation of the sinner, or the use the sinner makes of his will, or whether he will turn it to good or evil, or he may choose or refuse. It is with himself to do either. This is the summing up of their religion.

Now let me ask one question: How far is our conversion or salvation to be ascribed to the grace of God? The answer of every christian in the world will, I think, determine in a moment—all of grace. Grace saves sinners at its own expense.—For had God not given me a will to love him, I never should have had it, for it is not the product of nature.—What was there in us to merit eternal life or give the Creator delight? It was even so, Father, we ever must sing, for so it seemeth good in thy sight. So all is of God, from beginning to end, and by grace or the gift of God are men saved. And hence, to will to be saved by Christ is the gift of God. The reason why a saint differs from a sinner is not because he makes a better use of his will.—Here let me ask a question: Who made thee differ one from another? You are forced to say, In the doctrine of Free-will, myself, my own free will. Then where is boasting? See your error when God excludes boasting, not of works nor of free will either, lest any man should boast. Now, those that contend that God gave the sinner this will to become a christian, believe the sinner acts as freely to choose the way of life as those who contend that a sinner may have this free will of himself, and choose for himself unaided by the Spirit of God. One says, no man can have this will to come to Christ and be saved by him; while another says a man can, or may have this will of himself, that he has a self-determining power in himself over his own will to incline it to good or to evil; which is to say, a man can give himself what will he pleases, or give himself a will against the will he then possesses. How inconsistent! For this would be to will against will, or to give a will opposed to the one existing. So of course, no choice at all, because will against will could make no choice, for the will must give the casting vote ere

the choice is made; for choice is willing, choice is freedom of will or what best relishes with our hearts' wants, minds ease, taste, &c.

So in spiritual things: when sin and holiness are set before saints and sinners they are called on to choose. Saints choose holiness, and why? Because they love it, they will it for the same reason sinners choose sin; because it is the most agreeable with the moral relish of their hearts. Both are free, because both choose that course of life which is most agreeable to their wills. But while a sinner is under the power of sin, or while sin is his choice, and while he wills sin, which will is opposed to the spirit of the gospel, would it not be a contradiction to suppose such a sinner could choose holiness? Will unholiness desire holiness or believe and obey the gospel.

Such teaching clearly supposes that a sinner can choose that which is (at the very time of making his choice,) contrary to his choice, or the choice he is then possessed of? Yet this is the power of free will, that the most of the so-called religious gentry admire.

Allow me to ask a few questions. If salvation is offered to sinners on conditions, he who chooses must differ from him who refuses, so he that chooses must have had some holiness, or will, or co-operative power from the man himself or some other power, to make him make the choice.—While the other, for the want of that power (whatever that co-operating power be), refuses the invitations of the gospel. So I think a child of God can see that this determining is not in man to make one choose and another refuse; but, that it is by an assisting, co-operating or irresistible power from some quarter besides man's own free will of man who once stood in the same ground of him that refuseth. And it is called the day of Christ's power that makes this difference of will and choice. It was the gift of God's Spirit that constrained them to choose the good part which shall never be taken from them. But, the objector will ask, why God does not give this gift to all of Adam's posterity? Christ speaks for himself: Have not I a right to do as I please with my own? have you any claim to purchase grace with. The son of the bond-woman will say, Why make an atonement for only the sons of the free? I am astonished that he should make atonement for any. Justice might have passed them by. So each child of God can sing,

"Oh, to grace how great a debtor,
Daily I am constrained to be."

Again, Free-willers teach that God is only willing to save those that are of their own accord willing to be saved. And this makes God's will dependent on our wills; or, you must say, God is willing to save all men, but because they are unwilling to be saved by him, he will not save them, and so changes his will to as many as are willing to be saved.—Yet, the scriptures tell us that he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. The very idea that the unchangeable will of God should turn and twist to suit a hell-deserv-

ing sinner. That if a sinner will to be saved, then God will will it too. According to this, all that Christ can do for the sinner is dependent altogether on the will of the sinner, which debases the Creator and exalts the creature.

This doctrine opposes God's sovereignty and calls the covenant of grace an unholy thing. It limits God's power, reduces him to circumstances, renders him changeable, and teaches in plain English that there is no God, as is generally talked of among Primitive Baptists.

N. H. HARRISON.

Princeton, N. C., Sept., 1876.

Elder P. D. Gold,—Dear Brother:

I have taken my seat to try to write out a portion of what I hope is the work of the Lord in me, a sinner. If you consider that it is the work of Him, after correcting, you can publish it; if not lay it aside and remember me at a throne of grace.

My father was a strong believer in the doctrine practiced by Primitive Baptists. My mother was one of that sect, but she died when I was a baby.

When about the age of fifteen years I joined the Methodists. They had been working so long to make christians, and they said I was one, or that I had religion. But if I have since experienced anything of the grace of God, I have discovered that we were mistaken. Then to try to better my case I joined the Free-willers, and soon after began to feel myself a wretched character, and asked the pastor to have my name erased from the Church book. He said that I wanted my name taken off because my brother was an Old Baptist. I told him it was not that, but was because I felt myself too unworthy to be there. Though it was not much satisfaction to be in my brother's presence and say that Free-will doctrine was supported by the Bible. I thought I could see that something was amiss, especially on my part. I would often pray that I might understand, that I might distinguish light from darkness, as darkness has covered the minds of the people.

One night about 9 o'clock I saw a little cloud in the East, it passed over my head and then went away in spangles; I don't remember how many ascended in my view, but under the last one followed, apparently, a little fire about the size of the new moon, from the West; it arose above the trees, and I looked at it and then it went back; the sky was then fair.—I at first thought the Day of Judgment had arrived, and that I was going to die and go to hell. I spent the greater part of that night in prayer. Then was the first time I desired to see my brother and talk with him about the wonderful scene I had witnessed.

My brother was a Primitive Baptist preacher, and I prayed that he would visit the village where I was. The next day he came, and I told him what I had seen, and that I believed I was going to die. When I got through telling him, he said, No, you are not going to die, no one ever dies in your condition; God will finish the work he begins! I then thought I would sin no more; I felt