AUGUSTUS MONTAGUE TOPLADY

HYMN-WRITER

and

THEOLOGIAN

With special reference to his controversy with John Wesley.

by

JOSEPH MAYCOCK.

Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the regulations governing the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Divinity, in the University of Edinburgh.
# Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOOK ONE: Life and Times of Toplady</th>
<th>1 - 98</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter 1.</strong> Formative influences</td>
<td>1 - 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Early Ministries 1762-8</td>
<td>18- 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ministry at Broad Hembury</td>
<td>36--62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ministry in London</td>
<td>63--79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Pen-portrait of Toplady the</td>
<td>80--98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controversialist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOOK TWO: Toplady the Hymn-Writer</th>
<th>99-166</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter 6.</strong> Preliminary Observations (lists of Hymns)</td>
<td>99-109E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Literary and Religious Characteristics</td>
<td>110-142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Doctrine of Hymns</td>
<td>143-166</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOOK THREE: Toplady the Theologian</th>
<th>167-282</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter 9.</strong> His Standards</td>
<td>167--183C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. His Doctrine outlined</td>
<td>184--236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Critical Estimate of teaching</td>
<td>237--282</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOOK FOUR: The Theology of John Wesley</th>
<th>283-421</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter 12.</strong> His Niche in Theology</td>
<td>283--306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Doctrine of Man &amp; Grace</td>
<td>307--342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Doctrine of Sin</td>
<td>343--393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Doctrine of Perfect Love</td>
<td>394--421</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOOK FIVE: The Controversy</th>
<th>422-558</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter 16.</strong> Concerning Perfection</td>
<td>422--460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Concerning Predestination</td>
<td>461--538</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| EPILOGUE                              | 539--548 |
|=======================================|-------|
| BIBLIOGRAPHY                          | 549--572. |
PREFACE.

At the outset I would like to offer my thanks to all who have helped in any way in the writing of this essay, and to tender my apologies for certain of its imperfections.

I regret that the opening chapters have several typing slips; unfortunately the typist to whom the work was sent was labouring under the difficulty of a crippled arm and was only able to use her left hand. The rest I have typed myself - and I am not expert. I am sorry too that the carbon copy is smudged in some places; but I have used the best carbon paper that I could get.

It is with real appreciation of the help afforded me that I tender my thanks to my two supervisors, Prof. John Baillie, S.T.D., D.D., Litt.D., and Prof. Hugh Watt, D.D.; and also to the Revd. A. Mitchell Hunter, D.Litt., F.R.S.E., Librarian of New College, for many stimulating chats on the subject of Calvinism. My old tutor in Church History, the Revd. Henry Bett, Litt.D., Methodist Minister, has further made me his debtor by reading the whole of this essay. To his acute sense of English style I owe the removal of some of its literary blemishes. With characteristic generosity he has encouraged me with the suggestion that there is "a niche" for such a work as this, and that I should revise it for publication. I am also indebted to my friend and near neighbour
the Revd. T. M. Paterson, M.A., B.D., for the discovery and correction of many typing slips.

Lastly I desire to say "thank you" to the Editor of the "Methodist Recorder", the Revd. F. F. Bretherton, B.A., secretary of the Wesley Historical Society, the librarians at the British Museum, London, the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh; the Carnegie Library, Edinburgh; the John Rylands' Library, Manchester; Dr. Williams's Library, London; and the Central Library, Kirkcaldy. The last named has kindly secured me through the Carnegie Scheme whatever books I have requested. A special word of thanks is due to one who desires to remain anonymous; and to her it is gratefully paid.

Originality has been defined as "a judicious selection of other men's thoughts"; and perhaps such is the only originality that I can claim for this dissertation. Nevertheless I offer it as my own unaided work.

Apart from a few exceptions I have acknowledged my indebtedness by the use of inverted commas and footnotes; but in the few cases where memory has failed me I tender my apologies for so blundering an expression of my gratitude. All quotations from Toplady's Works are from the six volume edition.

101, Loughborough Road,
KIRKCALDY.
PROLOGUE
PROLOGUE

On the evening of May 24th, 1738, John Wesley went very unwillingly to a meeting house in Aldersgate Street, London; where one was reading Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans. Of that meeting Wesley wrote: "At a quarter before nine, whilst he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed, I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation: and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."

Wesley's conversion marked the birth of the Evangelical Revival, one of the outstanding events in English History. He was, under God, the pioneer of the greatest religious movement since the Reformation: and so it was not surprising that the religious press of 1938 was busily employed enriching the libraries of the theologian and the sociologist. But whilst Wesley has been written about from almost every angle, no work has appeared to greet the bi-centenary of the birth of one of his most redoubtable antagonists, Augustus Montague Toplady. So it was suggested to me, that here was a suitable field of research, seeing that Toplady - whilst not so outstanding a figure as Wesley - was one of the ablest men of an age that produced many, and one of the finest hymn-writers given to any age. I was, however, surprised to note the sparseness of

\[\text{Wesley's Journal, vol. 1. page 418}\]
the literature concerning him. Apart from numbering him amongst the hymn-writers, the 14th edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica makes no other reference; nor have I been able to find anything more concerning him in the Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics than the statement that he was the author of Rock of Ages. The 9th edition of the E.B. refers to him more fully in an article on hymns. Chambers's Encyclopedia gives a very brief account of his life and curtly dismisses his works of controversy as valueless. A photograph accompanies a very brief biography in Harmsworth's Universal Encyclopedia, which includes the following comment: "A convinced Calvinist, he embodied his views in the The Historic Proof of the Doctrinal Calvinism of The Church of England, 1774, and engaged in bitter controversy on the subject with John Wesley. He also wrote a number of poems on sacred subjects. He is remembered, however, only for his hymns, these including the world-famous Rock of Ages, first published in the Gospel Magazine." The Dictionary of National Biography gives a full and interesting account of his life. Brief reference to Toplady is also found in the Concise Dictionary of National Biography, Chambers's Biographical Dictionary, and in Everyman's Encyclopedia. Reference
is also made in Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart, the "New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge," and in Julian's Dictionary of Hymns. Bishop Ryle devotes some twenty-six pages of his "Christian Leaders of the Last Century" to Toplady, whilst the five volume "Outline of Christianity" give but one sentence. Various small books on hymns refer to Toplady's contributions, but none of them at great length. W. Tinters published a "Memoir" of Toplady, whilst John Watkins writes a preface to an edition of Toplady's "A Course of Family Prayer"; but neither this, nor Winter's Memoir have much to commend them. They are extravagant in their praise and inaccurate as to their assertions. "A Life of Toplady" was written by the Revd. Charles Hole, but it has never been published. In his series of books on hymns and hymn-writers Thomas Wright of Olney has written the best "Life of Toplady" yet produced; and whilst I do not agree with his dithyrambic praise of Toplady's works and gifts; I, nevertheless, gratefully acknowledge the help I have received from this carefully documented and attractively written book. It is, however, purely a biography; no attempt is made to criticise or even outline Toplady's teaching. Thomas Wright does say, when speaking of Toplady's Calvinism, that Toplady's arguments have never been answered, simply because they are unanswerable.

In this and the prior named work Toplady is wrongly described as M.A., a degree to which he never proceeded. A photograph is found amongst the famous hymn-writers.
In view of the paucity of literature concerning Toplady, it is not surprising that many people have only the vaguest knowledge of him; whilst some have none at all. Not infrequently friends of mine have said, "Toplady! Oh! he wrote a hymn, didn't he?" or "Wasn't he the chap who slanged Wesley?" It is noteworthy that amongst the few who have remembered his name, some have recalled the hymn-writer, and others the controversialist. As Bishop Ryle points out, "He that only reads Toplady's hymns will find it hard to believe that he could compose his controversial writings. He that only reads his controversial writings will hardly believe that he composed his hymns. Yet, the fact remains, that the same man composed both."

It is doubtless the bitterness of his controversial style that has caused people to turn away from Toplady; his language and temper beggar description.

The title of this essay as approved by the Senatus Academicus was "Agustus Montague Toplady, Hymn-writer and Theologian." But as one of my supervisors thought I was tending to deal too much with Toplady as a controversialist, I added the sub-title "With special reference to his controversy with John Wesley." Unfortunately I misunderstood a word of guidance on the subject of criticism of Toplady. I took the phrase "no criticism of Toplady" much too literally,

* Christian Leaders of the Last Century, p. 383
and so offered an outline of the life and teaching of Toplady, without attempting a critique of his work. I was, therefore, grateful when the Faculty of Divinity requested me to add a criticism of Toplady and to deal in some detail with his controversy with the Arminians. In consequence I have added a few pages to chapter 5; but even yet it is only intended to be a word portrait of Toplady as a controversialist: the substance of his controversy follows in two chapters at the end. Had time permitted I would have tried to have recast the whole work and have threaded the criticism through the chapters devoted to a statement of Toplady's position. I have, however, given a separate chapter of criticism, in which I have sought to estimate the place Toplady holds in the ranks of theologians, and to show the sources of his indebtedness. As a background to the controversy I have volunteered an outline of the basic teaching of Wesley. This, I fear, has led to some little overlapping, but I have sought to avoid it as best I could. The purpose of this fourth book is to show the fundamental unity of Wesley and Toplady on the major part of Calvin's teaching. In the chapters devoted to the controversy I have dealt with Wesley's emphasis on "Perfect Love", and with his denial of predestination. Thus my subject is divided into five books:

1. THE LIFE AND TIMES OF TOPLADY.  
   (Chapters 1 - 5)

2. THE LITERARY AND RELIGIOUS CHARACTERISTICS OF TOPLADY'S HYMNS.  
   (Chapters 6 - 8.)
Unfortunately my reading was somewhat delayed by my inability to get hold of the works of Sellon and Olivers. I tried in vain either to buy or to borrow them. None of the libraries to which I appealed were able to help me. Nor was the Wesley Historical Society. Even the Conference Library did not possess them. It was therefore necessary for me to spend my holiday last year in the reference rooms of the John Rylands' Library and the British Museum. For the courtesy and help received at both institutions I have already expressed my thanks.

The first part of this Essay is only slightly altered: further material is added on pages 97A to 97D. New tables of hymns are inserted,(thus giving index to every hymn written by Toplady):pages 183a to 183c are new as is also the whole of the second part.

Thomas Wright in his book gives a list of ten letters that are not found in the published works of Toplady, some of these I mention in my bibliography, but those that Wright had in his own possession cannot now be secured. I applied to his widow, but she, unfortunately, was not able to help. The few letters and MSS that her husband possessed cannot be traced. They are not at the British Museum nor at the Cowper Museum at Olney. Happily Wright gives the substance of them in a chapter of his book, pages 161-173.
Chapter 1.

FORMATIVE FORCES
Chapter 1.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH. Formative Forces.

EARLY YEARS.

Augustus Montague Toplady was born on the fourth day of November 1740 and died the victim of pulmonary tuberculosis 11th of August, 1778. As men reckon time his life was short, but if we consider what he accomplished in those short years we can say with the hymn writer,

"He liveth long who liveth well,
All other life is short and vain."

His sun set when scarce past its meridian blaze, but whilst it shone it wanted not for warmth. Indeed! at times its rays were as a consuming fire. Though dying in early middle life Toplady yet ranks amongst the immortals. For even if he had achieved nothing else, to have written one of the greatest hymns in all literature would have been enough to secure for him undying fame. But Toplady's claim to immortality does not rest solely on his authorship of "Rock of Ages", for he wrote other hymns of almost equal merit; and was also one of the most doughty theologians of his day. It may be questioned whether he said anything "new"; but what he had to say he said well. Sometimes, it might be added, too well. For in his zeal he not infrequently forgot courtesy, and often seemed more anxious to confound his opponents than to vindicate what he believed to be the truth.

He was born in West Street, Farnham, and at his baptism received the names of Augustus Montague in honour of the two
gentlemen who were his godfathers. Toplady was cradled in sorrow, for his birth seems quickly to have been followed by news of his father's death. Thomas Wright asserts that Toplady was a posthumous child. He writes "In May 1740 Major Toplady, who was serving under his friend Admiral Vernon at the siege of Cartagena, in South America, died of yellow fever before that city; and on the 4th of November Mrs. Toplady gave birth, in a house in West Street, Farnham, to a second son who was baptised on the 29th of November 1740 at Farnham Church."

In a footnote Wright recognises that this account differs from the accounts in other works, but claims that it is founded on certain notes written in a volume of Toplady's sermons by the Rev. John Ryland. He further quotes a Mr. Stroud who gave it as his theory that Major Toplady brought his wife to Farnham so that she might be near his friends the Vernons of Vernon House. However this may be, it seems strange support for the assumption of posthumous birth. For if Major Toplady actually accompanied his wife to Farnham he must have left immediately, if his death be correctly given as May 1740. Even if he died the last day of May he can only have been away from England less than four calendar months, and when one remembers the distance to Cartagena and the slowness of the travel in those days, it does not seem very likely that Major Toplady could have reached his destination so

long before his child's birth. As there seems to be no direct evidence available I think prudence directs that the statement "Major Toplady died in May 1740" be treated with reserve. Certainly Toplady's first biographer is not of that opinion. He writes, "All that can be known respecting his father Major Richard Toplady, is that he was a major in the army and died at the siege of Carthagena, soon after the birth of his son?"

Fortunately, we know much more concerning his mother. She appears to have been of the best type of her generation; a woman of refinement, culture and godliness. The way she set herself to the task of rearing and educating her son reveals a woman of courage and piety. Yet, she did not escape the peril common to all mothers for she spoilt her son by her doting affection. True, much can be said in extenuation of this not uncommon error. She had lost one child in infancy and now bereft of her husband’s love and companionship, she would doubtless lavish all her love on his son. Her adulation of the boy did not meet with his grandmother’s approval, for she - much to Toplady's disgust - ventured the opinion that Mrs. Toplady "would bring the boy up to be a scourge to herself". Such also seems to have been the opinion of the Revd. Julius and Mrs. Bate, and, as will be seen later, Toplady sensing this opposition, clung the more closely to his mother, whilst completely ostracising his uncle and aunt.

2. Toplady’s Diary. May 16th 1752.

Throughout his life Toplady returned in full measure his mother's devotion, and always spoke of her in the tenderest way. Certain of his phrases would cloy the palate of the modern man, but allowance must be made for the age in which Toplady lived and the social circle in which he moved.

Toplady seems to have been a high spirited, highly-strung and sensitive child of undoubted ability, ability somewhat marred by his conceit and self-righteousness. There is a type of precocity which is an endearing thing, for it is marked by an artless naivety. But it could scarcely be held that Toplady's precocity was of this order. Rather does he appear as a self-satisfied little boy. Indeed; self-satisfaction was for many years his "Hall-mark". From his diary one gets the impression of a child clothed like little Lord Fauntleroy, used to the companionship of the nobility, and abundantly pleased with himself, if not with others around him. As already hinted, he did not like his Uncle Julius Bate, whilst of his Aunt he entertained the opinion that she merited only social ostracism. In his diary for September 2nd he says, "Went to Aunt Betsy's. She is so vastly quarrelsome; in short she is so fractious, captious and insolent that she is unfit for human society". It was well for Toplady that this observation did not come to his Aunt's notice, for he would undoubtedly have suffered more severely at her hands than he did on January 27th 1753, for of that occasion he writes "My Aunt Betsy sent for me and after the most ungenteel treatment flew at me and beat me sadly".
Both Mr and Mrs Bate disliked the boy whom they suspected of untruthfulness and plagiarism. There does not, however, seem to have been any ground for their suspicions; for although Toplady as a child, was a good deal of a prig, he was not a liar. Moreover his Uncle's angry accusation seems to indicate a weak spot in his own armour. For even if Toplady had reproduced the sermons of others in order to impress his cousin Kitty he was guilty of an offence common to many of the clergy of his day— including not a few bishops, if the testimony of Osborne can be accepted.

Toplady seems early to have developed his dislike of "Uncle Jack" and "Aunt Betsy", for he refers to them frequently in his diary and always unfavourably. On the 16th of May he was humiliated by Uncle Jack by not being asked to sit down, and also by having to make confession of his poverty. Perhaps this confession was the cause of the rupture between the Toplady's and the Bate's families which occurred on December 16th. For on that day Toplady writes: "Went to Uncle Jack's in Bloomsbury Square. I asked the footman if my uncle was at home. The man said that my uncle had left word with him to bid me never come there no more, and that he would read neither letter or message that comes to him.

This is evidenced by Osborne the bookseller of Gray's Inn Gate who endeavoured to justify his offering to supply Toplady with sermons of the eve of his ordination, by saying "May, young gentleman, do not be surprised at my offering you ready-made sermons, for I assure you I have sold ready-made sermons to many a bishop in my time".

I told him, I had not clothes fit to come out of a Sunday; and that we are in such want of money, that every day seemed two, and that I had not good stockings.

2. Vol.6. p.256-7
from us. I thank God that I am conscious that I have not done
anything to him, nor do I know what cause to attribute his
un-unely behaviour. "We do not want his assistance, for we
have another estate of my father's coming to us in March".

This last sentence when taken in conjunction with the
previous acknowledgement of "poverty" seems to suggest that
Mrs. Toplady did have difficulty in maintaining herself
and child in the style to which she had been accustomed.
Certainly it would appear that the lady had to tolerate the
rudeness of Mrs. Bate;"and as human nature does not easily
accommodate itself to the condescension of sisters-in-law
it is very likely that Mrs. Toplady did in some measure rely
on her brother Julius. The fact that young Toplady emphasises
"we do not want his assistance" lends point to the suggestion
that help had previously been solicited.

Of Toplady's schooldays we know but little. It is
not even clear in which precise year he entered Westminster
School. His mother moved from Farnham to Westminster doubtless
with the intention of being near her son during his school years,
and it is very probable that Toplady entered in 1748 or 1749.
It was during his schooldays that he commenced writing the
diary to which I have already referred. He called it his
"book of duty", and from its pages we can trace the writer's

/ In his diary for July 15th Toplady writes; "Went
to Aunt Betsy's, who set forward a most dreadful
quarrel, calling me names, etc, Mamma made it up".
spiritual pilgrimage, for it is much more a record of his spiritual than of his intellectual development. Indeed; but for a few occasional references to his preceptors (Dr. Nicholls and Dr. Lloyd) we learn but little of his mental growth. The author of the "Account of the Life and Writings of the Rev. Augustus Montague Toplady" which prefaces Volume 1 of "The Works" says; "It is certain that young Toplady was a very apt scholar; and that neither want of talent nor want of diligence prevented him from making the most of whatever advantages he enjoyed. Discovering from the first a vigorous intellect, and uncommon application, he soon attained a degree of proficiency in the languages, which raised him high above his comppeers."

Doubtless he had his "pals" but there is much concerning them we would like to know; one fears that in his early youth Toplady was very much the "lone wolf". His dearest companion seems to have been his dog "Boy", whom he "loved vastly". Probably he spent much time with his cousin Kitty, and he also refers (rather scathingly) to a certain Lord Torreys. This young nobleman had let him down concerning a visit to a lottery, so Toplady expressed the pious hope that the future would see him saved from such young promise breakers as the son of the third Earl of Abingdon. This hope was not destined to be fulfilled for in later years Toplady refers to Lord Torreys as "my dear friend". The schoolboy acquaintance must have ripened into friendship.

I have already emphasised that the diary of Toplady's boyhood more clearly reveals his spiritual than intellectual development; for its pages offer much that would engross the modern psychologist, who would doubtless make many grim prophecies concerning the future of the writer who was unquestionably a remarkable child. Whether or not he was "likeable" depends on individual taste. To some - as to Mrs. Loveday - he would be a second Timothy; whilst to others an insufferably self-righteous little prig. For it cannot be gainsaid that for many people piety in a child is suspect; and when a boy of eleven years writes "I praise God that I can remember no dreadful crime, and not to me, but to the Lord be the glory", they fear the worst.

As illustration of the precocity of Toplady I volunteer the following extracts from his boyhood diary.

February 28th 1752. "My dear Mamma gave me a pulpit cloth of white all-a-piece, laced with broad gold lace. I always love God, and endeavour to cast away all impurity and all sin whatever".

April 7th, 1753. "Mamma told me that I was as good to her as ten children; see the tenderness of a kind dear mother. Went to my Uncle Charles's; he gave me threepence. My Aunt Betsy invented a terrible mistake of me. I have a little garden at Mr. Bunting's; she said she sowed some horse-radish in it; that I had pulled it up. I told her of the mistake and of the consequences which would attend getting a bad character on me; on which she multiplied her number from one piece of radish to two; stands to it that I told a lie; but thanks be to God,
I scorn one."

There is much more in the same vein, but enough has been quoted to reveal the early disposition of the child and his attitude to his mother. One cannot forbear to smile at these entries when one recalls that Toplady did not hesitate to make commercial gain from his proficiency in languages by writing the exercises of those of his school fellows who were either too dull or too lazy to write their own. Apparently he did not regard it as a "crime" to help in the deceiving of his teachers; or in the encouraging of deceitful habits in others. It would appear that at this time of life Toplady had not yet learned to "turn from the glittering bribe his scornful eye". It may be, that he thought that he earned all that he got and that the question of honesty was one to be faced by those who employed him rather than by himself. From this early age Toplady manifested something of the casuistry that was to distinguish his later writings.

Thomas Wright in his work on the Life of Toplady states that the diary of Toplady reveals "a boy of sanguine temperament, with the gift of being able to see the humorous side of things. He is shrewd, pertinacious, conscientious, lovable, but perhaps a little spoilt by a doting and indulgent mother, and perhaps a little self-righteous. There is already discernible in him the stuff of which intrepid and dogged fighters are made". With this analysis most students of Toplady will agree, though some may not

be quite so ready as Wright to absolve Toplady from the charge of snobbishness and conceit. In fact "snobbishness" seems, throughout his life, to have been Toplady's besetting sin. This is clearly shewn in his attitude to Olivers and Sellon - two of Wesley's henchmen. Olivers was guilty of the crime of mending shoes, whilst Sellon was not too proud to bake his own bread. Lady Huntingdon said of Toplady, that "even at Court she had not met a more accomplished gentleman," and burns incense to his "most polite and captivating manner, both of speaking and acting, accompanied by not the least degree of affectation, and to his delightful urbanity.", which only tends to throw into greater relief his lack of manners towards those he deemed his social inferiors. Nature seems to delight in inconsistencies; for it is a saddening thing that a man of such genuine piety as Toplady could taunt the labourer with the menial nature of his toil. "All labour ranks the same with God" says Browning, but this would not have been Toplady's opinion; nor would his views upon "rank" have been those of the poet Burns. In fairness to Toplady it must be said that a charge of snobbery would have been hotly denied by certain of his contemporaries. In fact, his first biographer states the opposite opinion. He writes;

"It is but too common with those who occasionally associate with the great, to overlook, if not to despise, the lower orders of society. It was, however, very different with Mr. Toplady. He "knew the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor". And therefore the poor were the objects of his especial care and sympathy."

/ Works. Vol.1. page 93. /
Later the writer offers this further eulogy;

"He was clothed with humility, and filled with the spirit of kindness, and Christian charity. And although for reasons and on principles, that will afterwards be noticed, he, in his writings, expressed himself with great severity against the enemies of truth, yet all its friends occupied a place in the warmest affections of his heart."

One cannot but smile at the assumption here made, that those who could not agree with Toplady were not the friends of truth. In retrospect the observation provokes more than a smile. Arminianism, may have been to Toplady a blood red and venomed pestilence, but it did more for the moral regeneration of England than did Toplady's impassioned defence of the "truth". But such is the blindness of even good men, that a facet is often mistaken for the whole jewel.

University; Trinity College, Dublin.

In 1755 Toplady left Westminster School and on July 11th he commenced his University studies at Trinity College, Dublin. As of his schooldays, so of his undergraduate years, we glean but little of his studies, but learn much concerning his growth in grace, and of the tragic condition of the religious life of his day and generation. From volume one of the "Works", we gather the impression - for it is nowhere categorically stated - that Toplady graduated in classics and then proceeded to a study of Hellenistic Greek and Hebrew.

It was during these University years that he was brought nigh by the blood of Christ, and also experienced his deliverance from - what he regarded - the dangerous illusion of Arminianism.

ibid. Italics mine.
By the Divine guidance he was led to a barn at Coolnaime where a lay preacher of the name of James Morris preached from the text "Ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ". Under its inspiration Toplady felt refining fire illuminate his soul; he had come to his Bethel. Of this service, which was to be ever memorable, he writes "Under that dear messenger and by that sermon, I was, I trust, brought nigh by the blood of Christ, in August 1756. Strange that I, who had sat so long under the means of grace in England, should be brought nigh to God in an obscure part of Ireland, amidst a handful of God's people, met together in a barn, and under the ministry of one, who could hardly spell his name; Surely it was the Lord's doing, and is marvellous; The excellency of such power must be of God and cannot be of man. The regenerating Spirit breathes not only on whom, but likewise when, where, and as he listeth." 

Although Toplady was preparing for the Ministry of the Anglican Church he was not a bigot. As we have just seen he owed his first experience of salvation to a lay preacher; and a follower of Wesley at that. It would be interesting to know on what grounds Toplady was assured of the illiteracy of Morris, for he offers no evidence of it.

Certainly the much more cultured ministries of the ordained priesthood had not influenced him even to the pursuit of virtue, let alone to salvation. Of the spiritual capacities of the Clergy he was the lowest opinion. True, he never communicated with the Nonconformists, they were channels of blessing to him only as

1. Ephesians 2.15.
2. Works. vol.1. pages 7 & 8.
as preachers of the Gospel, and not as the dispensers of sacramental grace. Yet, he unhesitatingly affirms that though he enjoyed "happy soul seasons" at the Lord's table "the clergyman at whose hands" he received the memorials of Christ's dying love knew no more of the Gospel than so many stocks or stones."

In his letter to Mr. F. on November 27th 1777 he says "For my own part, I am most clearly of the opinion, (1) That, if he cannot hear the Church of England doctrines preached in a Parish Church (which is terribly the case in some thousands of places) he is bound in conscience to hear these truths, where they can be heard; was it in a barn, in a private house, in a field, or on a dunghill. But, (2) I am no less clearly convinced that he is not under the smallest necessity of breaking off from the communion of the church established". He gives as one of his reasons "The goodness, or badness, of a parish minister, neither adds or detracts from, the virtue and value of the sacraments he dispenses."

I have already stressed the low opinion Toplady entertained of the parish priest (though he, let it be noted, always refers to the parish minister), but the prelates as well, are, by him, "weighed in the balance and found wanting"; for when only a boy of fourteen he writes; "On Sunday 27th January 1754; went to St. Martin's Church. Heard a poor mean sermon, and a very long one, by Dr. Pearce. Bishop of Bangor. The only good thing in it was when he said "to conclude".

2. " " 5. 225-6
Religious Life of Nation.

It is obvious from this remark that the religious life of the nation was in a pathetic plight. When there is no vision the people perish, and there could be no possibility of "vision" amongst the rank and file of the laity when their spiritual guides were both intellectually ignorant and (as was too often the case) morally decadent. The Preface to Bishop Burnet's "Pastoral Care" (3rd Edition) makes sad reading and one is aghast at the ignorance and indifference against which it is directed. Writing in 1713 he says—

"I cannot look on without the deepest concern when I see the imminent ruin hanging over the Church, and by consequence over the whole Reformation. The outward state of things is black enough, God knows; but what heightens my fears arises chiefly from the inward state into which we are unhappily fallen. I will in examining this confine myself chiefly to the clergy. Our ember weeks are the grief and burden of my life. The much greater part of those who come to be ordained are ignorant to a degree not to be apprehended by those who are not obliged to know it. The easiest part of knowledge is that to which they are the greatest strangers; I mean the plainest part of the Scriptures, which they say in excuse for their ignorance that their tutors in the Universities never mention the reading of to them; so that they can give no account, or at least a very imperfect one, of the contents even of the Gospels. Those who have read some few books yet never seem to have read the scriptures. Many cannot give a tolerable account of the Catechism itself, how short and plain so ever. This does often tear my heart, the case is not much better in many who, having got into orders, come for institution and cannot make it appear that they have read the Scriptures or any one good book since they were ordained; so that the small measure of knowledge upon which they got into holy orders, not being improved, is in a way to be quite lost; and then they thin it a great hardship if they are told that they must know the Scriptures and the body of divinity better before they can be trusted with the care of souls."

The picture thus painted is enough to strike despair into the stoutest heart, but happily it was not true of all, for
there were a few faithful, ardent souls - within and without the Establishment - in whom there blazed the fires of evangelical truth; but these living torches only cast into greater relief the spiritual and moral blackness amidst which they shone. Whitefield, Romaine and Hervey - amongst the Anglicans - Gill, Hitchin and Ryland - amongst the Nonconformists - preached with passion and toiled terribly in their effort to bring light to those who walked in darkness. Well might Toplady - in a letter to Wesley - say of his fellow students, "I do not visit three persons in the college, except one or two of the fellows...... I do not believe that there is one that fears God in it". From the Archbishop of Canterbury down to the newest curate, religious zeal was entirely lacking - nay more, it was openly frowned upon. According to the "Life of the Countess of Huntingdon" the King was constrained to pass censure upon Archbishop Cornwallis for the profligacy of his life, and for holding in his palace "large balls and convivial routs".

From the example of such men, no good could be expected; and the historians of the period speak with one voice of the utter helplessness of the Church to accomplish her destiny. Southey's verdict is particularly trenchant.

"The greater part of the nation was totally uneducated - Christian no further than the mere ceremony of baptism could make them, being for the most part in a state of heathen, or worse than heathen, ignorance. In truth they had never been opnverted; for at first one idolatry had

/ Written 15th Sept. 1758.
been substituted for another; in this they followed the fashion of their lords; and when the Romish idolatry was expelled they were left as ignorant of real Christianity as they were found.  

Nor is Burnet's estimate of the situation any more encouraging, in his "History of His own Times" he writes,

"The convocation did little this winter. They continued their former ill practices, and little opposition was made to them as very little regard was had to them. They drew up a representation of some abuses in the ecclesiastical discipline and in the consistorial courts; but took care to mention none of the greater ones of which many among themselves were eminently guilty, such as pluralities, non-residence, the neglect of their cures and the irregularities in the lives of the clergy which were too visible."

It has sometimes been urged that whilst pluralities and absenteeism resulted in the neglect of duty, the clergy were singularly free from charges of immorality. This is at once true and false. It is true that Consistory Court trials were not frequent, but it would be false to conclude that the moral life of the majority of the clergy was above rebuke. Only too frequently was the reverse the case, and the fact that official cognizance was not taken of their delinquency is but further evidence of the laxity of the Prelates themselves. It is a melancholy reflection that the two litterateurs of the age who surpassed their contemporaries in indecency - and none of these were novices in the art - were both ministers of the State Church. Thackeray rightly condemns the filthiness of Sterne and Swift. This latter he describes as "a monster gibbering shrieks and gnashing imprecations against mankind tearing down all shreds of modesty, past all sense of manliness and shame, filthy in thought, furious, raging, obscene."
His verdict concerning Sterne is equally severe; he refers to him "as a wretched worn out old scamp" and describes him at the last "as wicked, as vain, as false as he had ever been". Two Clergymen were executed. Dodd for forgery and Hackman for murder. Nor were these incidents made more heinous by reason of their isolation. True, others were not called to expiate their crimes upon the scaffold; but the general standard of clerical behaviour was an open scandal. Public opinion in those days was by no means inclined towards puritanism, but even it was antagonised by the wantonness of those who, by virtue of their ordination vows, were pledged to shew "a more excellent way". In his "History of Religion in England" Dr. Stoughton writes,

"The public have long remarked with indignation that some of the most distinguished coxcombs, drunkards, debauchees, and gamesters who figure at the watering-places, and all places of public resort, are young men of the sacerdotal order."

Such was the background, socially, morally and ecclesiastically of the ministry of Toplady; for notwithstanding the work of Whitefield and the Wesleys, the Evangelical Revival had scarce begun. Later cleansing fire was to sweep the country, but at the time Toplady was ordained, the outlook was still very far from bright. It is unfortunately true that despite his many gifts, Toplady did not further as much as he might that revival that was to revolutionise England. For it is not too much to say that the 18th century owes more to Wesley than to any other man it produced. William Pitt

1. Thackeray, English Humourists, p. 312, Ed. 1892.
did much for his country and his generation, but Wesley did more, and not for his country alone, but for the Kingdom of God throughout the world. Men, particularly in these days, warm to Pitt's declaration "England shall save herself by her exertions, and Europe by her example." But this utterance - great though it is - becomes mediocre and parochial before Wesley's audacious claim, "The world is my Parish."
Chapter 2.

EARLY MINISTRATION
(1762 - 1768.)
In his "Christian Leaders of the Last Century" J.C. Hyle, one time Bishop of Liverpool, says of Toplady, "Few spiritual heroes of the last century...have suffered more from the want of a good biographer than Toplady. Be the cause what it may, a real life of the man was never written. The only memoir of him is as meagre a production as can possibly be conceived. It is perhaps only fair to remember that he was an only child, and that he died unmarried; so that he had neither brother, sister, son nor daughter, to gather up his remains. Moreover he was one who lived much in his study and among his books, spent much time in private communion with God, and went very little into society. Like Romaine he was not what the world would call a genial man - had very few intimate friends - and was, probably, more feared and admired than loved. But be the reasons what they may, the fact is undeniable that there is no good biography of Toplady. The result is, that there is hardly any man of his calibre in the last century of whom so very little is known." With this observation, few will quarrel, for it is surprising that no one undertook the task of giving the world an authentic account of the life of a man, who - whatever his failures were - was one of the most outstanding figures of his day. The Official Memoir which

Since Hyle's book was written an excellent "Life Of Augustus M. Toplady" was published in 1911 by Thomas Wright of Olney; though written in Queen Victoria's reign.
serves as a "Foreward" to the "Works" fully justifies Bishop Ryle's description of it. It is "as meagre a production as can possibly be conceived". It reflects no credit upon its author, for it bears and the evidence of being hastily compiled; and despite its lavish praise reveals but a tepid interest in its subject. It is an incoherent production, lacking chronological sequence...and worse, it is an inaccurate one.

The anonymous author states, "Mr Toplady, having, subscribed to the doctrines of the Church of England, ex animo, was prepared to preach them with a degree of zeal and earnestness, corresponding to his firm conviction of their intrinsic truth, and their eternal importance. He had the opportunity of giving practical proof of this, almost immediately after his entering into Holy orders. The living of Blagdon in Somersetshire, having become vacant, he was inducted into it, in consequence of the application of some of his friends on his behalf. They had procured it for him in the same way, in which such livings are often obtained. Of the method adopted by them, it would seem, that he was not, for some time aware. But when, at length, he made the discovery, his tender conscience was troubled, and he never felt easy, till he had resigned his charge.

It is regrettable that Dr. Ryle did not, after his justifiable censure, verify certain of the statements contained in the "Official Memoir". Doubtless he accepted the account, meagre as it was, as accurate; but by doing so helped to perpetuate certain errors contained in it.

I have used the word "anonymous" seeing that no name is prescribed to the Memoir; but the production is the work of one of Toplady's friends, a certain Mr Walter Row, whose handling of Toplady's MSS, leaves much to be desired. The "Memoir" abounds with mistakes, whilst the handling of the hymns is neither chronological nor complete.
It would, indeed, have been an awful affliction to himself, and a serious injury to the Church, if the injudicious kindness of his friends had obliged him to be silent in his Master's service. But on relinquishing one cure which he could not hold with good conscience, he obtained another in which he laboured with pleasure, because he believed that his way to it was opened by the providence of God. In the year 1768 he became Vicar of Broad Hembury, near Honiton in Devonshire.

It would be hard to find a record—particularly one bearing official imprimatur—in which so many misstatements could be found in so short a space. In the first place Toplady was never incumbent of Blagdon, so it could scarcely have been obtained for him in a manner displeasing to his conscience. True, he did relinquish one "cure" in favour of another, but it was not Blagdon, but Harpford and Fen Ottery which he exchanged for that of Broad Hembury. It was the living of Fen Ottery that was obtained for him in a way of which he could not approve, and which made him restless until he had made a change. But it might be noted


The present incumbent—(The Revd. E. Marriott)—writes: "Augustus Toplady was curate in charge only of this parish and not incumbent. He was therefore never inducted to the living. His tenure of the curacy was 1762 - 1764, during the incumbency of the Revd. William Lupton."
in passing that the "method adopted" was not so displeasing to Toplady that he felt constrained to resign his Charge (as stated in the Memoir) but only that he should exchange it for another.
As further illustration of the perfunctory character of the "memoir" it may be pointed out that no reference is made either to Toplady's second curacy or his first incumbency. As the record stands the reader is left with the impression that Toplady left Blagdon for Broad-Hembury; and this; despite the fact that the anonymous author's first quotation from the diary, he pretends to rank so highly, is to Toplady's ministry at Fen Ottery. Such a slip-shod production is scarcely a credit to the writer, and certainly it is not worthy of its subject. Indeed, the fulsome praise, when contrasted with the careless and inaccurate presentation of the facts, leaves one with the feeling that the whole Preface is publisher's blurb.

Toplady's ministry at Blagdon does not seem to have been particularly distinguished. Thomas Wright states that although Toplady's ministry at Blagdon was short he thoroughly endeared himself to the people, and that traditions of him still survive amongst the 'older' inhabitants. This is not the opinion of the present incumbent, who writes, "Toplady has not left any particular impression, and the only important tradition that has grown up around him in the parish is that which surrounds the writing of the hymn 'Rock of Ages'. It is commonly believed that it was inspired by a terrible thunderstorm that compelled Toplady to take refuge in the cleft rock of Burrington Coombe.

How much truth there is in this commonly accepted tradition it is not possible to say. One can only weigh what little evidence there is and form one's own opinion. Whilst a commonly held tradition is not conclusive, it seems idle to reject it if nothing better can be but in its place. Dr. Dearmer in his "Songs of Praise Discussed" arbitrarily dismisses the story as an invention; but advances no reasons for doing so. He concludes his comments on the hymn "Rock of Ages" with the words: "We have only to add that the story of his making this hymn when he took refuge in the Cleft Rock of Burrington Combe in the Mendips, was invented about the year 1850 - perhaps by someone who thought that one little lie would hardly count among a total of 2,522,880,000 sins". This, to my mind, is much too drastic an assertion, particularly as no evidence for the date 1850 is adduced. Moreover it is apparent that Dr. Dearmer does not know the originator of the story, and so one wonders why he is so sure that it is a "lie". The present incumbent of the parish of Blagdon does not appear to be aware of any reason why the "only important tradition that has grown up around" Toplady should be so summarily rejected. It is true that the hymn was not published until long after Toplady had left Blagdon, and it is quite probable that Scriptural allusions rather than local geography inspired it; yet there is evidence that Toplady used the phrase "Rock
of Ages" while living at Blagdon. In the record in his diary for April 23rd 1768 are the words: "I seemed to have quite lost my hold on the rock of ages"; and in one of his farewell sermons to the congregation at Blagdon (he preached two) he speaks of the Saviour as the "foundation that cannot fail, even Jesus the Mediator, and Surety of the Covenant, Christ the Rock of Ages". It is quite possible that the cleft rock of Burrington Combe brought to Toplady's mind such texts as Isaiah 26: 4. "Trust ye in the Lord forever: for in the Lord Jehovah is an everlasting rock." Or as the marginal reference gives it "A rock of ages": and Isaiah 32:2. "The shadow of a great rock in a weary land." The cleft of the rock may have recalled Exodus 33:22. "I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand until I have passed by." Thus the actual rock at Burrington Combe may have been the primary source of inspiration. The suggestion that the hymn was actually composed in the cleft of the rock may be regarded as an embellishment, for it is highly improbable that it was the product of "unpremeditated art". For my own part I feel that Toplady had written the hymn with a polemical purpose in view and that he added it to his article in the Gospel Magazine in order to give a devotional touch to what was only a piece of statistical imagining. Imbued as it is with the idea of sin and human helplessness, there is yet the dart that strikes at the idea of Christian Perfection as taught by John Wesley.
The literary and theological merits of "Rock of Ages" will be evaluated at a later stage, for despite the fact that it has been severely criticised by some both as to its poetry and religious truth, the fact remains that its heart-piercing qualities have enabled it to triumph over all that can be said against it. No hymn has a more treasured place in the literature of the Christian Church.

The judgment of Mr. Marriott that Toplady has left no particular impression in the parish Blagdon is borne out by the scanty data that is left. Whilst at this time Toplady was delivered from the "snare of Arminianism" he does not seem to have entered the lists of Militant Calvinism. His passion for the doctrines of "Free Grace" had yet to be kindled. This does not appear to have come to its maturity until he was settled at Ten Ottery. Two things, however, stand out clearly: (1) he ministered to a divided parish, and (2) his health was being slowly undermined. The damp cold atmosphere of Blagdon would greatly aggravate his lung trouble, and it would doubtless have been better for Toplady if he could have found a sphere of service in a more mountainous and bracing locality. His subsequent movements to Ten Ottery, Broad Hembury, and ultimately London did nothing to check the ravages of his disease. No clue is given by Toplady as to the nature of the quarrel that split the parish, nor any as to the length of its duration, but rejoicing that he had no part
in it, and that both parties were equally dear to him, preached a sermon on the text; "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors", whereby he sought to heal the breach.

On April 29th 1764 Toplady preached his last sermon to the congregation at Blagdon, and the following month took duties at an episcopal chapel in Duke Street, London. His tenure of office must have been only a matter of weeks for in June 1764 he was appointed to Farley Hungerford as curate to the Revd. Henry Arnold, Prebendary of Wells. Here he stayed exactly a year, then left for London where he remained - taking occasional supply - until he was inducted to the living of Harpford and Fen Ottery in May 1766. Here ministry here was attended with increasing success, but after nearly two years of misgivings, he exchanged this living for that of the nearby parish of Broad Hembury - of which he remained incumbent for the rest of his life.

Reference has already been made to the fact that Toplady was not happy about his appointment to Fen Ottery. Apparently the manner of his presentation troubled his conscience, and despite the success that attended his work he never felt satisfied as to his incumbency. What the difficulty was we do not know. We know that his presentation by Mr. Samuel Cleveland is peculiar, for neither his predecessor nor his successor was presented by that gentleman. The gift of the living belonged to the Duke family of Otterton, and how Mr. Cleveland came to possess this one right of presentation is something of a myster

Mr. Cleveland of Woolwich must have purchased his right to present Toplady, but no further evidence is available.
Whatever may be the explanation, it apparently did not satisfy Toplady, so when Mr. Luce, who was then incumbent of Broad Hembury, suggested a change of livings he readily assented.

From his diary of this period one notes that once settled in at Fen Ottery Toplady began to preach passionately and unequivocably the doctrine of predestination, and judging by his comments concerning his increasing congregations it must be concluded that the common people heard him gladly, and not a few were converted. His diary records not his labours alone, but what he, himself, calls his correspondence with God. The reading of this "correspondence" is illuminating, for it reveals much that makes for a better understanding of one who was such a curious blend of the mystic and the dialectician, the controversialist and the recluse.

Toplady, as one would expect in so aerial a temperament, knew the miseries of the "slough of despond" as well as the ecstacies of the "mountain top". Although it must be admitted that he knew much less of the "slough of despond" than one might have imagined, particularly as he was never physically robust. The reading of his diary of this period impresses one with his joy in the knowledge of the Divine Presence; very

---

"When Vicar of Harpford, I laboured among that people for a great part of two years, before I could perceive a sensible out-pouring of God's Holy Spirit upon them; and yet before I left them, God seemed to have owned my ministry in a very great and unexpected manner".

frequently he experienced to the full the consolations of the
Spirit's abiding; but when he felt himself of God forsaken his
suffering was pitifully acute. In one place he writes; "Saturday
23rd. After dinner, rode to Broad Hembury; where, at night, in
my chamber, a little before I went to bed, my soul was harrassed,
in a sad and very unusual manner, with doubts, fears and
unbelief, I was in spiritual darkness, even darkness that might
be felt. I do not know that I ever was so much given up to the
evil surmisings of my own heart, since I had been in orders.
I could hardly act faith at all. Had it not been for fear of
exposing myself and disturbing the family, I should have roared
for the disquietness of my heart. My heavenly Pilot disappeared.
I seemed to have quite lost my hold on the rock of ages, I sunk
in the deep mire; and the waves and storms went over me. Yet,
at last, in prayer, I was enabled, I know not how, to throw
myself, absolutely and at large, on God, at all events, and
for better for worse; yet without comfort, and almost without hope
I was, in short, almost in a state of despair. My horror and
distress was unutterable. And in this condition I remained,
until it pleased God to give me some sleep".

Yet, such was not his customary experience, and for the more
part his journal is the record of one who talked with God, and
knew in very rich measure the joys of communion. Whatever else
he was, Toplady was a Christian mystic - his lonely soul ever
thirsted for God, mounting towards Him on wings of prayer.

["Works", Vol. 1. Page 52.]
It might be suggested by some that Toplady's ecstasy or depression was of physical origin, that his spiritual exaltation was attendant on his physical well-being; but this he would have vigorously denied. And it cannot be gainsaid that he was not without authority for his denial. Remembering the deadly nature of the affliction that was so soon to end his days, one is the more impressed by the spiritual fervour that pulses throughout the pages of his dairy. It would seem as though Toplady sensed the possibility of such criticism and so went out of his way to refute it in advance. Concerning one Sunday's service he writes:

"I would observe, that I have through the blessing of God, been perfectly well through this whole day, both as to health, strength and spirits; and gone through my Church duties with the utmost ease, freedom and pleasure, yet I have experienced nothing of that spiritual comfort and joy, which I sometimes do. A demonstration this, that they are prodigiously wide of the mark, who think that what believers know to be the joys of the Holy Ghost, are, in fact, no other than certain pleasing sensations, arising from a brisk circulation of the blood, and from a lively flow of the animal spirits. In this light, the consolations of God are considered by those who never experienced them. But if what the regenerate declare to be the sweetness of divine fellowship, is, in reality no more than what the cold formalist imagines, the mere result &epsilon;ι&omicron;s &omicron;ματική&omicron; it would follow that every person when in full health and spirits, actually enjoys that inward complacency and sweetness. But this is very far from being the case. I myself am witness, that spiritual comforts are sometimes highest
when bodily health, strength, and spirits are at the lowest; and when bodily health, strength, and spirits are at the highest, spiritual comforts are sometimes at the lowest; nay, clear gone, and totally absent. Whence I conclude, that the sensible effusion of divine love in the soul, is superior to, independent of, and distinct from, bodily health, strength, and spirits. These may be, where that is not; and vice versa.

Two facts concerning the life of Toplady have already been referred to; (i.e. his unsettled state of mind concerning his incumbency, and his preaching of predestination.) and in the following episode it will be seen how these are united. He readily falls in with a suggestion of an exchange of livings twixt himself and Mr. Luce, but rejoices that it was none of his own seeking, and therefore the exchange must be for him the will of God. It would appear that his mother either doubted this, or was over anxious concerning it. At all events Toplady feels constrained to offer his mother a mild remonstrance, which he does in a letter dated Thursday 10th December 1767. After certain general observations on the subject of Providence he refers to the projected exchange. "There is one thing that pleases me much about Broad Hembury, and makes me hope for a blessing on the event, viz. that it was not, from the first to the last, of my own seeking; and every door, without any application of mine, has hitherto flown open, and all seems to point that way. As a good man somewhere says, 'A believer neve
yet carved for himself, but he cut his own fingers.' - The all-wise God, whose never failing providence ordereth every event, usually makes what we set our hearts upon unsatisfactory; and sweetens what we feared; bringing real evil out of seeming good; and real good out of seeming evil; to show us what short-sighted creatures we are, and to teach us to live by faith upon his blessed self. If I should really exchange my present living for Broad Hembury, it will, I believe, be soon after Christmas. In the meanwhile, add your prayers, that God himself would be pleased to choose my heritage and fix my lot; command his gracious blessing on the event; turn the balance, as seemeth good in his sight; and make it entirely his own doing, not mine. Do not let your tenderness for me get the better of your confidence in God; a fault, I fear, too common, even with believing parents."

As Toplady seems so sure that "whatever is, is best"; and that his lot is chosen for him, and therefore whatever happens to him, is for him, the will of God, so long as he himself in no way seeks to influence the issue, one wonders why he was so disturbed in mind about his presentation to Fen Ottery. Did he have doubts as to whether Mr. Cleveland in securing his one right of presentation, was being used of God to further the Divine purpose? So far as can be ascertained Toplady had done nothing whatever to secure his presentation,

and it would appear that he had been incumbent of Fen Ottery some little time before he was made aware of the circumstances environing his settlement. Surely then, in so far as Toplady had in no way influenced his appointment, or chosen the sphere of his labour he could have accepted Mr. Cleveland as the agent of the divine will, and Fen Ottery as his divinely appointed station. Apparently he did not, or he would have rejected Mr. Luce's overtures. To my mind Toplady is more dogmatic on the subject of predestination than he is consistent. This will be more clearly seen when we note certain other episodes in his life. As a simple illustration of this, one might draw attention to his reluctance to ride a horse. His friend, Mr. Northcote, once teasingly said, "Mr. Toplady believes in absolute predestination, and yet he is loath to ride on horseback for fear of breaking his neck." To which Toplady made answer, "True; and perhaps that very fear may be an appointed way of preserving my neck unbroken." But surely this is a peculiar conception of predestination; for if it was predestined that Toplady should not die of a broken neck, then all his fears were futile, whilst if such was to be his fate, then nothing that he could do would prevent it. Toplady's answer was smart enough, but its speciousness does not hide its inconsistency. As further illustration of this, one recalls his first reactions on learning that the rebuilding of the burnt

vicarage would be his successor's responsibility and not his own. This will be made clear by quotations from Toplady's own diary. On January 23rd 1768 Mr Luce and Toplady formally exchanged their livings before Mr. Geare and two other witnesses; and on Wednesday 6th of April Toplady received institution to the living of Broad Hembury, but it was not until Thursday 5th of May that he took up residence. During the interval the Vicarage at Harpford was completely destroyed and for a moment it would seem that Toplady's natural anxiety more than equaled his belief in absolute predestination. Whether this be so or not Toplady went in great haste to consult the Insurance Company and was greatly relieved to learn that no financial liability devolved upon him. Commenting in his diary on the incident he reveals a peculiar conception of Providence - although it must be admitted that it is quite in accord with his idea of election. Some are elected to happiness, others are not; and this election is not only to the life hereafter, but also to the present.

Climbing to the top of Fen Ottery Hill in company with a certain Mr. Harris of Wellington, he sees "a pillar of smoke rising into the air, at a little distance from Harpford Tower", but concluding that the villagers were

* "Works" Vol.1. page 37.

* page 58.

* "Works" Vol.1. page 65.
burning stroll (i.e. couch grass) he continued to walk for three hours. Arriving at Micktam he dalls upon Farmer Francke who informs him that it was Farmer Endicott's house that he had seen burning. Remembering the close proximity between the farmer's dwelling and his own, Toplady immediately posted to Harpford, but on entering the village he met a man who saluted him with 'Sir; your house is burnt down to the ground.' Hasting to the Vicarage a scene of desolation met his gaze and so he immediately set off for Exeter to enquire concerning liability for the damage. Whilst waiting at Exeter to call upon the Insurance Agent; Toplady pens a piece of self-revelation that even the most prejudiced must recognise as the confession of one who trusts in the Lord, and finds in the Lord Jehovah his everlasting strength. I quote in full his entry in his diary for Tuesday 8th March 1768 and in stressing this point I am only seeking to do justice to one, who in the very next entries does a great injustice to his own convictions. "When I saw the Vicarage irrecoverably lost, I returned to Fen Ottery, and took horse for Exeter, where I arrived between eight and nine in the evening, and put up at Mr. Lathbury's. Being fatigued with my hasty ride, I thought it best to apprise Mr. Gearing (agent for the London Insurance Office) by a note, of what had happened; who in his answer, desired to see me next morning. What I chiefly enter down this account in my diary for, is this; namely, as a memento of God's great goodness to me, both in a way of providence and grace. Though I was not certain whether the expense (I mean all above the Insurance) of rebuilding the Vicarage-
house, with its appendages, might not eventually fall on me
(notwithstanding my resignation of the living last January 23rd),
by Mr. Luce's probably refusing, in consequence of this misfortune
to complete our projected exchange; yet neither the report, nor
the sight of this alarming visitation, made me so much as change
countenance, or feel the least dejection. This could not
proceed from nature; for, my nerves are naturally so weak, that,
in general, the least discomposing accident oversets me quite,
for a time. It was therefore owing to the supporting goodness
of God, who made me experience the truth of that promise, "Thy
shoes shall be iron and brass; and as is thy day, so shall thy
strength be". Surely, we can both do and endure, all things
through Christ enabling us. Had any one told me beforehand, 'You
will see the vicarage all in flames, without the least emotion
of mind,' I should have thought it impossible. But the strength
of God was made perfect in my weakness; and therefore it was that
my heart stood fast, believing in the Lord. O may thy grace be
ever sufficient for me;

Spent the evening not only in a comfortable, but even in
a rejoicing frame of mind; and never rested better afterwards.
Thou Lord, canst make the feeble as David. Thus, the 8th of
March was a day to be particularly noted, not in my book only,
but in my latest remembrance; on account of that wonderful
support with which I was favoured; which not only made my feet
as hind's feet, and caused me to walk on the high places of Jacob
but which even bore me up, as on eagle's wings, above the reach
of grief, fear, and weakness; and, as it were, laid me at rest
on the bosom of Christ, and within the arms of God." *

The following morning Toplady consulted Mr. Gearing and learnt that having changed livings with Mr. Luce before the fire, that any expense that rebuilding might involve must be borne by that gentleman. It is unfortunate that the quiet confidence of the night before had not sustained Toplady for this revelation; for his next entry in his diary is much out of harmony with the previous one; and is a very remarkable commentary on his conception of "predestination" - and that is the point I am here seeking to illustrate. His entry for Wednesday 9th and that of the following day read as follows:

"Continued at Exeter until after dinner. Called on Mr. Gearing and Mr. Geare. Found, upon enquiry, that the fire at Harpford happening after the living was vacated by my resignation of it, the exchange will certainly stand good, and the melancholy event there, cannot possibly affect me. Who would not trust in the Lord, and wait until a cloudy dispensation is cleared up? Through grace, I was enabled to do this; and the result of things has proved that it would not only have been wicked, but foolish to have done otherwise. O that I might always be as well enabled to adopt and realize that divine apothegm, 'He that believeth shall not make haste.' Thursday 10th. Drinking tea, this afternoon, at Farmer Carter's, I had an opportunity of seeing more leisurely, the devastation at Harpford. The whole vicarage is one large mass of ruins. What a providential mercy was it, that I resigned the living before this misfortune

happened; O God how wise and gracious, art thou, in all thy ways!

It would be idle to deny that this is a remarkable conception of Providence in a Christian thinker; and no good will be attained by seeking to put on these entries any other construction than the one they are, so obviously, intended to bear. If one was seeking to paint Toplady as a hero, without faults - a failing to which biographers and writers of obituaries seem so prone - one would either omit all reference to these entries or seek to explain them away. Thomas Wright quotes from an unpublished life of Toplady by the Revd. Charlew Hole, who says Toplady "must have been off a true balance of thought when he used these words, which implied that the wisdom and goodness of God was manifested in laying the affliction not on him but on Mr. Luce. "We have", however, adds Mr. Hole, "not a published statement deliberately maintained, but the record of a meditation penned in solitude and intended only for his own eye; we must consider it a false note, fit to be cited for our admonition in any unusual experience, but not to be fastened on as a characteristic of the man without the grossest injustice."

This is a most charitable observation, and it is well to be charitable, for none of us could bear the tearing away of the veil that hides our secret thoughts, but when one is seeking to evaluate another's theology, notice must be taken of all revelations of his mind and heart. The fact that the


† Quoted from Thomas Wright's Life of Augustus Toplady. page. 62.
diary was "penned in solitude and intended only for his own eye" does not affect the issue. Indeed if it is the idle word that is brought into judgement, seeing that it is the more revealing because it is unpremeditated, then this entry must be regarded as a particular illustration of Toplady's own reaction to adversity. For the only interpretation that the writing can bear, is that God's wisdom was manifested in afflicting Mr. Luce instead of Toplady. Did Mr. Luce share Toplady's delight that the fire had ravaged the vicarage after the deed of exchange had been completed rather than before it? It is very probable that there was much in Toplady's sermon preached the following Sunday from Romans 8, 28 to which he could not give unqualified approval.

It might be held, and maybe Toplady if pressed on the point, would have held, that the doctrine of election is here much to the fore; and that in the inscrutable working of the divine will, the disaster at Harpford was meant to discipline Mr. Luce rather than himself. However, this is a subject to which return must be made when Toplady's 'theology' as a whole is under review.
Chapter 3.

MINISTRY AT BROAD HEMBURY

(1768 - 1776)
MINISTRY AT BROAD HEMBURY. (1768 - 1770.)

On April 17th 1768 Toplady preached his first sermon at Broad Hembury and on Thursday 5th of May he entered upon residence in his new parish. Here he faithfully discharged his duties as a parish minister, and for nearly eight years he gave to a peasant congregation his wealth of mind and heart. Whilst he preached, wrote hymns, and indulged in controversy, he yet found time for the pastoral needs of his flock. Occasional references are found in his diary to "Grange" and "Priory" - the homes of two of the county families - but we have also references to his visits to the aged, infirm, sick and dying. In one place he stresses the fact that in sick visiting he found extempore prayer more valuable than the printed form, in that he could speak more directly to the supplicant's needs. It is fitting that I emphasise this point of pastoral care, for when Toplady was approached concerning the ministry of the "Lock" in succession to Martin Madan, who was then thought to be dying, he questioned whether the terms upon which he could accept the appointment would be acceptable to the governors. He said "I must have my week-days to myself, else I must cease to print". Apparently the

* "If the Lord gives me ability, I think to lay aside forms of prayer, in my future attendance upon the sick. I generally find, that prayer, on these occasions, offered up as God gives utterance, is more blessed to the souls that I attend upon, as well as to my own."

"Works" Vol.1. page 72.
claims of controversy had become importunate. When one remembers the frail physique of Toplady his output of writings becomes the more astonishing. There can be little doubt that his constant application to study helped to shorten his days. His friend John C. Ryland cautioned him against the habit of impairing his strength by toiling at night. In one of his letters to him he says, "The morning with the dew, the lark, and the sunshine, is the time for study. You are killing yourself, my friend." This fact will be noted again when Toplady's controversial writings are examined. At the present it is enough to state that during the next eight years, indeed, for the ten that remained to him, Toplady never ceased to write, preach, and pray, so that the good news of free and full salvation might "reach the hidden depths of many a heart."

Less than a year after his induction Toplady's first controversial work appeared. "The Church of England Vindicated from the Charge of Arminianism", to be followed in the same year by his translation of "Zanchius", a work which - as we shall see later - gave rise to the "pamphlet-war". Wesley abridged this, and with a sublime disregard for the laws of copyright sent it on its travels bearing the initials A...T... Toplady rightly incensed replied by publishing two works. "A letter to the Revd. Mr. John Wesley" (March 26th 1776) and "More Work for Mr. John Wesley" (November 28th 1771) Four years later Toplady's greatest work, (greatest in every sense of the word) left the press. It is indeed a monumental work. It consists of over 600 closely printed pages, written in noble prose, and bearing all the marks of patient
and competent scholarship. The introduction contains many jibes at Wesley and the early Methodists, as do certain other parts of the treatise; but these blemishes apart, it must be conceded, even by those who do not accept Toplady's position, that this is a worthy contribution to historical research. Like his earlier book, "The Church of England Vindicated from the Charge of Arminianism", it is not a polemic in favour of Calvinism so much as a demonstration that the Articles of the Anglican Church were Calvinistic. His doughty defence of Calvinism is found in such writings as "A Caveat against Unsound Doctrines" (a sermon preached in the Parish Church of St. Anne, Blackfriars, April 29th 1770; and later published at the price of ninepence.) "Freewill and Merit fairly examined" (another sermon preached at St Ann's, and later published,) and in "Free Thoughts on the Projected application to Parliament for the Abolition of Ecclesiastical Subscriptions" together with his "Clerical Subscription no Grievance". These last mentioned were occasioned by the action of certain Clergymen whom Toplady named the "Feathery Divines", thereby satirising the fact that they had met at the Feathers Tavern in the Strand, and called themselves the "Feathers Tavern Association."

They met on July 17th 1771 to draft a petition to Parliament desiring certain changes in the doctrines and forms of worship of the Anglican Church. They were headed by the Revd. Theophilus Lindsey and Archdeacon Blackburne, and it was upon the latter's shoulders the task of framing the petition devolved. Early in the year Blackburne had published "Proposals for an Application to Parliament for Relief in the Matter of Subscription to the
Liturgy and the XXXII Articles; which was circulated amongst those interested in order to ventilate the matter and to secure signatures before Parliament assembled. Toplady fell upon this production and subjected it to a most sarcastic review and commentary. Questioning, at the outset, the legality of the assembly and suggesting that as the King's approval had not been sought and obtained, the whole proceedings were ultra vires; he goes on to pour upon the whole business a mixture of honest wrath and ironical badinage. After pointing out that no pressure had been brought upon the petitioners to enter the Church of England, he advises them either to accept the doctrines and forms of worship as by law established, or else leave the Establishment and avail themselves of the Act of Toleration. He then examines their petition and suggests the following emendations. "A paragraph or two, to the following purport, would serve to adorn your intended petition. And whereas there is a certain obsolete work, made up of divers treatises, collected into a thick volume, which volume was, by the ignorance and superstition of our block-headed forefathers, looked upon as sacred, and as written under the influence of Divine Inspiration; We, your petitioners, being happily emancipated from the shackles of prejudice, and having dilated into true liberality of sentiment, do give it as our opinion, that the obtruding of the said book upon the free-born minds of men, is a most grievous hardship and unsufferable imposition. For we can easily prove, that the book aforesaid is stuffed with a detail of many improbable not to say impossible, facts; and moreover fraught throughout, with a great number of doctrines, equally repugnant to reason, and dangerous to morality; such as, three are one, and one is three,
(which we can mathematically demonstrate to be impossible); not to mention such wicked doctrines of election, justification, atonement, imputed righteousness, original sin, efficacious grace, regeneration, the indwelling of the Spirit, final perseverance, &c &c. All of which are irrational in themselves, and of very licentious tendency; not to add, that they are quite obsolete and worn out with age; and, therefore, it is high time that both they, and the book which inculcates them, were dead, buried, and forgot.

Your petitioners do also beseech the wisdom of this nation, in parliament united, to relieve us reverend divines from another very irksome grievance, which renders our useful lives not a little miserable. We mean the superstitious observance of what is commonly called the Lord's day. On this day, those of us who subsist by the Church, and who cannot afford to keep curates, are forced to undergo the intolerable drudgery of reading public prayers, and of preaching eight, ten, and sometimes fifteen minutes; both which burthens are very oppressive and unreasonable; seeing that the Sabbath was intended for a day not of labour, but of rest; which rest cannot, in equitable construction, be deemed general, unless it extend to clergy as well as laity.

And whereas there is a vexatious and unreasonable canon, whereby we are enjoined not to appear in public without cassocks, nor to wear any light coloured stockings; we, your aggrieved petitioners, not being content with breaking the said canon, do pray and desire that it may be totally and finally repealed; and that a law may pass, entitling us to dress like other men. Not as if we thought that our profession has any reason to be ashamed of us
but we being ashamed of our profession, do testify our earnest wish of being permitted to wear laced hats, ruffled shirts, and all other ornaments pertaining to men of this world;"

There is much more in similar vein, but sufficient has been quoted to show the mental attitude of Toplady to this proposed Petition. Previously he had asserted, "It is not subscription itself which so much constitutes the grievance complained of; but the stubborn orthodoxy of the things subscribed. Castrate the liturgy, articles and homilies, of their Calvinism and Trinitarianism, and I will answer for it, subscription will no longer be considered as "a yoke of bondage, which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear." Toplady is convinced that the burden of the prayer of the petitioners is that they may not only have liberty in interpreting doctrine, but license to depart from orthodoxy. Fittingly enough then, he attacks the Petition even more vigorously in his sermon "Clerical Subscription no Grievance", which he preached at Columpton on May 12th 1772, on the occasion of the annual visitation of the Clergy of the Archdeaconry of Exeter. In this sermon he steadfastly defends the interpretation of doctrines as laid down by Geneva. Arminianism, Arianism, Antinomianism, and Socinianism are each in their turn exposed, ridiculed and cast out. His sermon ends with an impassioned appeal to the Clergy faithfully to discharge their stewardship. Even the coldness of the printed page cannot hide the warmth and fervour of his importunate entreaty. He concludes; "Be it our care, at once to avenge and heal the wounds of our sacred mother the church, by

* "Works" Vol. 2. pages 458-9
† "Works" Vol. 2. page 428.
shining in her defence; by holding forth and holding up the word without of life purely, without mixture; meekly/malevolence, yet intrepidly, without fear or shame; honestly, without self-seeking; fully, without reserve, without partiality and without hypocrisy; practically, by giving all diligence to order every part of our own moral demeanor, as becometh the gospel of Christ; giving no just cause of offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed; but in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left. That when the destined season arrives, at which we must give account of our stewardship to the great shepherd and bishop of souls, we may be found of him in peace; watching, praying, labouring, and ascend from our Master's work, to our Master's joy; as Cincinnatus was found busy at his plough, when called to the dictatorship of Rome." 

The Feathers Tavern Petition was presented to Parliament in due time (6th February 1772) but was rejected by 217 votes to 71; and on again being presented it was again rejected. But it might be noted that very few of the petitioners were so deeply stirred in conscience as to make demission of their lucrative charges. True; the Revd. Theophilus Lindsey did, and later founded a Unitarian cause in a building called Essex-house, in the Strand. Toplady who visited it and heard Mr. Lindsey preach, described it as "a long narrow room, (which if filled, would hold about two hundred people) where, auctions (particularly for books)

* "Works" Vol.3. pages 159-160.
The whole service impressed Toplady very badly and in a letter to Mr. H. written the following day, he had much caustic comment to make. He writes; "I took care to be there, before any of the service began, in order to hear, what the gentleman calls, the reformed liturgy; but what may more truly be termed, the liturgy deformed. It is a wretched skeleton of the old Comman Prayer, shorn and castrated of all its evangelical excellencies." His opinion of the sermon was no higher than that of the service, or even of the preacher himself. "He preached, or rather, read, a poor, dry, ungraceful harangue on Matthew 25; 14-5. So wretchedly was he tied and bound by the chain of his notes, that, if by accident, he happened to take his eye from his papers (and it happened several times) he was sure to blunder; and endeavoured in an exceedingly confused and embarrassed manner to gather up the broken threads as well as he could." Of the man he says: "He seems to be a man of much personal modesty and diffidence; and I verily believe, acts upon principle. But he has no popular talents; no pathos, no dignity, no imagination, no elegance, no elocution. He must, unavoidably, soon sink into obscurity, when the novelty of his secession begins to subside, and when his Arian friends are weary of puffing him off in the newspapers." It must be said to Toplady's credit, that although the preacher's views and his own were so much at variance, that he did not presume to sit in judgment upon the man's sincerity. "God forbid" says he, "that I should
judge and condemn him. To his own master he must stand or fall." One can only wish that the same charity had characterised more of Toplady's attitude towards those who disagreed with him; for this, as we shall see later, was not Toplady's general temper in controversy.

Although Toplady's London Ministry did not begin until he took duty at Orange Street, he was a very frequent visitor to the metropolis. Several of his letters bear a London address, and many of his friendships were formed from there. He seems to have been on terms of easy familiarity with many of the prominent people of the day. When one thinks of Toplady's circle, the names of Lady Huntingdon, Mrs. Macaulay, Dr. Johnson, Dr. Goldsmith and Mr. Hollis, spring at once to mind. By saying this no disparagement is implied to the equally illustrious circle of fellow-divines; such as Hitchin, Ryland, Serle, Romaine and Wilson. Indeed, with the possible exception of the ladies just named, Toplady was much more intimate with his fellow ministers than with Johnson or Oliver Goldsmith, both of whom he met at a dinner given by Messrs Edward and Charles Dilly to a distinguished gathering of men of letters.

If Toplady had not a close association with Johnson, he, nevertheless, held him in high esteem whilst at the same time dissenting from him in many of his views. In a letter from Broad Hembury dated Feb. 9th 1774, Toplady writes thus of Johnson: "I have some personal knowledge of him, and, however I dissent from

†Orange Street Church was a French Calvinist Reformed Church see page-
various of his principles, nor can avoid smiling at some of his
not unpleasing oddities; he still passes with me, for one of the
ablest and honestest men who now adorn the republic of letters." *
If Toplady had not a particularly close association with Johnson,
he was on terms of affectionate intimacy with another prominent
litterateur - Catherine Macaulay. Toplady shared the common
adulation of "this gair historian"; but not Dr. Johnson. He seems
to have had sufficient common sense to appraise Mrs. Macaulay's
merits as an historian, rather than be led away by the personal
beauty of the writer. Thomas Wright has expressed the opinion;
"Her readers thought they were admiring a book, whereas they were
in reality admiring the ivory throat, the delicately-chiselled
arm, and the red coral lips of a beautiful woman in her bloom." †
Not so Johnson. And it is not, therefore, surprising to learn
that Mrs. Macaulay was no devotee of Boswell's hero. On the
occasions that they met, they almost invariably crossed swords,
for politically - if in no other way - they were diametrically
opposed. From Toplady's letter to Mr. L.C----- dated 13th Feb.1775,
we learn his attitude to both these distinguished writers. He
writes; "The mention of my valuable friend, Mrs. Macaulay, reminds
me of the aforesaid Dr. Johnson; whose high principles both
political and ecclesiastical are very different from those of the
fair historian. A few years ago, Mrs. M. and the doctor (who never
had a very cordial esteem for each other) met at the house of a
third party who had invited them to spend the day. Before dinner

† Life of A.T.: Toplady. page 132.
the conversation turned on the nature of civil government.

Johnson, as usual, declared, in very strong terms, for monarchy, Mrs. M. for a republic. Some sparring passed on both sides; and Johnson happening to cite some passage of Scripture, which he thought spoke in favour of his own system; Mrs. M. undertook him on the Scriptural score, and, (as I was told, for I was not present) was rather more potent and pertinent, in her quotations, than he, Johnson, who does not easily digest contradiction, grew rather sour, and he well knows, that he acquits himself better in a political, an historic, or a philosophic war, than in a holy one. The announcement of dinner occasioned a truce to debate. But the doctor with more ill manners than I ever heard authentically placed to his account, except in this instance, took occasion, when the company were all seated at the table, to renew hostilities with his amiable antagonist.

Mrs. M.'s footman was standing, according to custom, at the back of his lady's chair; when Johnson addressed him thus; 'Henry, what makes you stand? Sit down, sit down. Take your place at the table with the rest of us. We are all republicans, Henry. There's no distinction here. The rights of human nature are equal. Your mistress will not be angry, at your asserting your privilege of peerage. We are all on a level. Do take your chair and sit down.' This was very indelicate and rude. 'Or was it arguing fairly; for a master or mistress (let the natural rights of mankind be, originally, ever so equal) has not only a just claim to superiority, but a title to the services of every person who, by voluntary stipulation, engages to render those services
for a consideration agreed upon. Mrs. Macaulay, it seems, coloured a little, and drew up her head, but made no answer. If she had been there, I should not have let the doctor off so easily, for this savage piece of spurious wit. It is true, his great parts are entitled to proper respect; but, as Mrs. Macaulay was observing to me, when she was last in Devonshire, with reference to this very Doctor Johnson, "A learned man is not so miraculous a phenomenon in this kingdom, that he should expect to be honoured with divine worship." Though it must be owned, there are few Johnsons, in any kingdom, or in any age. It is, however, this great man's foible, to look for more homage and attention, than everybody will give him."

In another place Toplady writes of having visited Mrs. Macaulay whilst in Bath and of finding her "very weak and languid" for earlier, on hearing that she was seen much in the company of her doctor, the notorious James Graham, he had written expressing the hope that she would not only discourage the doctor's attentions but give him the honour of escorting her to Devonshire. It is not then irrelevant to ask whether Toplady was in love with Mrs. Macaulay. He may have been, probably was. But the evidence is not easy to evaluate. His letters are couched in endearing terms; but then, so were many others that came to Mrs. Macaulay. If one was asked whether Dr. Wilson was in love with her, the answer would be an unhesitating.


Thomas Wilson son of the Bishop of Sodor and Man was born at Bishop's Court 1705 and died at Bath in 1784. He was a vain ambitious man, who whilst being Vicar of St Margaret's Church, Westminster was also Prebendary of Westminster Abbey and Rector of St. Stephen's Church Walbrook.
yes! indeed, it was only at the age when most men enter their dotage, that Dr. Wilson became possessed of wisdom. His adulation of his goddess is at once laughable and pathetic.

It is sometimes said that "love is blind", but if it is, then Toplady was not in love with Mrs. Macaulay. He was by no means blind to her faults, nor yet to his own physical weakness. Those who are in love know that no phrase deemed possessed of proverbial wisdom is more false than the one just quoted. Infatuation may be blind (and Dr. Wilson might well be used as illustration of the truth of this) but nothing is so open-eyed as love. Whilst it is true that it "endureth all things" it also screeneth nothing from itself. Toplady in one of his brief reveries writes of a man in love, and from that, one concludes that he was not a stranger to the "tender passion"; but he, doubtless, realised that his sickness was unto death, even if long delayed, and so renounced the joy of the married state for himself, that he might not be the cause of grief in others. That he enjoyed the companionship of Mrs. Macaulay is obvious from his letters to her and to others concerning her. From his writings one concludes that he was a frequent and welcome visitor to her home both in London and in Bath; and he availed himself of the opportunity of seeing much of her when she came to spend a four months' holiday at the home of Mr. & Mrs. Northcote, of Honiton; a village about five miles from Broad Hembury. Concerning that visit he wrote to Mr. Baker, saying; Mrs. Macaulay has lately left us, in a more vigorous state of
Notwithstanding the many local and social charms of Freshford, you have really sustained a loss, by not being here during her long residence in this neighbourhood."

Toplady admired Mrs. Macaulay; and whilst not agreeing with all her statements, admired her work. Was he deluded in this? Johnson, as we have seen, did not join in the general diapason — but then jealousy is not unknown even amongst the great. Thomas Wright, whom I have already quoted, gives scant praise; indeed; he gives no praise at all; for when he comments on Toplady’s anxiety concerning Mrs. Macaulay’s health, and his suggestion that she should give less time to her researches, he observes with brutal candour, "nor could better advice possibly have been given, seeing that the world would have lost absolutely nothing had she never written a single line." This, however, was not Toplady’s purpose in writing, nor was it his opinion. Nor was it the opinion of others who were equally qualified to judge. For Wright is definitely prejudiced when he implies that Mrs. Macaulay’s home was the rendezvous of the "essenced jessamy and corseted macaroni" only. Later judgement suggests that the writings were of more consequence than the writer. W.E.M. Lecky — who can scarcely be accused of admiring the "ivory throat or delicately

+ Life of A.M. Toplady. pages 14-5.
chiselled arm" - characterised Mrs. Macaulay as "the ablest writer of the new radical school". It is unfortunate that success as a writer added fuel to the fire of Mrs. Macaulay's vanity and insatiable hunger for flattery. Realising that her youth and beauty were swiftly passing, she, instead of accepting the inevitable, and growing old gracefully; betook herself to Paris, from whence she returned so enamelled, rouged, and generally bedizened, as to be almost unrecognisable. Toplady was affronted; and when later he heard of the absurdities which had marked the forty-fourth birthday of the "fair historian", he resolved, that on their next meeting, he would unburden his heart. In a letter to Dr. Baker written from Knightsbridge, August 12th 1777, he writes; "The accounts of the extravagant and ridiculous manner, in which, as you observe, my friend Mrs. M.'s birthday was celebrated at Bath, gave me extreme disgust; and have contributed to reduce my opinion of her magnanimity and good sense. Such contemptible vanity, and such childish affectation of mock majesty, would have disgraced a much inferior understanding; and have sunk even the meanest character lower, by many degrees. If I live to see her again, I will rally her handsomely." Whether Toplady was enabled to carry out his intention is not known. Very probably he never saw Mrs. Macaulay again, and I have not been able to trace any further communication with her. If any letter to her was written it has not been preserved. A year after writing to Dr. Baker, his earthly labours were ended, and his ardent spirit entered into its rest. In this he was saved a further

disappointment; for four months after his death, "that celebrated lady", "the British Brutus" married a youth of twenty one years. Immediately the hosannas were stilled; and in the place of odes "in honour of an accomplished lady" lampoons of the most suggestive character sped from the press. Whilst from the lips of the malicious, rumours of damaging intrigues passed quickly and with relish. The "Modern Minerva" was dethroned. Dr. Wilson, who had literally worshiped at her feet, was appalled; hastening in his disillusionment to his London Church he tore down her statue, cast the accursed thing from the hallowed place. One cannot but wonder why he did not shatter it to bits. Instead he sent it to his "Bank House", Lancashire, - now Warrington Town Hall. Here I found it occupying a prominent place, and yet it seemed to be singularly unnoticed.

Early in the year 1770 Toplady learned that his mother's health gave rise to anxiety and so in February he set off for London. He had a double purpose in view - to see his mother and render what help he could, and also to respond to invitations to take services in the principal Evangelical Churches. It was during this visit that he twice preached his sermon "A Caveat against unsound Doctrines". First from the pulpit of St. Matthew's Church, Bethnal Green, and secondly, by request, at St.Ann's Blackfriars. It was on the return journey, whilst resting at the home of his friend Dr. Baker, that "it pleased God to remove from him the desire of his eyes"; and so he immediately returned to London to take earthly farewell of his mother. Her death saddened him greatly; and he found difficulty in re-visiting London; truly,
he was thankful that his mother had never visited Broad Fenbury. In his letter to Dr. Baker written from Broad Fenbury on February 4th 1773 (almost three years after his mother's death) he writes; "I am much obliged to you, for your kind invitation, on my way to London, if I should have occasion to go thither. The truth is, I ought to have seen the capital, long ago. But I really dread to do so. The sight of places, and the conversation of persons, where and with whom I have enjoyed so many happy hours in the company of my late honoured parent, will naturally recall her so strongly to my remembrance, that, I fear, my nerves will hardly bear it. I am thankful that she never accepted any of my invitations into Devonshire; as it would, now, have only tended to revive those ideas, which I shall be happier never to recollect. The higher a departed satisfaction has been, the more painful (supposing the departure to be final) is its remembrance. Philosophy may censure these feelings, as a weakness; but they are such a weakness, as I cannot help. Resignation is one thing, insensibility is another."

It is probable that the poignancy of his bereavement inspired the pen and tongue of Tooley when he preached on the following Christmas Day his sublime sermons "Jesus seen of none" and "God's Kindfulness of Men". These sermons are majestic in their conception and fervent in their language. Two hundred years after their delivery they still make good reading, and whilst certain of the sentiments expressed would find no place in the thought of the present day congregation, they, nevertheless fire the imagination and solace the spirit.

Shortly after writing the letter to Dr. Baker to which
reference has just been made, Toplady must have steeled his soul to visit London once again; for he returns therefrom towards the end of May 1773 to prepare for visitors. The first of whom was Ambrose Serle, under-secretary to William Legge, 2nd Earl of Dartmouth, who was at that time Secretary of State for the Colonies. Toplady entertained towards Serle a particularly deep affection; an affection, it would appear, that was returned in full measure. Of the seventy-eight letters that are to be found in Toplady's works, ten of them are addressed to Serle, and all breathe an atmosphere of sincere admiration. They show Toplady and Serle as kindred spirits, whose joy is in the Lord. Nor can any one doubt that in this friendship each counted the other better than himself. Toplady had much to value in Serle, for he reveals himself as an able, loveable and devoted man. His choice of a motto is an eloquent commentary upon his Christian faith. "Duo duce, omnia bona"; of such a motto Toplady might well say it is "the language of reason, not less than faith". "It is a text on which Eternity itself will be an everlasting comment." Seeing, as we have, that Toplady's views were very marked and clear cut, it will occasion no surprise to learn that Serle's position is just as definite as Toplady's; although Serle does not seem to have been so bitter a controversialist as Toplady. It does not require much imagination to recast the nature of the conversation that would engage the two friends closetted in Toplady's

study at Broad Hembury, and from an entry we learn that
Toplady's heart rejoiced at the aphorism with which Serle
enunciated his faith: "Everything is within the reach of
free grace, but nothing within the reach of free-will."

This visit of Serle's was destined to be his last, for
early in 1774 he went to America, from whence he did not
return until after Toplady's death. Though no further visits
were possible the two friends did not cease to correspond,
for a few months after Serle's return from Broad Hembury
he sent to Toplady the manuscript of his book "The Origin
of the Human Soul". (A work later published in a series of
some of the first numbers of the Theological Miscellany.)
with the request that Toplady should give his opinion and offer
any suggestions that he considered pertinent. Toplady was
glad to comply; and on the 1st of October 1773 replied
offering his apologies for delay in writing and requested that
he may be allowed further to retain Serle's manuscript as he
was "very desirous of giving it several perusals more." In
this letter, Toplady, whilst not entirely rejecting Serle's
position, does not accept it. He, to quote his own words,
suspends his judgement. Earlier in the letter he had written:
"I must own, that, though I am not proselyted, I am
considerably staggered, by the arguments that you bring." *

Apparently, Toplady felt that the subject was not one on which he was prepared to dogmatise; and so went on to say, "After all, it may perhaps be best for us, as humble Christians, not to launch too far into the immense ocean of too curious speculation. God's word is the believer's chart. God's Spirit is the believer's pilot. Where the former ceases to describe our path, and the latter to shape our course, it will most conduce to the simplicity and joy of faith, to limit our enquiries, and to leave with God the secret things which belong to him."

* Six more letters passed between Toplady and Serle all of which speak the language of tender affection. In one of them Toplady writes; "The person does not breathe whom I love and respect more than you." Such a friendship reminds one of that of David and Jonathan; their souls were knit together. Toplady's one disappointment with Serle was his unwillingness to accept ordination. "The subject of ordination" he writes, "revives my wish, that you would submit to the imposition of hands. The Church would then (a very uncommon thing in this age) be a gainer at the expense of the state."
Shortly after Serle left Broad Hembury Toplady was delighted to entertain Mr. & Mrs. Romaine. Romaine was, by this time, a figure of considerable eminence in the Church. His earlier career had been both varied and turbulent, but by the time he visited Toplady he was happily settled as Rector of St. Andrews by the Wardrobe and St. Anne's Blackfriars. A strong Calvinist, he was yet possessed of a more gracious manner in defending his position than Toplady. He was an eloquent preacher, a competent scholar, and a doughty controversialist; but not what we today would call an "approachable man". He was brusque in conversation; but whilst inclined towards rudeness when in a disturbed mood, he was quick to confess his faults, express his regrets, and make what amends he could.

On his way to Broad Hembury he had encountered at Tiverton, Thomas Olivers, who had engaged him in argument concerning the universality of grace, - a fact which greatly annoyed Toplady when he heard of it. Toplady did not relish the idea that an "illiterate and self-sufficient Arminian" should seek to "dispute with a man of Mr. Romaine's eminence". In a later chapter this idiosyncrasy of Toplady will be noted in greater detail, but I cannot forbear to say that this is a trait in Toplady's character that even his staunchest admirers must regret. Both Romaine and Olivers were preachers of the Gospel; and even if Romaine did enjoy "ecclesiastical exaltation", that fact should have made him all the more ready to receive as a "brother in the Lord" one who was not so distinguished. A truly great man is approachable by all. Toplady forgot that the mark of aristocracy in the Kingdom of God is a girded towel. The call to
service in this Kingdom comes to those who are "born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God."† Despite the fact that Toplady indulged in much self-deprecating rhetoric, one fears that he was not a little vain. Particularly is this true in the realm of scholarship. He forgot that academic attainment in itself is no substitute for a warmed heart. Only a fool would seek to belittle the value of a cultured Ministry, but culture alone is not enough. Wesley clearly recognised this; and demanded of his preachers "Gifts" as well as "Grace". Moreover his advice to his helpers can scarcely be bettered. Truly Toplady might have been saved from his besetting sin had he been willing to learn from his adversary. Of all who desired office as a lay preacher Wesley asked: "Do they know in whom they have believed? Have they the love of God in their hearts? Do they desire and seek nothing but God? Have they Gifts (as well as Grace) for the work? Have they success? Do they not only so speak as generally either to convince or affect the hearts, but have any received remission of sins by their preaching, a clear and lasting sense of the love of God? As long as these three marks undeniably occur in any, we allow him to be called of God to preach. These receive as sufficient reasonable evidence that he is moved thereto by the Holy Ghost."‡ No doubt Toplady - adamant as he was to Wesley

† St. John's Gospel Ch. 1. v.13.

‡ Toplady later met Olivers and afterwards was just enough to acknowledge that his adversary was not without ability, but whilst he often spoke of him without rancour, in writing his asperity was in no degree abated.

† ‡ "A New History of Methodism" Vol.1. page 295.
and all his works - could and would have said a glad "amen" to this test of ministerial fitness; and as he remembered the spiritual and intellectual poverty of many of his fellow clergymen might have whispered wistfully to himself, o si sic omnes.*

Before taking leave of Toplady Mr. Romaine preached for him at Broad Hembury. Unfortunately no reference can be found as to the service or the sermon. But one is quite safe in assuming that he preached a "Free Grace" Sermon; and that he further endeared himself to Toplady in the doing so.

Less than two years at Broad Hembury now remained for Toplady; but during those two years certain friends were called to their reward. On January 11th 1774 Edward Hitchin, Pastor of White Row Church, died at the comparatively early age of 48. Toplady greatly admired Hitchin, and regarded the fortitude with which Hitchin endured his long illness as evidence of God's indwelling. Of this endurance he says, "His steady faith, and his calm and unruffled departure amid circumstances of such bodily pain can only be attributed to that everlasting love, and to that atoning blood, which made him more than conqueror."

* A further illustration of Wesley's sanity and far-seeingness is to be found in the advice he gave to Probationer-Ministers, generally called "The Twelve Rules of a Helper"; which "Rules" were read every year at the May Synods of the Wesleyan Church. He expressed the opinion that his preachers were more competent than many of those leaving the Universities.

See "A New History of Methodism" Vol.1. Ch.VI (particularly pages 294 to 296)
A few days later Toplady was further bereaved by the passing of his friend Thomas Hollis, a philanthropist, whose "great abilities and vast fortune were entirely devoted to acts of private and public good."

This month must have been particularly trying to Toplady, in addition to these and other losses, he was in particularly poor health; and this fact makes his next accomplishment an even greater achievement. It shows how his tempestuous spirit enabled him to triumph over his physical weakness; for it was during this month that he received from his friend Martin Madan, Wesley's "Thoughts upon Necessity". This pamphlet angered him greatly, and despite his physical frailty to which I have referred, he leapt to the task of refuting Wesley's position. This he did in dissertation "The Scheme of Christian and Philosophical Necessity Asserted", which he completed in a fortnight. Much of the pamphlet is sheer abuse - but the part devoted to his polemic is a clear statement of the Necessitarian's position. The argument is not new, nor is it as conclusive as Toplady seems to think. More detailed analysis will be attempted when his "Theology" is under review.

By this time Toplady's health gave rise to serious anxiety, and he, feeling that the continual dampness of the air of Broad Hembury was prejudicial to recovery, decided to live either in London or Bath. He therefore arranged to leave his parish in the care of a curate of whose soundness of doctrine he had been abundantly assured. It was, however, towards
London and not Bath that his steps turned; and one feels that he was not constrained to leave Broad Hembury on grounds of health alone, for London - even in those days - was not exactly a health resort. Toplady longed to reach the crowd, and London offered him a sphere of service that attracted him greatly. Earlier in his ministry Whitefield had urged Toplady to seek broader pastures, to which Toplady had replied, "The same Providence which bids others roll at large, seems to have confined me to a particular orbit". But now Toplady feels that that same Providence is beckoning him to leave the sequestered vale for the metropolis. He had felt like an imprisoned bird, and as he says in his letter to his friend Dr. Baker, he wished to "be ever on the wing".*

How much of this was "divine discontent" and how much the orator's natural desire to reach a responsive and appreciative crowd, no one can say; but Toplady, like very many more, had no difficulty in seeing in his own wishes the divine leading.

After acquainting his bishop with the final arrangements for maintaining the spiritual oversight of his parish he set off for London, travelling via Plymouth and Bath. It was at Plymouth that the rumour of Wesley's death reached him, and Toplady immediately got in touch with his publishers so that he might purge his work - The Scheme of Christian and Philosophical Necessity asserted - of all personal reference to Wesley. Rumour, however, as so often, proved itself a

a lying jade, and Wesley who had been seriously ill was raised up again. Although seventy-two years of age God had still work for him to do; and for another sixteen years he was to be "led o'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent" "spreading Christian Holiness throughout the land". Apparently when Toplady heard that the news of Wesley's death was premature he allowed the publication to go forward; with the result that his argument is marred and scarred by scurrilities that defy comment.

On leaving Plymouth Toplady journeyed to Bath where he was the guest of Lady Huntingdon. Here he met several old friends - amongst whom was Mr. Berham, a wine merchant, the Revd. C. Johnson, Vicar of South Stoke, and Mrs. Macaulay. Lady Huntingdon was a charming hostess and Toplady records many good stories and anecdotes with which she regaled him. She was much more acceptable to Toplady than she appears to have been to the Bishop of Exeter; but one need not be surprised that a lady of such plain out-spokenness as the Countess might give offence to his Episcopal Lordship. At all events when Toplady met the Bishop in Bath and told him that he had just partaken of her Ladyship's hospitality the bishop did not enthuse; but referred to Lady Huntingdon "with very great, but very cool, civility."

* At Lisburn, Northern Ireland. "His tongue swelled and turned black, his heart did not perceptibly beat neither was any pulse discernible." Vol.4, page 49; Wesley's Journal. Dent's Ed

† Works. Vol.4. pages 140 - 151.
Toplady preached on several Sundays at Lady Huntingdon's chapel, and was still in Bath on August 4th, 1775 on which day he recorded his observations on matters political and spiritual. "National matters at present carry a very gloomy aspect. But it is in things civil as in things spiritual; and I regard my country, and myself, in a similar view. Considered in myself, I am a most unworthy and sinful creature; considered in Christ, I am without fault before the throne of God. Consider the state of public affairs, as they are in themselves; and hardly anything can be more threatening, cloudy or unfavourable. Consider them in a providential view; and whatever is, is right. This is my sheet anchor, concerning that black and dismal storm, which now seems to be bursting over the English Empire."

It is not possible to trace Toplady's itinerancy twixt Bath and London - though from references to friends met en route it does not appear that he went direct - nor can one say exactly on what day he arrived at the capital. But we know from an entry in his "Works" that he had reached it before August 30th on which day he wrote to Mr. Rowland Hill. *

Toplady on arriving in London had no set sphere of Labour, but he was destined soon to have two. In the next chapter it will be seen how his manifold gifts found expression both as Preacher and Essayist. Multitudes were to be thrilled from the pulpit by his mellifluent voice and still greater multitudes were to come under the spell of his erudite and pungent pen.

Chapter 4.
MINISTRY IN LONDON.
(1776 - 1778)
Chapter 4.

MINISTRY IN LONDON. (1776 - 1778)

As this survey of Toplady's "Life and Times" is not being recorded in strictly chronological order, certain things must inevitably overlap. (His friendship with Mrs. Macaulay; his controversies; are illustrations of this.) As far as possible I have dealt with the outstanding events of his life as they arose, and have traced their full development without particular regard to the time factor.

Whilst the last chapter is headed "Ministry at Broad Hembury", it would be noted that Toplady was a frequent visitor to London, and that in response to the request of friends he preached from several city pulpits. Nevertheless, his London Ministry does not really begin until 11th of April 1776, when he undertakes duty at Orange Street. Whilst accompanying Lady Huntingdon and Lady Anne Erskine to Norwich, where he preached with great acceptance, his friends were making arrangements with the Trustees of the French Calvinist Reformed Church, in Orange Street, for the use of their chapel on Sundays and Wednesdays. Consent being obtained it was licensed by the Bishop of London; and so began Toplady's ministry in the metropolis, a ministry that caused crowds to throng to his standard. After the lapse of two centuries it is not easy to evaluate Toplady as a preacher. His own generation ranked him highly; but not quite so highly as
certain writers since. Thomas Wright speaks in the superlative; he exhausts his vocabulary in attempting adequately to convey Toplady's genius as a preacher. It is, however, seriously open to question whether Wright does not over-do his praise. His eulogium is worthy to be emblazoned on the wings of an arch-angel. I quote certain of his passages, and in doing so cannot refrain from wondering why Toplady is not better known than he is.

"Toplady no sooner commences than the air seems alive with arrowy thoughts. He is magnetic. He is inspired. He has the vivid imagination of a Charnock, the volcanic force of a Knox. His earnest voice, his masculine and blazing eloquence, his illumined face, his luminous eyes, all rivet the attention of the congregation. They see before them a seer with soul on fire—a saint tranced in beatific vision—'tortured with bliss'. Before his unhooded vision the plastered ceiling and the octagonal lantern have dissolved into the vast concave of heaven. The firmament opens and the volumed and transplendent cherubim, forsaking the shades of bliss, descend into his presence, surge about him, and listen enraptured to his message......The charm, the gladness of his character, was never so evident as when he was in the pulpit. His heart glowed with love for his people.......His voice had at one moment the full sweet melody that gives such charm to the Hebrew prophets; in the next, it was compact of that righteous indignation—that crash of invective—which in the same prophets thrills to the marrow and fills with indescribable awe. The audience
are ravished....They listened amazed...."

In case the foregoing excerpts be judged simply as dithyramb I quote also from the book "Hymn-writers and their Hymns": The preacher is described as having an "ethereal countenance and light immortal form. His voice was music. His vivacity would have caught the listener's eye, and his soul-filled looks and movements would have interpreted his language, had there not been such commanding solemnity in his tones as made apathy impossible, and such simplicity in his words that to hear was to understand. From easy explanations he advanced to rapid and conclusive arguments, and warmed into importunate exhortations, till conscience began to burn, and feelings to take fire, from his own kindled spirit, and himself and his hearers were drowned together in sympathetic tears."  

Dr. Ryle in his "Christian Leaders of the Last Century" is much more guarded in his judgment, and I am constrained to agree with his balanced statement. He writes; "As a preacher I should be disposed to assign to Toplady a very high place among the second class men of the last century. His constitutional delicacy and weakness of lungs, in all probability, made it impossible for him to do the things that Whitefield and Berridge did. Constant open-air addresses, impassioned extempore appeals to thousands of hearers, were a style of thing entirely out of

---

† Thomas Wright: "Life of A.M. Toplady, pages 179-180
† Revd. S.W. Christophers, page 36.
his line. Yet there is pretty good evidence that he had no mean reputation as a pulpit orator, and possessed no mean powers. The mere fact that Lady Huntingdon occasionally selected him to preach in her chapels at Bath and Brighton, of itself speaks volumes. The additional fact that at one of the great Methodist gatherings at Trevecca he was put forward as one of the leading preachers, is enough to shew that his sermons possessed high merit."

This calm, unimpassioned, judicial observation commends itself to me much more forcefully than the extravagant praise of either Christophers or Wright. It is quite clear that Toplady was an able preacher; and it is most reasonable to assert that had he enjoyed a more robust physique he would have ranked amongst the greatest of his day - and perhaps of all time. But it is absurd to rank a man suffering from consumption of the lungs with Whitefield, Wesley, Berridge or Ryland. No matter how willing the spirit may have been, the fact remains that the flesh was weak.

In early January 1776 Toplady began his duties as Editor of the Gospel Magazine in fulfilment of a promise made in the previous December. He did not, however, continue long in the editorial chair, for after seven months' service he availed himself of the aid of his friend Ryland of Northampton; and
although the arrangement at the outset was to have been of a temporary nature, Toplady did not return to this work. Previous to accepting editorial responsibility Toplady often contributed to the "Magazine" and afterwards he continued to add lustre to its pages by brief essays and short biographies. Those of Knox and Foxe are sparkling gems. In the October and December of 1775 he published "Life a Journey" and "Original Sin". Both are able pieces of work; and whilst I do not think that his teaching on original sin is the last word that can be said on the subject, there can be no doubt that Toplady builds up a strong argument, which he supports by apt quotations from the philosophers and poets of the ancient world. Plato, Aristotle, Horace and Propertius are amongst the authorities to whom he makes appeal. For were his contributions of a purely theological character: Zoology, Botany, and Astronomy were hobby studies, and as such reveal the wide range of his interests.

From so short a tenure of the editorial chair one cannot expect a great deal; but as in all other things Toplady's natural ardour found full expression. Much as he disliked Wesley, he was the personification of Wesley's first "Rule" of the "Twelve Rules for a Helper". "Be diligent. Never be unemployed for a moment; never be triflingly employed; never while away time." 

It was just before leaving the editorship of the Magazine that Toplady issued his "Psalms and Hymns for Public
and Private Worship." In it he includes six hymns of his own, together with some written by Watts, Cowper, Newton, Hart, Doddridge and Miss Steele. After slight emendation he includes also two by Charles Wesley, and Oliver's "The God of Abraham Praise". It should be noted that Toplady makes two errors in attributing authorship. He accounts to Watts Charles Lesley's hymn "O for a thousand tongues to sing" and also to Doddridge the hymn "Not all the blood of beasts", which was written by Isaac Watts. His theological dispute with the Wesleys caused Toplady to alter certain hymns so as to express his own Calvinist position; as for instance,

"Exalt the Lamb of God,
The all-atoning Lamb"
as written by Wesley, was made to read

"Exalt the Lamb of God
The sin-atoning Lamb"

so that it might express his belief that Christ died only for the elect. Toplady, as we shall later see, had much to say concerning John Wesley's alteration of his translation of Zanchius, and whilst I do not for a moment condone what Wesley did, I am of opinion that to alter another's writings to suit one's own purpose is just as inexcusable in a Toplady as in a Wesley. It was doubtless to Toplady, amongst others, that John Wesley was referring when he wrote: "Many gentlemen have done my brother and me (though without naming us) the honour to reprint many of our hymns. Now they are perfectly welcome to do so, provided they print them just as they are. But I desire that they would not attempt to mend them; for they are really not
able. None of them is able to mend either the sense or the verse. Therefore, I must beg of them one of these two favours: either to let them stand just as they are, to take them for better or worse; or to add the true reading in the margin, or at the bottom of the page; that we may no longer be accountable either for the nonsensical or the doggerel of other men."

It might be claimed that by the time this appeared in print Toplady was dead; but it is very probable that he was alive when the hymn book was being prepared for the Press. At all events Toplady's collection of hymns found in volume six of the "Works" contains several that he did not write, the most noticeable example being Charles Wesley's "Christ whose glory fills the sky". It is, of course, quite fair to assert that Toplady was not seeking to pass off as his own work that of other writers and that the error is due to his biographer, who finding the hymn in Toplady's possession, concluded that it had been composed by Toplady himself; and acted in good faith when he included it amongst Toplady's compositions.

Toplady, as we have seen, was on terms of close friendship with Lady Huntingdon; and so it is not, therefore, surprising that he actively associated himself with her in her efforts to secure as a preaching centre a large place of amusement situated in Spafields, known as the "Pantheon". Through the good offices of a number of Christian gentlemen this building

| Preface to a Collection of Hymns For Use of the People called Methodists. 
| London October 20th 1779. |
Was ultimately acquired and on the 5th of July 1777 the opening sermon was preached by the Revd. John Ryland. If Lady Huntingdon had her supporters in her noble work she had also her opponents, the chief of whom, in this instance, being the Revd. William Sellon. Even in a time when clerical laxity was definitely a scandal, Sellon's conduct was something to be commented on. He was a positive disgrace to his "cloth". Greedy beyond belief he was not satisfied with heaping cure upon cure, but he needs must hinder those who were trying to do the work he was paid to do. To this end he raised an action against several devoted Ministers belonging to the Establishment for the monstrous crime of preaching in her Ladyship's chapels; and so cunningly did he pursue his advantages that the chapel was ultimately closed.

To avoid all further molestation it was resolved to take refuge under the Toleration Act; and accordingly several Ministers of the Anglican communion seceded and took the oath of allegiance as dissenting Ministers - retaining such part of the Church service as is allowed by the canons to dissenters. This, in point of fact, made very little difference to the actual service, for the Liturgy was used almost unchanged, whilst the Thirty-Nine Articles were taken as the basis of the new Confession. Sellon's success in the Consistory Courts considerably altered the character of Lady Huntingdon's labours, and she, like Wesley, was destined ultimately to break completely with the Establishment, although she had hoped that her "Connexion" should remain within the pale of the Anglican Church. Whilst some of her chaplains
availed themselves of the Toleration Act, others were constrained to sever their connection with her movement; amongst these the best known were Romaine, Townsend and Venn.

It is interesting, if idle, to conjecture what Toplady's attitude to this secession would have been. He died a year before the decision of the Consistory Court was reached. Unquestionably it would have meant for him an acute mental conflict. He had no love for Sellon, or for his type; but he was, nevertheless, an ardent supporter of the Establishment. One wonders whether his passion for the doctrines of "free grace" would have caused him to number himself amongst those "who went out" for conscience sake; or whether he would, like Romaine and Venn, have remained to function as a "moral antiseptic" within the Established Church.

Ecclesiastic Courts move very slowly, and so, as just stated, Toplady did not live to see William Sellon's petty triumph. But whilst strength was his he fought this despicable simonist. Alas! only too often in the history of the Church have men by legal processes vindicated their betrayal of trust. Not satisfied with devouring the lambs of the flock they try to starve those that remain. Of such was William Sellon. Truly the Church must be a divine institution to survive the ravages of such as he!

Toplady was not without his faults, but not even his enemies could doubt either his courage or his sincerity. What he felt to be right he defended with a passion at white heat. But the curved finger of death was beckoning him, and he knew that he must soon answer the summons; that no matter how earnestly
he might strive, his physical powers were slowly ebbing away. He, therefore, resolved to make his Will, to visit Broad Hembury once again, and whilst there make arrangements for the disposal of the furnishings of the Vicarage. Accordingly he set out for Devon, breaking his journey at Salisbury, where he was the guest of his old friend Dr. Baker.

By April 18th Toplady was back again in London, and the following day being Easter Sunday he preached on the text "My dead bodies shall arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust." For the next four Sundays he conducted worship, though it was increasingly obvious to all that the shades of the valley were closing over him. It is very probable that he had preached to his congregation at Orange Street for the last time by the middle of May, for his medical advisers had at length prevailed upon him to keep to his room. Unhappily he was not able to do so, for his spirit was profoundly disturbed by learning of a rumour that he had renounced the doctrines and principles which he had so long preached and so ardently defended. "He attributed the origin of the calumny" says Wright, "to Wesley or one of Wesley's followers." But no proof is adduced. Obviously the evidence is very slender when the name of the guilty party cannot be given. The Methodists were not popular in 1778 and there were plenty who were very ready to listen to any accusation against them without waiting for a single word of evidence in support. Such a calumny once uttered would spread

[Life of A.M. Toplady. page 215.]
with amazing rapidity, and like all rumours it would grow as it spread. Whether the statement was rightly attributed it is now impossible to say; but it is only just to point out that no minister's reputation would be safe if he could be condemned on unsubstantiated rumour. Whether or not Wesley or one of his henchman was the originator of the charge, Toplady believed so; and ill though he was he struggled, despite his doctor's orders, into his pulpit for the last time, and there, as he preached from II Peter, 1. 13-4: he refuted the rumour. A week later his sermon (in so far as it related to Wesley) was published under the title "The Revd. Mr. Toplady's Dying Avowal of his Religious Sentiments". In it, he says, "Whereas sometime since, a wicked, scandalous and false report was diffused in various parts of this Kingdom, by the followers of Mr. John Wesley purporting, that I have changed some of my religious sentiments, especially such of them as relate more immediately to the doctrines of Grace, I thought it my indispensable duty, on the Sunday after I received this information, which was on the 13th of June last, publicly to declare myself, from the pulpit in the Orange Street Chapel, to the following effect: 'It has been industriously circulated, by some malicious and unprincipled persons that during my present

It was also later asserted that Wesley circulated the statement that Toplady had recanted of Calvinism when dying, but again the evidence - as we shall later see - was extremely slender. Moreover, it will be observed, that Toplady, himself, does not say that Wesley himself originated the calumny, but 'the followers of Mr. John Wesley'. In the chapter devoted to Toplady as a controversialist the evidence upon which Sir. Richard Hill accused Wesley will be given in full.
long and severe illness, I expressed a strong desire of seeing Mr. John Wesley before I die, and revoking some particulars relative to him, which occur in my writings: now I do publicly and most solemnly aver, that I have not, nor ever had, any such intention or desire; and that I most sincerely hope, my last hours will be much better employed, than in conversing with such a man." To which I added: "So certain and so satisfied am I, of the truth of all that I have ever written; that, were I now sitting up in my dying bed, with pen and ink in my hand, and all the religious and the controversial writings I ever published (more especially those relating to Mr. John Wesley, and the Arminian controversy), whether respecting facts or doctrine, could at once be displayed to my view, I should not strike out a single line relative to him or them."[1]

Wright, in his book gives as his opinion that certain of the controversialists regretted the asperity of their writings. He writes: "There is reason to believe that several of the leaders in the great controversy regretted in their declining years, the violence that characterised their earlier writings." [2] Toplady apparently did not, and he certainly had as much, if not more, reason to do so than many of them. Believing, as he did, that Wesley or one of Wesley's supporters was attacking him, even as he lay dying, it is hardly surprising that he did not repent of the vituperation that he had poured upon Wesley's hoary head. If Wesley was guilty of disturbing Toplady's last hours, or

---

[1] Wright, in his book gives as his opinion that certain of the controversialists regretted the asperity of their writings. He writes: "There is reason to believe that several of the leaders in the great controversy regretted in their declining years, the violence that characterised their earlier writings." Toplady apparently did not, and he certainly had as much, if not more, reason to do so than many of them. Believing, as he did, that Wesley or one of Wesley's supporters was attacking him, even as he lay dying, it is hardly surprising that he did not repent of the vituperation that he had poured upon Wesley's hoary head. If Wesley was guilty of disturbing Toplady's last hours, or

---


of maligning him after he had gone, no words of condemnation can be too strong; but when one remembers certain other episodes in Wesley's life, it is hard to believe that he could so far fall from grace as to be guilty of such petty and vicious spite. He did not show such a spirit to his other opponents—and he had many—nor did he lay such stress on orthodoxy as did Toplady. He was much more concerned with practical Christianity than with credal fidelity. "I will not quarrel with you about opinions," he says, "only see that your heart is right with God, and that you know and love the Lord Jesus Christ, and love your neighbour and walk as your Master walked, and I ask no more. I am sick of opinions, give me a good and substantial religion, a humble, gentle, love of God and man."

Moreover it is very doubtful whether Wesley was as concerned about Toplady as Toplady thought. On the whole it would seem apparent that Wesley did not think Toplady worth bothering about. Indeed the strongest epithet used by Wesley of Toplady is "that lively young coxcomb." This seems to have been his attitude

Writing to his friend Mr. Merryweather at Yarm, Wesley observed: "My dear brother; Mr. Augustus Toplady I know well; but I do not fight with chimney-sweepers. He is too dirty a writer for me to meddle with; I should only foul my fingers. I read his title page, and troubled myself no further. I leave him to Mr. Sellon. He cannot be in better hands. As long as you are seeking and expecting to love God with all your heart, so long your soul will live. I am, your affectionate brother, John Wesley."
to all his contestants, for though Madan, Romaine, Hervey, and Rowland Hill heaped upon him torrents of vulgar abuse, "he reviled not again": and whilst his brother Charles when asked to write Hervey's epitaph declined, his declining was the gracious act of a Christian gentleman, who felt there was a limit beyond which even Christian charity could not go.

"Let Madan or Romaine record his praise, Enough that Wesley's brother can forgive."

I offer these two quotations to show that the spirit of intolerance or vindictiveness was not a characteristic of the Wesleys; and though a verdict of "Not guilty" cannot, after the lapse of two centuries, be assured, yet the charitable will suspend judgment, and commend to posterity the verdict of "Not proven".

As earth's foundations slowly melted away, Toplady longed to be gone. Up to the end he remained not only cheerful but joyous. To his physician's observation that he was growing weaker, he replied: "Why that is a good sign, that my death is fast approaching; and blessed be God, I can add that my heart beats every day stronger and stronger for glory."

Almost his last act was to write his "Death Song", the inspiring hymn

"When languour and disease invade
This trembling house of clay,
Tis sweet to look beyond the cage,
And long to fly away.

Sweet to rejoice in lively hope.
That when my change shall come,
Angels will hover round my bed,
And waft my spirit home."

In his "trembling house of clay" Toplady tabernacled for only thirty-eight years. Whatever his faults or virtues, it could
be truly said of him as of Bunyan's Mr. Valiant-for-truth, "That his pitcher was broken at the fountain." He could have said of himself, "I am going to my Father's; and though with great difficulty have I got thither, yet now I do not repent me of all the troubles I have been at to arrive where I am. My sword I give to him that shall succeed me in my pilgrimage, and my courage and skill to him that can get it. My marks and scars I carry with me, to be a witness for me that I have fought his battles who will now be my reward." On the eleventh day of August 1778 Augustus Montague Toplady was appointed before the throne; and to him, the rest of Bunyan's testimony to Valiant can be ascribed without reserve: "When the day that he must go hence was come, many accompanied him to the river side, into which as he went he said 'Death where is thy sting?' and as he went down deeper, he said 'Grave where is thy victory?' So he passed over, and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side.

In accordance with his wish Toplady was buried at Tottenham Court Chapel, his funeral being of the simplest kind; indeed it gained in dignity by reason of its simplicity. Although he had requested that no funeral sermon should be preached for him, "The Revd. Rowland Hill could not repress his feelings so far as to be silent on this occasion. Trespassing for once, but trespassing very innocently, and very properly, on the wish which modesty led his deceased friend to express, he in the best style of eloquence, pronounced a funeral oration, which is said to have produced a very powerful impression on

Bunyan. Pilgrim's Progress page 348.
the minds of those to whom it was addressed. The funeral service was read by the Revd. Dr. Illingworth; and a suitable hymn having been sung, the body was entombed in the family grave of his friend and executor, Mr. Hussey. Over the grave, which is under the gallery, and opposite the pulpit, in the above named chapel, is laid a plain stone on which nothing more than his name and age are inscribed." Since then other memorials have been erected to Toplady's memory. At Whitefield's Tabernacle the Memorial reads: "Within these hallowed walls, and near this spot, are interred the mortal remains of the Rev. Augustus Mantonie Toplady, Vicar of Broad Hembury, Devon. Born 4th November 1740. Died 11th August 1778. Aged 38 years. He wrote:

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee:"

Brass plaques have also been erected in the Churches at Farnham and Blagdon, whilst a marble tablet in which Toplady's head and shoulders have been exquisitely carved was unveiled in Broad Hembury Church in 1899.

And so is perpetuated the memory of a remarkable man. He was a scholar, a preacher and a poet, and whilst equalled by some he was surpassed by few. Bishop Ryle was not given to extravagant speech, and yet his eulogy of Toplady was a most handsome tribute. He writes: "He was a man of rare grace and gifts, and one who left his mark on his generation...yet he was a man in whom there was a most extraordinary mixture of grace and infirmity. Hundreds, unhappily, know much of his

| Works. Vol. 1. page 121 |
infirmities who know little of his graces."

In painting Toplady's picture one would be glad to forget his infirmities and remember only his graces; but the portrait would not then be a true likeness. The shade is needed to enhance the light: so in the next chapter I shall try to portray Toplady as a controversialist, for unpleasant as the task may be it is essential if his character is to be truly delineated. But once these lines are penciled in, the virtue of the singer will be seen in bolder relief; for Toplady does not need either "storied urn or animated bust" to assure his immortality. He will be remembered as long as man feels the burden of sin and turns in his helplessness to his Saviour's riven side and cleansing blood.
Chapter 5.

TOPLADY THE CONTROVERSIALIST.
Chapter 5

Toplady the Controversialist.

On settling at Broad Hembury Toplady immediately entered the lists as a defender of Calvinism: and living, as he did with his cat and dog, an almost hermit-like existence, he laboured through long hours, often well into the night, to give to mankind some of its most mordant polemical literature and some of its grandest hymns. This is, in my opinion, Toplady's most fruitful time, for whilst it is true that his preaching in London drew great congregations, it is still questionable whether he did not exercise a greater influence and a more intimate influence, from his old world-vicarage at Broad Hembury than from his London pulpit.

As his hymns are to receive special attention later on, passing reference must here suffice. It is nothing short of amazing that the golden period of Toplady's hymn writing should coincide with that of his controversy with John Wesley: and yet such is the fact. Probably on the same day that he dipped his pen in vitriol in reply to Wesley or one of Wesley's henchmen, he would pour forth his soul on wings of song. In one hour his overflowing heart would empty itself of thoughts that bless and words that burn; and the very next would see his pen streaming with biting invective.

It would appear that Toplady's first appearance in the arena was when he joined issue with the Reverend Doctor Nowell, Principal of St. Mary Hall. Dr. Nowell
had written in reply to Richard Hill's "Pietas Oxoniensis", a pamphlet that had been provoked by the arbitrary dismissal of six young students from the University for having taken part in a prayer meeting. One writer makes the pungent observation that it was permissible in those days for an Oxford undergraduate to swear, but criminal for him to pray. Dr. Nowell's "Reply" was promptly countered by Hill's "Goliath Slain" and by Toplady's "The Church of England Vindicated from the Charge of Arminianism". In this work Toplady's concern is not whether Calvinism as a system of dogma is true or false, but whether it is asserted or implied in the Confession of Faith of the Anglican Church: and whether, if it be true that the Articles and Liturgy of the Established Church are Calvinistic, Arminians can, with a good conscience, subscribe to them, or accept ordination within the Church of England. In this Toplady conducts his case with considerable dialectical skill, and unlike certain other of his productions it is excellent in temper: although he says "On such a theme 'twere impious to be calm". Perhaps the fact that his contestant was the Public Orator of the University of Oxford was conducive of restraint. Certainly, he was not so minded in dealing with Wesley. It may be that he felt that an old Fellow of Lincoln College did not merit the deference due to the Public Orator; - at all events he did not get it.

---

| Works. Vol. 5 page 37 |
Toplady in this lengthy letter reveals something of his general theological position, although its writing (as suggested earlier) is not so much an apology for Calvinism as an asseveration that the Articles of the Anglican Faith - to which Dr. Noyell had pledged his assent - were unequivocally Calvinistic. In this sense Toplady proves his case. Thomas Wright states "Toplady's arguments have never been answered, simply because they are unanswerable." It should however be pointed out that such arguments as Toplady's have been answered. Walter Sellon's attempt at rebuttal is not the despicable fiasco that Toplady tries to make out. Moreover, it is never difficult to secure evidence for a thesis when one starts out with that thesis already in mind. Whilst it may be said that Toplady proves/the Thirty-nine Articles capable of Calvinistic interpretation, he went out knowing quite well "what he had gone out to see". His polemic is unquestionably an argument a priori.

---

"I would premise, that the two grand questions on which I shall join issue with you, are 1st: Not so much whether the Calvinistic doctrines are right or wrong in themselves; as, whether they are, or are not, the doctrines of the Church of England: and, 2. Whether, on proof of their actually being the doctrines of our Church, Arminians can, with a safe conscience and bona fide, subscribe to those doctrines ex animo." Vol. 5. pages 3-4.

"Open the liturgy where you will, Calvinism stares you in the face." Vol. 5. pages 13-14.
The trouble with Wesley began after the publication of Toplady's translation of the Works of Jerom Zanchius, which appeared towards the end of the year 1769. Wesley is accused of making an unfair abridgement of this translation; and of making a caustic commentary of his own; the whole appearing over the initials A------T------.

No one can possibly justify Wesley in this act. It was an unwarrantable interference with another's work and name; and even if it be true that the concluding paragraph is meant as a caricature of Toplady's position, this does not in any way exonerate Wesley. A fact that Toplady was not slow to point out. His reply, which is headed "A letter to the Revd. Mr. John Wesley" is a masterpiece of vituperation and invective, and - let it be said - inaccurate as well as

Unsatisfied with carefully and totally suppressing every proof, alleged by Zanchius, in support of his argument; a false colouring must be superinduced by inserting a sentence or two, now and then, of your own foisting in. After which you close the motley piece, with an entire paragraph, forged, every word of it, by yourself; and conclude all as you began, with subjoining the initials of my name: to make the ignorant believe, that the whole with your omissions, additions, and alterations, actually came from me. Works. Vol. 5. page 320.

Your concluding paragraph, which you have the effrontery to palm on the world as mine, runs thus: "(a) The sum of all this is: one in twenty (suppose) of mankind are elected; nineteen in twenty are reprobated. The elect shall be saved, do what they will, the reprobate shall be damned, do what they can. Reader believe this, or be damned. Witness my hand, A----- T------." Works. Vol. 5 page 321.
uncharitable assertions. Toplady's indignation is understandable indeed justifiable, but as he pours forth the fire from his bosom he is guilty of such breach of good taste that he forfeits all sympathy. Moreover he makes statements for which he does not advance a single word of evidence. From whence did he gain his strange intelligence concerning Wesley's rejection of Calvinism in favour of Arminianism? He asserts that Wesley was converted by the "tossing of a shilling". This shows an ignorance of the travail of Wesley's spirit. Wesley was tossed and buffeted on the waves of intellectual doubt, but he made harbour at last, and without the doubtful expedient of "tossing a shilling". Toplady cries out against Wesley's abridgement of his "Zanchy", but his indignat protest loses something of its power when he descends to the most scurrilous personalities. Wesley is portrayed as a perverter of Scripture, an adversary of the teaching of St. Paul. He is painted as "being possessed of more than serpentine elability, who casts his slough not once a year, but almost once an hour." His teaching is likened unto the ingredients of the witches' pot in Macbeth; or to Joseph's coat of many colours. His humble answer to a critic that he had known much anxiety of heart on questions of faith is turned against him to make him appear unstable. He is further represented as a lunatic who draws

---

Works. Vol. 5. page 323.

* "...there can hardly exist, in these two cities, (London & Westminster) a more atrocious sinner than himself. I will not pollute this paper with a recital of his crimes." Works. Vol.5 page 316.
figures on the wall of his cell and then batters his knuckles fighting them. Moreover, in this letter, mockery is made of Wesley's "Rules for the Society"; "Rules" - it might be added, that have been of incalculable value to thousands in the disciplining of their devotional life.

From this point in his treatise Toplady leaves the subject of the mishandling of his "Zanchy" to pillory Wesley on the subject of the latter's ordination of his preachers. Wesley is commanded either to conform to customary procedure or cast away his gown. In this observation Toplady forgets certain of his own innuendoes against his fellow clergymen, and also his primary indebtedness to a lay preacher. Moreover, it is interesting to note, he does not presume to offer this advice to Lady Huntingdon, and certain of her preachers were ordained other than by the Episcopate of the Anglican Church. Wesley, - and Toplady could scarcely be in ignorance of this - was a true son of the Established Church. To the end of his life he strove to keep his societies within its pale, whilst at the same time laying the foundations of a separate existence, if that should prove impossible. Reverence for "Orders", a passion for Order, and an undissembled love for the ordinances of liturgical worship, were characteristics of Wesley that none can gainsay. But whilst he loved the Anglican Church, he loved still more the unchurched multitudes that everywhere thronged to

ibid page 339.
hear him. Even in this day of Grace we are none too sure on the subject of "Orders" and it would perhaps be better if the time and energy spent in discussions that are so frequently empty of any positive result, were directed to aggressive evangelism. Today certain of the Anglicans can spend precious hours debating whether a piece of mouldering bread should be placed at the right hand or the left hand side of the altar in order to be "validly" worshipped. I have heard a Vicar of Anglo-Catholic persuasion state that if our Lord was to return to earth He would seek ordination at the hands of a Bishop, on the same principle that he accepted baptism by John, before seeking to administer Holy Communion. What comment can one make on such an utterance? Is it far removed, if at all, from blasphemy? Yet this sort of self-inflating rodomontade is indulged in, whilst multitudes drift from the Church, and, one fears, from God. Whatever ecumenical councils may say on the subject of Ordination, Wesley could have anticipated the heart-warming utterance of Dr. MacLaren, "He that hath the inspiration hath the authority, whether it be the tiaraed Pope on the seven hills of Rome, or the Methodist local preacher tramping his ten miles home on a Sunday." He had the authority of inspiration. He had seen a need and responded to it. A burning heart gave him a flaming tongue. He, like his Lord, "when he saw the multitudes was moved with compassion for them, because they fainted and were scattered
abroad as sheep having no shepherd." He had eyes to see, to see a people adrift from God, and he resolved to "take heed to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost had made him overseer". The words of Myers' famous poem have marked applicability to Wesley: "Oh to save these! to perish for their saving, Die for their life, be offered for them all." Who today can read "England before and after the Wesleys" without profound thankfulness that in the fulness of time it pleased God to raise up such soldiers of the Cross as the Wesleys and George Whitefield? Whitefield the evangelist par excellence, who literally burnt himself out in the service of his God and of his fellowmen. Their incandescent zeal knew no bounds. Their message rang out with imperative urgency "O let me commend my Saviour to you". On foot or on horse-back they travelled over moor and fen preaching and singing the unsearchable riches of Christ. The mission of the Wesleys was "to spread Scriptural Holiness throughout the land". How far they succeeded is now the testimony of history. It is, of course, no secret that Wesley and Whitefield were constrained to part company; they did not agree as to the universality of Grace; but whilst for a short time there was a sharp contention between them, it is good to know that their love was more than equal to the strain. Their oneness in missionary zeal was more precious than their doctrinal differences. Toplady was a great admirer of Whitefield, so one cannot but regret that in matters of controversy, especially with Wesley, he had not been possessed of a similar spirit. The Wesley-Toplady controversy, especially when viewed in retrospect, is
alike distressing and pathetic, whilst from the controversy of Wesley and Whitefield — and this was not lacking in heat — we inherit the true eirenicon, the agreeing to differ, which is the best possible solution of many religious disputes.

The controversy centred on the doctrine of grace. Toplady fought strenuously, but whilst his opponents were quick to take advantage of every dialectical weakness, there can be no question that in the violence and fury of his verbal war he far outstrips them. It was war, and in a way it was grand, but it is doubtful whether such violence as Toplady's accomplishes much more than its own hurt. Wesley, at the time the controversy began, was a whiteheaded man of 67 years, and in this milder mannered age it is astounding to read of his being referred to as a "wily noisome beast", "the father of a horrid rabble of unhallowed, frontless obsequious, rancorous, cobbler-parsons, and baker-pamphleteers, and other blind bigots and hideous abortions." Truly it was towards Wesley's venerable person that Toplady's most pointed and poisonous barbs are directed; but his co-workers did not go unscathed. Sellon and Olivers were mercilessly castigated. It pleased Toplady to make sport of Sellon — whom he called a pigmy on stilts — for having baked bread. Whilst Olivers is nicknamed "Cobbler Tom" in honour of his having mended shoes. Olivers was a shoe repairer, but grace not only warmed his heart, but inspired his pen, for he gave to the Evangelical Revival one of the grandest hymns in the English tongue; a hymn great in its conception, noble in its language, and fervent in its praise. "The God of Abraham Praise" is one of the finest hymns of adoration
ever penned.

Toplady claimed that good works are not the condition of Salvation but its evidence; that election grace manifested itself in loyalty to Christ and His teaching. But if graciousness is a mark of grace - and who can doubt that it is? - then Toplady might have paused to ask himself on what grounds the evidence of his own election rested. He had no doubt that Christ was only the Saviour of the Elect; he had also no doubt that he was one of them, and that it was impossible for him to be lost. This is clearly seen in a letter to Mr. Philips written on 6th September 1768. In this letter Toplady comments thus upon the falling away of a certain Mr. H. "I am concerned to hear of Mr. H........'s defection. If he ever was of us in reality, God will in due time bring him to us again." From this and other passages it is obvious that Toplady was sure of his election. It might be noted in passing that St. Paul was not permitted such an assurance; he knew the need of and manifested the grace of self-discipline. It is a pity that Toplady had not done the same, and then his pen would not have streamed with such invective towards one deemed to be lost. In the advertisement to "More Work for Mr. John Wesley" Toplady assures his readers that he entertains no animus towards Wesley, and that he had purposely kept back his manuscript for several weeks "merely with a view of striking out, from time to time, whatever might savour of undue asperity and intemperate warmth."

If the following extracts have been purged, what must the originals have been? If this be the whip, then what the scorpion?

"Mr. Wesley has as much of the insidious in his composition as he has of the acid; and it would be difficult to say which predominates." "He is for adding the lion to the fox. He wishes not only to wheedle but to thunder the Church out of her Calvinism." He is like Mahommed for propagating his religion by the sword. Peals of anathemas are issued, and torrents of the lowest calumny are thrown out, against all who abide by the Thirty nine Articles. Pope John's authority may have some weight with such men as Messrs Walter Sellon, Haddon Smith, and Thomas Olivers; but not an inch beyond the purlieus of ignorance, prejudice and superstition will his dictatorship extend.

"His mode of phraseology is as pregnant with craft as his conduct is destitute of honour. He first hatches blasphemy, and then fathers it on others." "His forehead must be petrified and quite impervious to a blush.

Of Sellon, Toplady entertains the lowest opinion. He accuses him of dipping "his pen in the common sewer" and of "injuring and disgracing the cause he seeks to advance. Amusingly enough he reminds Sellon that "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God". One cannot escape the thought that Toplady might have been more effective if he had listened to his own advice. He excels himself in satire at Sellon's

Toplady's Works, vol. 3. p. 53. ibid, vol 5. p. 353
ibid p.353; ibid p. 354; ibid p.357; ibid p. 357.
It might be noted that this sweeping assertion is not substantiated by quotation. In point of fact, it is untrue.
lack of education. He says that "Wesley should have laid the
burden of his alliance on other shoulders than those of Mr. Sellon.
The lot could not possibly have fallen on a more incompetent man."
Whilst acknowledging that certain of his contestants were men
"of eminent talents", he proceeds to say, "Mr. Sellon, however,
may make himself easier on this particular. Unless he should
improve miraculously, I shall never cry up his abilities. I
must want common sense, to suppose him a man of parts; and I must
want common modesty to represent him as such." Sellon in a
letter to Toplady had acknowledged his humble origin and lack
of educational opportunities; but this confession only played into
Toplady's hand who made very merry at its expense. Sellon had
written "As to myself I make no scruple to tell you, I am what
some call an exotic; one destitute of the honour of an academical
education. The highest degree I lay claim to, is that of a poor
fellow of Jesus College, in the University of Christianity." Toplady's comment on this is almost unbelievable. He says "Never
till now, did such low whining cant ooze from the pen of meanness."
He further goes on to say "He" (speaking of Sellon) "adds, that he never had an "academical education"; I believe him, nor is he
in any danger of being mistaken for a man of learning." "He does
not know the difference between a degree and a fellowship."

Toplady's argument does not appear to be very sound. It is
surely no argument in favour of Sellon's ignorance to draw
attention to what may have been nothing more than a play
upon words. The words "degree" and "fellow" can be given
more than a purely academical education. In any event Toplady
is hard driven in controversy when he has to fall back on such
contemptible spite.
In a footnote we have the observation, "And true enough it is. Mr. Sellon is, in very deed, destitute of the said honour. His education was as illiberal as are his principles: he was, at his first setting out in a life, a low mechanic; he then got himself enrolled on the list of Mr. Wesley's lay-preachers; he next insinuated himself into the favour of a certain person of distinction, who, (not being indue with the gift of foresight) procured his admission into Holy Orders: and thus he came to wear prunella." There is much of the same kind directed towards Thomas Oliver; whilst as already mentioned, Toplady marred much of his argument against Arminianism by turning aside from his discourse to hurl some scurrilous taunt against Wesley. One cannot but regret that Toplady descended to such depths, particularly as he had not the excuse of the illiteracy that he finds so debasing in Sellon. It is undeniable that Sellon's opportunities were meagre, but he was by no means the ignorant buffoon that Toplady would like to make out. Further, his superior contempt for a man who by dint of hard work had satisfied the requirements necessary to proceed to ordination, after having laboured as a "low mechanic", reveals a trait in Toplady's

\* Italics mine. \* Works Vol. 1. page 179 footnote.

\* This gracious compliment is offered to Lady Huntingdon whom Toplady claimed as his friend, and one who was in no degree inferior to Toplady either in native endowment or cultural accomplishment.
character that scarcely commends itself to admiration. Earlier, I have referred to a snobbish streak in Toplady's personality, and although I quoted passages from the Preface to the "Works" in contradiction, I still feel that charge previously made, is, in the main, true. For whilst he could taunt a man with his lack of early educational opportunities he was prepared to pay court to members of the aristocracy; and this despite the rebuff of one of its distinguished ornaments. At the outset of his ministry he was very anxious to secure a chaplaincy to Lord Chesterfield, and wrote requesting a "scarf". His desire, however, was not gratified, for the double-faced Earl wrote two gracious letters of regret, but unfortunately did not notice the flat contradiction they contained. Toplady did. Yet, whilst ready enough to accept such favours he could upbraid a fellow Christian and hymn-writer for having mended shoes for a livelihood. One is thankful to remember that a scholar, infinitely greater than Toplady, was not ashamed to be a tent maker, and that in a carpenter's cottage in despised Nazareth, the Saviour of men wore a toiler's jacket and swept the shavings from the workshop floor.

"The year after I was in orders (viz. 1763), I asked his Lordship for a scarf. 'I am extremely sorry, sir,' replied he, 'that you didn't mention it earlier. Had you asked me two days sooner a scarf should have been at your service: but no longer ago than yesterday, I gave away my only vacant one.' I answered, that I should be glad to hope for the honour of the next that fell. He replied, 'The very next is already promised; but you shall certainly have the next after that.'"

Works. Vol. 6. page 253
I am anxious to avoid being unjust to Toplady, and am fully aware that as a controversialist he shows his worst side; but no estimate of character is the slightest use if it offers anything but a full-faced portrait. Moreover, Toplady, as a controversialist, condemns himself in the very advice he offers to his opponents. To Sellon he "whispers this friendly hint": "If you wish your scurrilities to obtain belief, restrain them within the banks of probability; malice, when too highly wrought, resembles a cannon too highly charged, which recoils on the engineer himself, instead of reaching its intended object of direction." Sellon could justifiably have pleaded his "illiteracy" for his lack of good form in debate; Toplady could scarcely do this, furthermore, he had set the example, he would have had nothing to complain of, even if Wesley and his henchmen had reached his own heights of eloquence, or depths of abuse.

It may be said in defence of Toplady that his opponents were equally truculent, and also that the general standards of controversy of his day were far removed from those now prevailing; but this can only serve to palliate the case; the fact remains

Works of Toplady, vol.1. pages 182-3
that Toplady as a controversialist was bitter, intemperate, and personal to such a degree that he defeats his own ends. Had he confined himself to attacking Wesley’s doctrine, the position would, in all conscience, have been bad enough; for to refer to the theology of a revival that shook England as “an equal portion of gross heathenism, Pelagianism, Mohametanism, Popery, Manichaeism, Ranterism, and Antinomianism, culled, dried, and pulverised, and mingled with as much palpable atheism as you can scrape together.”, is to offer affront to all intelligent people. Such extravagance in caricature was bound to have a boomerang effect. It is, however, his attack on the personal character of Wesley that so greatly offends. Nowhere in the works of Wesley is there to be found an attack on Toplady’s character. In letters to his friends he refers sometimes a little scathingly to Toplady, but that is a very different thing from vilifying him in the public press. Olivers and Sellon were much more pungent in their writings than was Wesley, but even they do not reach Toplady’s depths of scurrility. Moreover their attack is, for the more part, an inverted one. They use Toplady’s own phrases. Olivers prefaced his letter to Toplady by observing “As I cannot prevail with myself and throw off all good manners and to expose that measure of common sense I am professed of,

Toplady’s Works vol. 6 preface v.
to the contempt of every candid reader, much less disclaim the meekness and gentleness of Christ, I shall not pretend to treat you according to your deserts. Was I to do this, I must embellish almost every page with such flowers as you seem peculiarly to admire: I should at every turn call you "Jesuit" - "Pope" - "Bellwether" - "Knave" - A "theological coward" - "A religious gambler" - a "lying sophister. I should compare you to an "oyster woman", a "porter", a "carman" a "chimney sweeper", to a "clumsy bungling anatomist", to an "Insane person rolling himself in the mud", to a "lurking sly assassin". I should tell of your "low serpentine cunning", and of your "dirty subterfuges", of your "mean malicious impotence". I should represent you as a man equally void of "Honour and integrity" and strongly insinuate that you are a "perjured villain". Then when I had thus hectored and bullied you till I was weary, I should talk of transmitting you to "Virginia or Maryland" if not to Tyburn.” " In similar strain Sellon introduces his tract "The Church of England Vindicated from the Charge of Absolute Predestination"; he writes: "I shall deal plainly with you; more plainly perhaps that you might desire, yet not so plainly as you may justly expect. I would not say a word barely to enrage you; and yet I doubt not that I shall enrage you, without speaking a little in your own manner: and

| "A Letter to Toplady occasioned by his late letter to John Wesley" page 4. |
I have always observed that those most prone to give offence, are also most prone to take it.” Yet, having made these caustic observations Sellon goes on to develop his argument in excellent temper. Nowhere in this polemic does he descend to abuse. Relentlessly he assails Toplady’s predestinarianism, and in one place suggests that Toplady cannot be sincere when he says “I abhor everything that looks like persecution for principles merely religious.” With the published works of Wesley and his co-workers accessible to all who would read them it cannot be sustained that the Arminian polemists were the abusive mud-slingers or ignorant pulpitsers that their Calvinist opponents insinuated. The tracts of the brothers Hill and those of Toplady – to say nothing of Romaine, Madan, and various contributors to the Gospel Magazine – make sorry reading; and remain a permanent blot on their careers. To these observations a critic might fairly draw attention to the charge laid against Wesley of having published a rumour that Toplady, when sick unto death, had recanted of his Calvinism. Wesley never replied to the charge. Was it true? Toplady and his supporters often made slanderous statements against Wesley without adducing a single word of corroboration. The evidence upon which this particular indictment is based is very slender. It transpired that a Mr. Gawkrodger of Bridlington told Sir Richard Hill that Mr. Thomas Robinson told...
him that Wesley told him that Toplady "died in black despair and blasphemy". Verbal evidence of this kind is never worth much, but when on the strength of it Wesley was publicly accused of "vilifying the ashes and traducing the memory" of Toplady, it was quite apparent that Sir Richard had already made up his mind on the matter; and so Wesley seems to have treated this "open letter" with the silent contempt it deserved. Had Sir Richard Hill written a personal letter to Wesley, he would, doubtless, have received a reply, but as both the text and tone of Hill's letter so obviously reveal a prejudgement, it is not surprising that Wesley remained silent. So far as I can trace in "Wesley's Works", after making reply to Toplady's charge of forgery, Wesley completely ignores him; and much to Toplady's anger, leaves him to the tender mercy of Sellon and Olivers. I have already pointed out that Wesley's use of Toplady's Zanchius was most regrettable, and his use of Toplady's initials, unpardonable: nevertheless, the abridgement of "Zanchius" by Wesley was a sound piece of Apologetics, in that it revealed in a few direct sentences what Wesley conceived to be its errors.

"Let Mr. Wesley fight his own battles. I am as ready as ever to meet him with the sling of reason, and the stone of God's word in my hand. But let him not fight by proxy; let his cobblers keep to their stalls; let his tinkers mend their brazen vessels; let his barbers confine themselves to their blocks and basins; let his blacksmiths blow more suitable coals than those of nice controversy; every man in his own order."

Wesley disclaims intention of forgery, pointing out that no one who knew Toplady's position could be misled into believing the production was his. Nevertheless, this, too, is but a palliation of a most unworthy piece of chicanery.

I have previously shown that in matters of Churchmanship Toplady was no bigot; unfortunately this cannot be said of him on a matter of doctrine; for any opponent of his in this direction could count upon sustained and virulent opposition. Moreover, Toplady's rejection of John Fletcher's invitation, when the latter was preparing to return to his native Switzerland, places him in a bad light. Fletcher, even in controversy, was a saint: yet this did not prevent Toplady hurling at him the vilest personal abuse. When Fletcher realised that his health was rapidly being impaired, he invited his friends to a farewell meal. To this meal he also invited the redoubtable defenders of the doctrine of "Free Grace"; so that "all doctrinal differences apart, he might testify his sincere regret for having given them the least displeasure, and receive from them some condescending assurance of reconciliation and goodwill." No man had less reason than Fletcher to make such a gesture, for his charity and consideration stand out at once a challenge and a rebuke to his contemporaries. To this gathering came the brothers Hill, John Berridge, and others of like mind; Toplady, almost alone, remained implacable. Berridge was deeply distressed. In tears, he greeted Fletcher with the words, "How could we write so about each other, when we aimed at the same thing — the glory of God and the good of souls?".
It is good to read that the brothers Hill accepted the invitation, for their manner in controversy was equally as truculent as Toplady's: indeed! Thomas Olivers asserts it was even worse; for in his one conversation with Toplady he remarked, "We once thought you the bitterest of Mr. Wesley's opposers; but upon my word, Mr. Hill's scurrilities exceed everything." Such virulence in controversy suggests personal animosity; theological opinions, no matter how firmly held could scarcely occasion such vicious attacks on Wesley's character. It is apparent that Toplady and Hill felt that they had to discredit Wesley, as well as to expose the falsity of his teaching. Why? Obviously because they believed - or wished to believe - that he was simply a charlatan; a wolf in sheep's clothing. Though whom the "wolf" might be said to have devoured is not a question to which they seek to supply an answer. They were too busy hurling accusations to have much time to verify the accuracy of them. Nevertheless, it seems clear that they believed they had grounds for their indictments; and that they were in possession of an infallible source of information. A perusal of Wesley's letters reveals the source; for on October 2nd 1778 he wrote to his wife a letter that must have cost him unutterable pain. After commenting upon the fact that their ages made it very improbable that they would meet again in this world, he
goes on to write,

"Four years ago you quitted my house at Bristol, without my consent or knowledge, and declared to Mr. Lewis, you would come thither no more. Ever since (and indeed long before) you have made my faults the constant matter of your conversation. Now suppose an husband has many faults, is it the part of a prudent wife to publish or conceal them? You have published my (real or supposed) faults not to one or two intimates only, (though that perhaps may have been too much), but to all Bristol, to all London, to all England, to all Ireland. Yea, you did whatever lay in you to publish them to all the world. You purposely and deliberately published them to all those in particular whom you knew or believed to be prejudiced against me, to Moravians, Quakers, Anabaptists; Calvinists, Patriots (so called), Mr. Hill, Mr. Toplady: designing hereby to put a sword into my enemies' hands. If you live a thousand years twice told, you could not undo the mischief which you have done. And till you have done all you can towards it, I bid you Farewell!"

The year previous he had written in similar strain when Mrs. Wesley had shewn a willingness to return to him. In this letter he observes:

"Two years ago you left me again without my consent or knowledge. A few days since I met you, and (to my great surprise) you seemed willing to return. I was willing to receive you upon these terms: (1) restore my papers; (2) promise to take no more. But upon reflection I see I was too hasty. For you have given copies of my papers, and these you cannot recall. Likewise you have spoken all manner of evil against me, particularly to my enemies and the enemies of the cause I live to support. Hereby many bad men have triumphed and been confirmed.
in their evil ways; and many good but weak men have been stumbled, and some have drawn back to perdition. A sword has been put into the hands of the enemies of God, and the children of God have been armed against one another."

In this same letter Wesley gives a clue to the terrible charges that his wife laid against him.

"All you can now do, if you are ever so willing, is to unsay what you have said. For instance, you have said over and over that I have lived in adultery these twenty years. Do you believe this, or do you not? If you do, how can you think of living with such a monster? If you do not, give it me under your hand. Is not this the least you can do?"

The kindest judgment one can pass on Mrs. Wesley's conduct is that she was of unsound mind. Unless she was the unhappy victim of some psychosis she must be held responsible for her behaviour; behaviour so monstrous that only the mentally deranged or the morally depraved could conceive. Mrs. Wesley can only be delivered from strong condemnation if it be conceded that she was psychologically aberrant. But what must be said of those men who would make use of such a woman? To give credence to the imaginings of the mentally diseased is a reflection upon their own credulity; whilst deliberately to make use of a woman who was basely defaming her husband, reflects even more adversely upon their moral character. If Mrs. Wesley's conduct be rightly branded as infamous, not less so is that of those who used her venom to secure for themselves a dialectical advantage. One is nauseated to think that

a Christian Minister could so far debase himself as to enlist the aid of a treacherous wife; and to use documents stolen by her as a means of attacking the character of her husband.

Toplady, after the abridgement of his Zanchius, would have banished Wesley to Maryland, or have seen him hang at Tyburn. But if Wesley's abridgement of a published work merited such a fate, what of the use of unpublished documents pilfered by a neurotic wife? Toplady did not hesitate to brand Wesley as the greatest sinner in the cities of London and Westminster; and it is doubtless upon the evidence of Mrs. Wesley that he based his charge. Was he sincere in this, or was he seeking by any means to score off his enemy? It may well be that Toplady was genuinely disgusted with Wesley, that he truly believed him to be what his wife represented. Moreover it is possible that he had no knowledge that the documents produced by her were stolen - though he might have paused to ask himself how they were obtained, and why some of them were only copies. One must, however, remember that whilst Toplady was a bachelor and that his sense of chivalry was deeply stirred by feminine distress he was, nevertheless, unacquainted with that fury which springs from "love to hatred turned". Further, it is much easier to believe ill of those whom we dislike than those we admire. Whatever Toplady's real motive may have been, it is known only to himself; and if charity acquits him of deliberately vilifying Wesley, charity must also absolve Wesley from the heinous charges laid against him. Generosity towards Toplady must not be obtained at the cost of justice to Wesley.

A Letter to the Revd. Mr. John Wesley, v.5, p. 321
ibid Works vol. 5. page 316
One thanks God for Toplady's diary and particularly for his hymns. Without these, Toplady would appear to be nothing more than a fire-eating repellent controversialist, whose bitter and venomous tongue caused his good to be evil spoken of. Toplady wrote the grandest prayer set to music, - let us forget all else but that. For, as W.H. Fitchett, LL.D., in his "Wesley and his Century" points out, "The controversy is long dead: but the temper in which it was conducted is an enduring scandal to religion. What can be more amazing than the spectacle of two deeply religious men, one of whom had written "Rock of Ages" - a hymn which the Church of Christ will sing till earthly hymns are no longer needed - and the other had written one of the greatest sacred lyrics, "The God of Abraham praise" - abusing each other with the temper and language of angry fishwives?"
TOPLADY THE HYMN WRITER

(Preliminary Observations)
When one reads the hymns of Toplady the wonder grows that they are not better known. One is puzzled to account for this fact; for by the neglect of Toplady hymnody is quite definitely impoverished. Looking through the hymnals of the various denominations I was surprised to find so few of Toplady's compositions. Even the Revised Church Hymnary - which might have been expected to lean towards the writings of one who considered himself so ardent a supporter of Calvin - gives but four: "Rock of Ages", "Your harps ye trembling saints", "A Debtor to Mercy alone", and "A Sovereign Protector I have": whilst the Methodist Hymn-book includes two, "Rock of Ages" and "Object of my first desire".

"Rock of Ages" undoubtedly ranks amongst the greatest of hymns and is Toplady's masterpiece. Prejudiced indeed, would be a selection committee that passed over this perennial fount of consolation and encouragement. It has been sung by multitudes; it has fired the emotions of the crowd; it has solaced the tormented spirit of the solitary seeker after God; it has given the peace of pardon to the penitent. In short, it has plumbed the deeps of human emotions as few other hymns have been able to do. This no doubt accounts for the fact that Communions of widely differing theological tenets have been able to include it in their hymnals. Why then has so scant regard been paid to his other
works? seeing that one of his hymns has secured universal recognition and immortal fame. It is true that nothing else he wrote has the same endearing quality as "Rock of Ages", but many of his other hymns are truly excellent and are deserving of much wider recognition. Including his "Juvenile Poems" he wrote well over a hundred hymns - the bulk of which are forgotten.

In saying this, I cannot escape the conviction that they are "forgotten" simply because they have never been known. Like all authors, not all he wrote is of equal value, indeed some of it is simply doggerel. George Whitefield said of certain of Charles Wesley's hymns that they "were very bad"; he could with equal truth have said the same of some of Toplady's. Considered numerically Toplady's output is not large; particularly is this so when one recalls the prodigious labours of Charles Wesley and Isaac Watts: yet his best is not inferior to their best and if I had to arbitrate twixt Watts's "When I survey the wondrous Cross", Charles Wesley's "Jesu, lover of my soul", and Toplady's "Rock of Ages", I would ascribe first place to "Rock of Ages"; but at the same time I hasten to assert that nothing else Toplady wrote equals either "Jesu, Lover of my soul", or "When I survey the wondrous cross". Moreover these two great hymns are not so outstanding amongst the compositions of their authors as is Toplady's "Rock of Ages" amongst his. I do not imply that in comparison Toplady's work is of mediocre character, but that whilst much is of high order it is, nevertheless, not of so high an order as the general standard set by Wesley and Watts.
Briefly, the position is this; some of Toplady's hymns are poor, many good, a few excellent, and one that justly entitles its author to rank amongst the immortals. So one must ask again, Why are so few of Toplady's compositions to be found in the various Church hymnaries? The question is very difficult to answer. It cannot be that the quality of his hymns is too poor; (hymns are to be found in most hymnals that are unworthy of inclusion, and which are far below Toplady's standard). It cannot be said that they fail to obtain recognition because of literary defect; nor yet because some are controversial in character. This latter quality might be presumed to have secured for them a prominent place within the Communions which hailed Toplady as defender of the faith, and, as such, so doughty a champion of orthodoxy. As hymns with definite Arminian bias abound in the hymnals of the Methodist Churches one would have thought it reasonable to assume that the supporters of the doctrine of "Free Grace" would have included Toplady's hymns in their compilations if only as a counter-blest.

The only explanation that I can volunteer is that the setting and the time of publication were not propitious. Many of Toplady's hymns are excellent devotional reading - combining all the qualities that go to the making of a great hymn - and yet they are unknown. It is possible that the bitterness with which he conducted his controversy caused many to turn from all his work, thinking it impossible that so tempestuous a spirit as his could compose hymns that could bring peace, tranquility
and assurance to an enquiring heart. And yet his hymns combine all these qualities together with unction, warmth and power in a really remarkable degree. Dr. Ryle, one time Bishop of Liverpool, writes: "Of all English hymn writers, none, perhaps, have succeeded so thoroughly in combining truth, poetry, life, warmth, fire, depth, solemnity, and unction as Toplady has". This is high praise, particularly from one of balanced judgment.

I have already suggested that "the setting and time of publication were not propitious", but even more than these is the fact that Toplady died young and had for his biographer one who was entirely dispossessed of all those qualities that are needed to secure a reading public. The biography - as already shewn - is studded with mistakes and the hymns are arranged so haphazardly as to prejudice the reader at the outset. We are indebted to this gentleman for collecting Toplady's hymns and giving some that had previously been unpublished - although he does not include all Toplady wrote - but no one could truthfully offer congratulation for work well done. By far the greater part of the Broad Hembury hymns were first published in the "Gospel Magazine" - an organ definitely Calvinist in tone, and in consequence they were not

"Christian Leaders of the Last Century" page 383

The Gospel Magazine or Spiritual Library was founded in 1786 with a Mr. Gurney as editor; it was discontinued in 1772, but two years later re-appeared under the editorship of Mr. Mason as the Gospel Magazine or Treasury of Divine Knowledge.
likely to reach many who were not of Calvinist persuasion. Against this a critic might assert that Charles Wesley's hymns were published with an Arminian public in mind, and yet they have survived. To this I would reply that only a small fraction of Charles Wesley's hymns are to be found in the new Methodist Hymn Book; and further Wesley established a Church whose members were pledged to the doctrines taught by the hymns of his brother; Toplady left no such community. He had his admirers but he did not found a Church. This argument, I am aware, is not overwhelmingly strong; Watts's hymns are remembered along with many others, whose authors did not found a Church; yet in the main I would hold my argument to be valid - namely, that Charles Wesley was the singer of a Revival that gained in momentum with the passing of the years, and that the Church which was later to bear the name "Wesleyan", became the vehicle through which Charles Wesley's hymns were carried to the uttermost ends of the earth.

After the passing of two centuries it is not easy rightly to appraise the psychology that caused Toplady as a hymn-writer to be - apart from one hymn - almost unknown. Unquestionably it is upon "Rock of Ages" that his fame rests.

As none of the hymns appear to have been dated the only clue to their chronology is the time of their appearance in print, and this is only possible in a few instances. In the last Volume of the works of Toplady his hymns are gathered together under various heads. All told they number 121 (all he wrote are not included) and the bulk of these are attributed to him in
his early youth. It is impossible to dogmatise but it seems fairly safe to assert that Toplady's youthful attempts have been mixed up with his more mature efforts. As the record stands, of 121 poems all but 32 of them were "written between fifteen and eighteen years of age". Under the heading of "Poems on Sacred Subjects" which number 89, there are 42 "Juvenile Poems", 15 "Hymns of Thanksgiving", 15 "Paraphrases of Select Parts of Holy Writ", 7 "Epitaphs on the death of friends", and 10 others "not properly reducible to any of the preceding heads". After these there follows 32 "Hymns written on Sacred Subjects and Particular Occasions". How far these titles and sub-divisions are the work of the biographer, the editor, or of Toplady, it is impossible to say. It is interesting to record that this last section contains hymns that did not come from Toplady's pen. Reference has already been made to this fact and will be again when Toplady's indebtedness to Charles Wesley is being discussed. I am not here, or later, suggesting deliberate plagiarism; with so careless an author as Toplady's biographer such confusion of Toplady's own work with that of others that was found amongst Toplady's possessions is not surprising. Toplady has suffered much at the hand of his well meaning but incompetent friend; it would be most unjust to saddle him with responsibility for the way in which his
literary remains has been presented to the world. Yet, the "official collection" does not only contain compositions of Charles Wesley; other authors have had their works wrongly attributed. But of the thirteen hymns given in the list headed "Hymns written on Sacred Subjects" which are not from the pen of Toplady nine are the work of the Singer of the Methodist Revival.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hymn No.</th>
<th>Hymn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>O When shall we supremely blest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Thy anger for what I have done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I groan from sin to be set free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Tis pleasant to sing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Christ whose glory fills the skies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>What tho' I cannot break my chain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Jesus what hast Thou bestowed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Father I want a thankful heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>The power of hell</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The other four are:

- Astonished & distressed by B. Beddome
- Source of Light by W. Shirley
- What in Thy love possess I not? by P. Gerhardt
- Come Holy Ghost our Souls inspire

which is a ninth century Latin Hymn translated by Dr. Cosin, one time Bishop of Durham. Toplady only very slightly emends Dr. Cosin's translation.

In his list of hymns wrongly attributed to Toplady Daniel Sedgwick places the number as high as thirty, and of these, seventeen are Charles Wesley's. I have not, however, found these other hymns in Toplady's "Works". A most careful search of the six volume edition (1825) reveals only those already emended. In 1860 Daniel Sedgwick published "Hymns and Sacred Poems on a Variety of Divine Subjects" which he claimed
comprised "the whole of the Poetical remains of the Revd. Augustus M. Toplady". This work is very largely the hymns and poems contained in the 1825 edition of the "Works", although there are certain additions and emendations. He adds a new section "Hymns of Invitation" which contains eight hymns, but two of these are found in the sixth volume of Toplady's Works amongst the "Juvenile Poems on Sacred Subjects". Also amongst the "Occasional Pieces on the Death of Friends" two tributes are to be found which the 1825 edition did not give. One "On the death of Mr. T. M." and the other "On the Death of the Right Honourable William, Earl of Harrington". Eight more hymns omitted from volume six are interspersed throughout the first three sections. These I will give below together with the page on which they are to be found in Sedgwick's compilation.

My yielding heart dissolves as wax P. 27
Whom have I in heaven? P. 40
Beneath Thy cool refreshing Shade P. 43
O might my groans as Incense rise P. 44
Surely Christ Thy Griefs hath borne P. 71.
When thou, O Sinner art P. 72
Wherewith O Saviour P. 84
Who, Lord thy glorious Face shall see? P. 98

Sedgwick claimed that his list is complete, but I cannot find two hymns which appeared in the "Gospel Magazine"
and which Thomas Wright attributes to Toplady:

"Since my Redeemer's name is love" and "Complete in Christ".

It may be that Sedgwick is not satisfied that Toplady was the author; for he gives in his last section many hymns that Toplady wrote but which are omitted from the "Works". Certain of Toplady's later hymns first appeared in the Gospel Magazine; some bearing no signature, others the non-de-plume "Minimus"; these Sedgwick includes in his compilation. The following list gives the year of publication in the "Gospel Magazine", the number of the page in Sedgwick's compilation, and the number of the page in the Collection found in volume six of the "Works".

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>&quot;Gospel Magazine or Spiritual Library&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;Works&quot; Vol.6 Page</th>
<th>Sedgwick's Compilation</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Offspring of God</td>
<td></td>
<td>135</td>
<td>1771</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How happy are we</td>
<td></td>
<td>136</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King of Glory</td>
<td></td>
<td>139</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A debtor to mercy alone</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formed for Thyself</td>
<td></td>
<td>141</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesus Immutably the same</td>
<td></td>
<td>142</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thou fountain of bliss</td>
<td></td>
<td>143</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O tis sweet empty</td>
<td></td>
<td>146</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why Lord art thou so kind</td>
<td></td>
<td>148</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bought with a price</td>
<td></td>
<td>148</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giver of every perfect gift</td>
<td></td>
<td>149</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awake sweet gratitude</td>
<td></td>
<td>150</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Father we bless</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whom have I in heaven?</td>
<td></td>
<td>153</td>
<td>1772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encompassed with clouds</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From whence this fear</td>
<td></td>
<td>155</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your harps ye trembling saints</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compared with Christ</td>
<td>406</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Gospel Magazine or Treasury of Divine Knowledge&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happiness, thou lovely name</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>1774</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I saw, &amp; lo a countless</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eternal Hallelujahs</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How vast the benefits</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What though my frail eyelids</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rock of Ages</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please turn to page 108.

*(Page immediately after clip)*
Manifest thy love for ever,
Fence us in on every side;
In distress be our reliever;
Guard, and teach, support and guide:
Let thy kind effectual grace,
Turn our feet from evil ways;
Show thyself our new creator,
And conform us to thy nature.

Be our friend on each occasion;
God, omnipotent to save!
When we die, be our salvation;
When we're buried be our grave:
And, when from the grave we rise,
Take us up above the skies;
Seat us with thy saints in glory,
There forever to adore thee."

with this hymn one can compare the teaching of certain
of his others.

"Sweet Spirit of grace,
Thy mercy we bless,
For thy eminent share in the council of peace;
Great agent divine
To restore us is thine,
And cause us afresh in thy likeness to shine."

"Thy office is to enlighten man,
And point him to the heavenly prize;
The hidden things of God explain,
And chase the darkness from our eyes."
Dead in sin, 'till then I lie,
Bereft of power to rise;
'Till thy Spirit inwardly
Thy saving blood applies:
Now the mighty gift impart,
My sin erase, my pardon seal;
Send the witness, in my heart
The Holy Ghost reveal.

Blessed Comforter, come down,
And live and move in me;
Make my every deed thine own,
In all things led by thee:
Bid my ev'ry lust depart,
And with me O vouchsafe to dwell:
Faithful witness, in my heart
Thy perfect light reveal."

The doctrine of the Holy Spirit is not an easy one
to enunciate, and has been a bone of contention from the
ey early Christian centuries. Toplady is soundly trinitarian,
but it might be questioned whether he does not drift into
Tritheism, he seems to think in terms of three separate
entities, and nowhere does he face up to the problem of
what is meant by "Person" in the doctrine of the Trinity.
There is just a suggestion of a hierarchy in the Trinity,
God the Father first, the Son subordinate to the Father, and
the Holy Spirit completing the work of the Son.

Toplady's DOCTRINE OF SIN AND GRACE:

With this doctrine of sin and grace there is, of
necessity, embraced the doctrine of Man. Toplady's doctrine
of man is painted in black, pure and unrelieved. Man is a
sinful worm, a fallen helpless creature, by nature blind,
corrupt in the inward parts; he is deserving only of Hell.
In his hymns Toplady does not face up to the question why man
is corrupt and worthy only of hell; he is content to state
that man as a sharer in Adam's sin is deserving only of eternal
death. In both his hymns and his polemics Toplady does not
see where his dogma is leading him; in the last analysis he
really denies sin for he attributes everything to God, flatly
denying any freedom of the will, and in consequence all moral
responsibility.

"Lord is not all from thee?"
In this same hymn he goes on to speak of his depravity and to
show that whatever virtue he may possess it is the gift of grace

"I cannot speak a word,
Or think a thought that's good,
But what proceedeth from the Lord;
And cometh forth from God.

Jesus I know full well,
What my best actions are:
They'd sink my grievous soul to hell,
If unrefined they were.

I of myself have nought
That can his justice please;
Not one right word, nor act, nor thought,
But what I owe to grace."

Man, as a sharer in the corruption of Adam's seed, is justified
by the righteousness of Christ;

"As all when Adam sinned alone,
In his transgression dy'd,
So by the righteousness of one
Are sinners justify'd."

in this Toplady is truly Pauline, though the portion of the
seed of Adam which is regenerate are "those whom his soul delights to defend", and these are they whose salvation has been decreed from all eternity.

"Sorrows and agonies and death,
Thou didst endure for me,
When all the sins of God's elect,
Were made to meet on thee."

Nothing that man can do can in any way bring him to God, only grace can

"A fallen, helpless creature take,
And heir of thy salvation make."

Man is

"A debtor to mercy alone";

for his heart is

"The seat of every sin",

from it proceeds

"Distrust, presumption, artful guile,
Pride, envy, servile fear."

But Toplady rejoices "that where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:" for writes he,

"Grace was given us in him,
Before the world began."

and this grace cannot fail,

"Not one of all the chosen race
But shall to heaven attain:
Partake on earth the promised grace,
And then with Jesus reign."

the elected sinner's name is printed indelibly on the heart.
of God, who will uphold him through time and eternity.

"My name from the palms of his hands
Eternity will not erase;
Imprinted on his heart it remains,
In marks of indelible grace;
Yes, I to the end shall endure,
As sure as the earnest is given;
More happy but not more secure,
The glorified spirits in heaven."

The Pauline doctrine of Justification by faith is precious to all those who know by experience the truth of which he writes. "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ", this was the first fruits of the Gospel to Toplady and in his Poem number 13 he pleads

"Now let me live through Jesus's death,
And being justified by faith,
May I have peace with God."

But it is in "Rock of Ages" his best known hymn that he most effectively expounds this precious theme. After the extravagances and vagaries of a so-called "Christian Humanism" it is good to return, as Barth has done, to this central truth of the Christian faith. Too long have men been encouraged to lift themselves nearer God by tugging at their shoe-laces; this acrobatic feat has accomplished nothing—unless to convince man of his own inadequacy is an accomplishment.

"When I am weak, then I am strong;
And when my all of strength shall fail,
I shall with the God-Man prevail."

So sang Wesley and so (in other words) sang Toplady; widely

New Methodist Hymn Book Hymn No. 339
as they differed on some things they were at one in this.

If the judgment of certain writers is to be accepted, the hymn "Rock of Ages" is Toplady's only claim to fame. W.T. Stead in "Hymns that have helped" volunteers this opinion, "It is probable that before he died he still had no conception of the relative importance of his own work. But today the world knows Toplady only as the writer of these four verses. All else he laboured over it has forgotten, and, indeed, does well to forget." If this observation had been limited to Toplady's controversial writings I would have heartily endorsed Mr. Stead's judgment; but having read Toplady's hymns I assert, unhesitatingly, that although not of the standard of "Rock of Ages" they are of infinitely greater worth than many that are to be found in most hymnals.

Yet, it is four verses that enables Toplady to rank amongst the immortals, for although they were directed against Wesley's doctrine of "Entire Sanctification", and were first published in almost unpromising setting they yet plumb the deeps of human hearts in a way that very few other hymns have been able to do. Men and women tormented by the futility of self-effort have turned to the Rock of Ages with new hope and have found in their deliverance from sin's guilt and power, peace and strength. What zeal and tears could not do, they found done for them, by Him who could clothe their nakedness with the garment of His righteousness.

| Toplady is engaged in an actuarial calculation. He is seeking to discover the number of sins a man may commit during his life time. At 70 the number was 2,207,560,000 |
Although this hymn has received almost universal approbation there have not been wanting those who could only see its faults. John Hudson in the National Review for August 1888 is very trenchant in his criticism. He writes: "It seems a medley of confused images, and accumulated, if not misapplied metaphors - "cleft rock", "riven side", "to thy Cross I cling", "to the fountain fly". What is the precise meaning of"double cure"? Is the curative agent or the thing cured double? i.e. does it refer to"Water and blood, or "guilt and power" of sin? And surely to cleanse from power is an odd expression! The hymn does not make clear to the reader whence the writer took his idea." Against this hyper-critical and cold analysis there can be put the judgment of no less a scholar than Professor Saintsbury, F.R.S.L. "Every word, every syllable, in this really great poem has its place and meaning." A.C. Benson on returning from the funeral of Gladstone wrote: "To have written words which should come home to people in moments of high, deep, and passionate emotion, consecrating, consoling, uplifting.....there can hardly be anything worth better doing than that." Waiving for the time any consideration of its polemical value as a denial of the doctrine of entire sanctification, it yet must be noted that its essential Calvinist emphasis is rightly placed. Two fundamental truths of the Gospel ring out with unmistakeable clearness; the awfulness of sin and the utter helplessness of the sinner. It is these two truths expressed with such beauty and passionate intensity that have secured for the hymn a secure place amongst deathless verse.

Quoted from "Songs of Praize Discussed" p. 337
The following five hymns were not published in the "Gospel Magazine":-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>&quot;Works&quot; Vol. vi Page</th>
<th>&quot;Gospel Magazine&quot; Page</th>
<th>Sedgwick's Compilation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When Languour &amp; disease invade 420</td>
<td>163</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deathless Principle 422</td>
<td>165</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courage, my soul</td>
<td>167</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O Precious blood 405</td>
<td>168</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Ghost, dispel our sadness 403</td>
<td>169</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the year 1759 three hymns appeared in the "Gospel Magazine", but later were revised and republished in that Journal of 1771 and 1774.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>&quot;Works&quot; Vol. VI PAGE</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>&quot;GOSPEL MAGAZINE&quot;</th>
<th>SEDGWICK'S COMPILATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>326</td>
<td>Emptied of earth April 1771</td>
<td>page 30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>354</td>
<td>O Thou who didst &amp;c May 1771</td>
<td>&quot; 66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>415</td>
<td>Surely Christ thy griefs hath borne Decr. 1774</td>
<td>&quot; 71</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sedgwick thus presents Toplady as giving to the world 124 hymns; three more than the total in the 1825 edition of the "Works". The small difference is readily understood when it is remembered that Sedgwick did not only add to the hymns contained in volume six, but also removed those that Toplady's biographer had wrongly attributed to him. For convenience of comparison I have made the following tabulation.
PETITIONARY HYMNS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEDGWICK'S COMPILATION PAGE</th>
<th>FIRST LINE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Refining Fuller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Father of Love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Lord let me not Thy courts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Jesus by whose grace I live</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>God of Love, whose truth &amp; grace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Lord shouldst Thou weigh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Jesus since I with Thee am one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Saviour I Thy word believe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Great God, whom heaven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>O that my heart was right with God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Pilot of the Soul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>O that my ways were made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Father to Thee in Christ I fly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Supreme High Priest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Jesus My Saviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Compassed by the foe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>O may I never rest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>From Justice's consuming flame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Ah give me Lord</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>I life my heart &amp; eyes to thee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Chained to the world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>O when wilt Thou my saviour be?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Jesus the light impart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Emptied of earth I fain would be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Lord we invite Thee here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>My soul canst thou no higher rise?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Thou unexhausted mine of bliss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>O Thou that hearest the prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Bring the kingdom Lord make haste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Redeemer, whither should I flee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Lord stand not off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Jesus, God of love, attend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Come from on high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Lord is not all from thee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>From thy supreme tribunal, Lord,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Jesus thy feet I will not leave,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Thou sun of righteousness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Lord, I feel a carnal mind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Hail, faultless model,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Now Lord, the purchased pardon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Shouldst thou be strict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Jesus thy power I fain would feel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"WORKS" Vol.6 PAGE
309
309
310
310
311
312
312
314
315
316
316
317
318
318
318
320
321
322
323
323
324
324
325
326
326
327
328
329
329
330
330
331
331
333
334
334
335
336
337
338
339
340
340
# HYMNS OF THANKSGIVING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAGE</th>
<th>FIRST LINE</th>
<th>&quot;WORKS&quot; Vol.6 PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Not to myself I owe</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>The sky's a veil</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Lo the God by whom salvation</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>Glorious union, God unsought</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>Father creator of mankind</td>
<td>346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>Jesus, thou try'd foundation stone</td>
<td>347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Praise the Lord</td>
<td>348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>My soul with blessings unconfined</td>
<td>349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>Earnest of future bliss</td>
<td>349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>Immoveable our hope remains</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>Amplest grace in thee I find</td>
<td>351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>Gracious Creator thy kind hand</td>
<td>352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>Fountain of never ceasing grace</td>
<td>353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>O Thou who didst thy glory leave</td>
<td>354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td>Eternal God, the thanks receive</td>
<td>355</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# PARAPHRASES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAGE</th>
<th>PARAPHRASE</th>
<th>&quot;WORKS&quot; Vol.6 PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>69</td>
<td>General Praise to God be given</td>
<td>357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>Low at thy feet</td>
<td>359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>Author of all in earth and sky</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78</td>
<td>Beloved of God</td>
<td>362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>Consider Lord my just complaint</td>
<td>363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>My heart, wherere I lift my eyes</td>
<td>364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81</td>
<td>Ye friends and followers of God</td>
<td>365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81</td>
<td>Ye kine of Bashan</td>
<td>365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>Princes have persecuted me</td>
<td>367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86</td>
<td>Zion awake put on thy strength</td>
<td>368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87</td>
<td>Set the loud trumpet to thy mouth</td>
<td>369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>Who Lord confide in thee</td>
<td>371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91</td>
<td>Our holy Father, all thy will</td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92</td>
<td>O God, my God thou art</td>
<td>373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95</td>
<td>Let thy loving mercy, Lord</td>
<td>375</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### OCCASIONAL PIECES
**ON THE DEATH OF FRIENDS.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAGE</th>
<th>FIRST LINE</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>110</td>
<td>If candour, merit, sense or virtue dies</td>
<td>377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>111</td>
<td>The debt of nature</td>
<td>377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>113</td>
<td>The robes of light our sister wears</td>
<td>378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>116</td>
<td>Hearken the Saviour’s voice at last</td>
<td>379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>118</td>
<td>Hail happy youth</td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>119</td>
<td>Thrice happy they who sleep in God</td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120</td>
<td>The crown of righteousness is given</td>
<td>382</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### AN APPENDIX

#### First Line

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAGE</th>
<th>FIRST LINE</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>122</td>
<td>Look back my soul</td>
<td>384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>123</td>
<td>Is there a man whose daring hand</td>
<td>385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>124</td>
<td>Redeemed offender, hail the day</td>
<td>386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>125</td>
<td>Can my heaven born soul submit</td>
<td>387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>127</td>
<td>Behold the awful day comes on</td>
<td>388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>129</td>
<td>Can ought below engross my thought?</td>
<td>390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>130</td>
<td>Dying Redeemer slaughtered Lamb</td>
<td>391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107</td>
<td>How blest I am, no snare I fear</td>
<td>391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107</td>
<td>Soldier of the living God</td>
<td>392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>131</td>
<td>Fickle and changeable man</td>
<td>393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSALM'S &amp; HYMNS</td>
<td>SEDGEWICK'S COMPILATION PAGE</td>
<td>FIRST LINE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>304</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>Come Holy Ghost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>158</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>I saw and lo a countless throng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>151</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>Happiness thou lovely name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Encompassed with clouds of distress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>Thee Father we bless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>295</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>Astonished and distressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>285</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>O when shall we supremely blest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>155</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>Thy anger for what I have done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>206</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>A debtor to mercy alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>206</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>Holy Ghost dispel our sadness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>206</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>I groan from sin to be set free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>206</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>Tis pleasant to sing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>309</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>O precious blood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>308</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>At anchor laid, remote from home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>290</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>Compared with Christ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>271</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>Your harps ye trembling saints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>309</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>I lift my heart and eyes to Thee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>308</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>Courage my soul, Jehovah speaks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>290</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>Source of Light &amp; power divine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>271</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>Christ whose glory fills the skies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>309</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>What tho' my frail eyelids refuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>308</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>Rock of Ages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>159</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>Eternal Hallelujahs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>160</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>How vast the benefits divine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>Surely Christ thy griefs hath borne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>163</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>What in thy love possess I not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>163</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>The power of hell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>163</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>What tho' I cannot break my chain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>165</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>Jesus what hast Thou bestowed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>165</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>Father I want a thankful heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>When languor and disease invade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>Deathless Principle arise</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9th century hymn translated by Dr. Cosin.
B. Beddome
W. Shirley
P. Gerhardt
C. Wesley.

N.B. Psalms & Hymns for public and private Worship was published for Toplady by E. & C. Dilly in 1776.
Earlier in this chapter I have said that certain of Toplady's compositions are poor, this is particularly true of his burlesques. Were I to consult my preference I would avoid all reference to these rather pitiful efforts, but must do so if I am to give a true delineation of both the man and his work. Nowhere does Toplady's poetic sense desert him more surely than in his attempts at satire. To evaluate them any higher than puerile doggerel would be to sacrifice sincerity to courtesy. Moreover, as the subject matter dates these effusions it is an excess of charity to suggest that they were written in childhood; indeed, the literary style of Toplady's boyhood diary is far in advance of these pathetic effusions. I will not demean Toplady by giving further notoriety to his spiteful babbling by repeating a single sentence. Well would it have been if the "Gospel Magazine" had shewn a similar reluctance to stain its pages.

See "Gospel Magazine" 1809 pages 244-249
Chapter 7

TOPLADY THE HYMN WRITER

Literary and Religious Characteristics.
Chapter 7.

TOPLADY THE HYMN-WRITER.

Literary and Religious Characteristics.

------------------------

It has already been emphasised that Toplady was a hymn-writer of no mean order, for his work is possessed of both endearing and enduring qualities. His best hymns have all the essential characteristics of what Herbert called a "true hymn". Most people know what they mean by a "good hymn", and yet would find it difficult to put their judgment into words. As Dr. A.E. Gregory has observed "A hymn is not a thing of rigid definition". St. Augustine's definition is well known, but even it is not above criticism. It is at once excellent and inadequate. It is much too narrow, and would, if strictly adhered to, exclude very many truly great hymns. Yet its chief emphasis is sound - "if it is not sung it is not a hymn". The chief

It is not easy to evaluate successfully Toplady's Poetical Remains in that (as previously mentioned) no clue is given as to the date of composition. Of the 121 hymns found in the "Works" 89 are attributed to Toplady whilst a youth; and whilst any dogmatic denial of this classification, is, in the nature of things, impossible, it seems only reasonable to assume that Toplady's biographer is again in error; for amongst these 89 compositions are some of Toplady's best work. Work which reveals a maturer mind than is possessed by a boy of 15 years. I stress this point, because if many of the hymns were written at this early age, they were written before Toplady's "Arminian prejudices received their effectual shock" and so accounts for theological differences which on the face of them are in-consistent.

The Hymn-book of the Modern Church page 6.
characteristic of a hymn is that it is sung praise. Many of the items that enrich our manuals of devotion are not truly hymns, simply because they are unsuited to congregational singing.

If one is permitted a wide connotation of Augustine's second canan "praises of God", so as to include not only God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, but whatever indirectly glorifies God, such as hymns of penitence, thanksgiving, and intercession; then the excellence of this ancient definition is more clearly revealed. "Every feeling which enters into any act of true worship", writes John Ellerton, "may fitly find expression in a hymn." Toplady would have agreed; he sought

"through all the changing scenes of life
In trouble and in joy"

to sing God's praise.

Dr. Gregory in the book to which I have just referred offers eight essentials of a good hymn: Sincerity, Reverence, Dignity, Beauty, Simplicity, Fervour, Truth of Doctrine, and Scriptural Language. This analysis commends itself to me as an excellent standard by which to judge Toplady's work; and by this standard it will soon be apparent that Toplady is deserving of much greater recognition than he has received.

However much one may disagree with Toplady's theological position or with the manner in which he upheld it, no one can doubt his sincerity; and this quality glows throughout his hymns.

In seeking to apply this eightfold test to Toplady's hymns - or indeed to any other writer's - one has always to
keep clearly in mind the fact that all do not think and feel alike. Moreover some hymns are so inseparably wedded to a particular emotional experience that they become possessed of a significance far beyond the range of any canon of criticism. Further, one has also to recognise that in criticising hymns one is not only a "literary critic"; a hymn is not just 'literature'. Judged by certain literary standards the hymn "Jesus lover of my soul" is poor religious poetry; we cannot, for instance, deny that the first verse is one of mixed metaphor, but no one possessed of a modicum of religious sensitivity would say it was a poor hymn. So, at the outset I have to say that the ordinary canons of literary excellency are not applicable to hymns. "Hymns do not form a sub-division of poetry" writes the late Bernard Lord Manning, and goes on to say "They are a distinct kind of composition, neither prose nor poetry; they are, in a word, hymns; and I refuse to be drawn any nearer than that to a definition. A hymn may be poetry as it may be theology. It is not, of necessity, either."

Now, certain of Toplady's hymns are not truly hymns, they are excellent devotional reading, and whilst the writer's sincerity is revealed throughout his work, they are unsuited to congregational use. The lonely soul feels the charm of and draws encouragement from the hymn "When Languor and disease invade", but it is definitely a composition for the bedside or the cloister. The hymn "I saw and lo a countless
"throng" is a fine paraphrase of Revelation chapter seven verses nine to seventeen; but it is unfitted for congregational singing by reason of its difficult metre; yet no one reading it can fail to catch the fervour of Toplady's heart, or miss the mystical passion that glows throughout. His hymn on Judgment, "Behold the awful Day comes on", is an enlargement of the famous "Dies Irae", and like it, it is not likely to be found on the praise list of any modern choir. Further, Toplady's "Epitaphs" are not hymns. They are eulogies of particular persons, and, as such, were never intended to be sung. Moreover, it is very questionable whether they are not out of place even in a manual of devotion. Doubtless had Toplady been compiling such a manual or a hymn book he would not have included these purely individual tributes.

It has been suggested to me by a learned Professor of Divinity that I write "Toplady's tombstone"; "for" said my advisor, "a controversialist so bitter as Toplady was far from the kingdom of God, and could not be a sincere hymnist. He was a good poet, but was he a good man? a distinction must be drawn between the hymn-writer as an artist and the hymn-writer as a man. It does not follow that because a man writes wonderful hymns or even compiles a manual of prayer that he is a good man. Literary and aesthetic accomplishments are not in themselves virtue." Now! this is a truth none can gainsay. Literary excellency or the production of great hymns is no guarantee of spiritual soundness or moral worth, and certainly when one reads of Toplady referring to a fellow
hymn-writer as "a low and puny tadpole in divinity" "actuated by Satanic guilt and Satanic shamelessness", the wonder grows that such a "sad polemist" should even desire to write hymns; and yet, after carefully reading both Toplady's hymns and his polemics I cannot escape the conviction that he was not only a good poet, but also a good man. His convictions were deep even though his views were narrow: so I am prepared to accept the testimony of an eminent Wesleyan Minister (who cannot be suspected of prejudice in Toplady's favour) that Toplady's "sincere piety impressed all who knew him". Toplady's theological writings are not easy reading; the dogmatic and truculent strain that runs through them all - to say nothing of the scarifying personal abuse which he hurls at his opponents antagonises the reader; yet to judge him on these alone is to get as false a picture as would be drawn from judging him solely on his hymns. And so I cannot accept the advice given and write "Toplady's tombstone". Whilst I cannot admire certain of Toplady's traits I question whether he was more than most of us a mixture of infirmity and grace. Of his ambivalence none can have any doubt, but dust and divinity is the inheritance of all the sons of Adam, so it ill becomes any one of them to sit in judgment. So whilst gratefully acknowledging the erudition of my counsellor, I still feel that Toplady as a singer was transparently sincere. With Cowper he would truly have prayed --

"Forgive the praise that falls so low
Beneath the gratitude I owe:
It means thy praise, however poor;
An angel's song could do no more."
Not only was Toplady sincere, he was noticeably reverence in his handling of the great religious themes. Which reverence is the more apparent when one compares his work with that of certain of his contemporaries, particularly the Moravians. Moreover Toplady's reverence does not give one the idea of being "forced"; it stands out like a headland washed into prominence by the tides of spiritual fervour. He knew those moments of which Charles Wesley wrote:

"O'erwhelmed with Thy stupendous grace,  
I shall not in Thy presence move,  
But breathe unutterable praise,  
And rapturous awe and silent love.

Pardoned for all that I have done,  
My mouth as in the dust I hide."

He knew that there are moments when the tongue is silent and the pen ceases to move; moments in which we pass from the nearer presence to the Presence that is beyond, yet "closer to us than breathing, nearer than hands and feet". In such a moment instinctively we cast the shoes from off our feet for the place whereon we stand is holy ground.

"A solemn reverence checks our songs,  
And praise sits silent on our tongues."

Yet, though he would have said with Gerhard Tersteegen, |

"Lo, God is here! Let us adore,  
And own how dreadful is this place!  
Let all within us feel His power,  
And silent bow before his face;  
Who know His power, His grace who prove,  
Serve him with awe, with reverence love."

his reverence was not only the reverence of "Quietism". He could sing in triumph, his "rapturous awe" was not always expressed in "silent love". Listen to the reverent rapture

| German mystic. 1697 - 1769. "Gott ist gegenwärtig"
OF his "Object of my first desire".

"Object of my first desire,
Jesus, crucified for me;
All to happiness aspire,
Only to be found in thee.

Thee to praise and Thee to know,
Constitute my bliss below;
Thee to see and Thee to love,
Constitute my bliss above.

Lord it is not life to live,
If Thy presence Thou deny;
Lord, if Thou Thy presence give,
'Tis no longer death to die.

Source and giver of repose,
Only from Thy smile it flows,
Peace and happiness are Thine;
Mine they are, if Thou art mine.

Let me but Thyself possess—
Total sum of happiness—
Real bliss I then shall prove,
Heaven below and heaven above."

Reacting from the gross irreverencies of the Moravians |
some of the hymn writers carried their sense of the fitness |
of things too far, and were in danger of toning down the |
glowing words of ardent Christian love. It is said that |
John Wesley hesitated to include his brother Charles' hymn |
"Jesu, Lover of my soul" in his "Collection"; and even today |
whilst both the Methodist Hymn Book and the Revised Church |
Hymnary find room for Frank Fletcher's "O Son of Man, our |
hero strong and tender," with its third verse beginning |

"Lover of Children, boyhood's inspiration,
Of all mankind the Servant and the King."

| Cp. Southey's "Life of Wesley". "The most characteristic |
| parts of the Moravian hymns are too shocking to be inserted |
| here." |
neither have found room for lines

"Lover of souls, to rescue mine
Reveal the charity divine
That suffered in my stead".

It is true that for some the word "Lover" has sinister associations, but then there are very few words that could not be degraded. Is hymnody to be impoverished for ever because of those whose hypersensitivity blinds them to the Pauline assurance, "that to the pure all things are pure."? Certainly John Wesley was divinely guided when he allowed his brother's great hymn to be published; the Christian Church has endorsed his action and the individual Christian is grateful. It is doubtless this conception of reverence that has caused editors to alter Faber's hymn "Sweet Saviour, bless us e'er we go" to "O Saviour, bless us e'er we go", although they have allowed the last line of his hymn "Souls of men!" to remain unaltered.

"If our love were but more simple,
We should take him at his word;
And our lives would be all sunshine,
In the sweetness of the Lord."

Of the two verses I would have preferred the latter to be changed, for, apart from the idea of sickliness that sweetness so often connotes, the concepts of "sunshine" and "sweetness" are incongruous. Sunshine in the presence of the Lord would have been much better; and also much nearer the Scripture teaching; "And the city hath no need of the sun, neither the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."  Although Toplady was somewhat given to the use of phrases which tend to cloy, none of these are

to be found in his hymns. They are all possessed of a strong masculinity. Occasionally phrases are found that would not find acceptance with a modern writer, but these are more due to his theological tenets than to his want of reverence or poetic finesse. Furthermore, "bad taste is not irreverence" and whilst it is to be regretted, many examples of equally bad taste abound in hymn books simply because they breathe the language of the age of their composition, even though time has made ancient good uncouth. Cowper's hymn "There is a fountain filled with blood" is to a modern congregation simply ghastly imagery and only finds place in the modern hymnal because of its age and revivalist associations. Toplady's verse on the same theme is, if anything, worse than Cowper's, he writes:

"Foul as I am, deserving hell,
Thou canst not from Thy throne repel
A soul that leans on God:
My sins, at Thy command, shall be
Cast as a stone into the sea—
The sea of Jesu's blood."

On the theme of the cleansing blood Toplady has written a great deal, but more will be said of that when we examine the theology that underlies it. Certainly it is not easy today to think of the Saviour's "agony and bloody sweat" and almost instinctively one feels it to be something so awe-full and unutterable that it becomes impossible to sing about it; even if full understanding of its meaning could be assured. For my own part I cannot understand what Watts means by "sacrificing

---

to His "blood". I suggest that the verse would convey much more to the average Christian if it read:

"Forbid it Lord that I should boast
Save in the death of Christ my God:
All the vain things that charm me most
I scorn them for the path He trod."

And yet! the elimination from hymnody of all reference to our Saviour's blood is not to be thought of: crude expressions and imagery must be avoided, reverence demands it, but the great evangelical truth contained in the Pauline phrase "purchased with His own blood" must not be lost. Such hymns as "Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?" and "What can wash away my sin?" may appeal to very few, but hymns like "Just as I am without one plea", "Souls of men why will ye scatter?", and "Rock of Ages cleft for me", - to mention but three which refer to the blood of Christ - are the inheritance of Christendom, and one that cannot be sacrificed in the name of a pseudo culture. Moreover, it must not be forgotten that hymns which may offend the taste of the many, may yet have been blessed to the few. A scratched and battered chalice may count for little to the materialist, but not so is it valued by those who through its agency have grasped and handled things unseen. The same is true of hymns. Anything that jars or detracts from worship must be avoided. It is unhappily true that many congregations do not always realise what they are singing, and so long as the tune is to their liking, whether it fits the words or not, they are content; with the result most hymn-books contain some appalling doggerel. It is almost unbelievable that such puerilities could be found within the same cover as Watts' mighty hymn
"Join all the glorious names
Of wisdom, love and power,
That ever mortals knew,
That angels ever bore;
All are too mean to speak his worth,
Too mean to set our Saviour forth.

Great Prophet of my God,
My lips shall bless Thy name:
By Thee the joyful news
Of our Salvation came;
The joyful news of sins forgiven,
Of hell subdued, and peace with heaven."

A hymn that reminds one how inadequate is his best. Toplady realised the truth of this when he wrote his hymn "Praise the Lord, my joyful heart". The hymn is not comparable with that of Watts, but it emphasises the fact that man's best praise is unworthy of its Object.

"Jesus, the theme renew,
Endless praises are thy due:
Anthems equal to thy grace,
Saints and angels cannot raise.

I my worthless mite cast in,
Here the song of heaven begin:
I th' eternal chorus join,
Echoing the love divine.

Ever may I worship thee,
Praise my sole employment be;
Sing the virtues of the blood!
Every moment thank my God."

Almost inseparable from reverence is dignity - the elevation and refinement of thought and language, so that all man's powers bring their due meed of praise. Toplady's work (both poetry and prose) is dignified. Even when he attacks his theological opponents he is dignified - he never descends to slang. / Indeed, some might say his style is

\[\text{Meth. Hymbk. 96.} \quad \text{Works. Vol. 6. p. 349.}\]

/ This statement needs to be qualified when one thinks of Toplady's burlesque: but that is the only exception.
too dignified, in places almost oppressively so. Yet, if this be true of his polemical writings, it is not true of his hymns. They are dignified but not stiff or pompous. Even his youthful compositions are dignified; certain of them may be only rhymes, indeed doggerel, yet they do not offend. They have, at least, dignity in conception.

In turning to the idea of beauty one must ask "What is a beautiful hymn?", Is it to be found in its structure or in the sentiment it seeks to express? Is beauty only the corollary of reverence and dignity? Time was when works were included in hymnals because of their undoubted piety although they made no claim to beauty. Some of these are still to be found - their age entitling them to consideration - but today there is no need for a Selection Committee to fear a choice twixt Piety and Beauty, for it has at its disposal such a wealth of sacred song that nothing common-place or tawdry ought to disfigure our manuals of devotion. To decide what is meant by a beautiful hymn involves an appeal to aesthetics, and even then it may be difficult to establish a norm that would gain everybody's consent. Some poetry could be described as "pretty" rather than beautiful, for beauty is something much more durable than mere prettiness. Tennyson's "Crossing the Bar" is a beautiful hymn, so also is Matthewson's "O Love that wilt not let me go!" or Benjamin Waugh's "Now let us see Thy beauty Lord, as we have seen before", but all these and similar hymns could scarcely be called "great hymns"; they cannot be put along side of Toplady's "Rock of Ages", Charles Wesley's "Come O Thou Traveller Unknown", Oliver's "The God
of Abraham praise", or Watts' "God is a name my soul adores:"
They may have poetic finesse but they have not the stamina of
the "great hymns". Had one been reared on such as "Now let
us see thy beauty Lord" - which set to the tune of "Edgeware"
is very popular today - one would scarcely have sung with the
triumph of John Andreas Rothe "Now I have found the ground
wherein, sure, my soul's anchor may remain:"
So I would
maintain that whilst beauty of form and sentiment are qualities
not to be despised, the truly permanent hymns possess these
qualities and something more; they have solidity, and their
very durability is the secret of the comfort with which they
have blessed the soul of succeeding generations.

Toplady's hymns are not marked by any particular
beauty of structure, he keeps closely to the accepted metres.
His paraphrase "I saw and lo a countless throng" is one of the
very few of his poems in which he departs from the prevailing
standard. It should, however, be noted that nowhere in
Toplady's hymns is there a breach of good taste in his choice
of words. By the time he had commenced writing, English meaning
and usage had become more firmly established than in the days
of Watts. (Watts died at the age of 74 eight years after
Toplady's birth.) Apart from the one phrase in "Rock of Ages"
"When my eye-strings break in death:"
I have found nothing in
Toplady to which even a purist could take exception. Certainly,
nothing to compare with Watts' "Here every bowel of our God
With soft compassion rolls."
or

"His bowels are made of tenderness
And ever yearn with love."

It is a truisms to say that words degenerate in meaning, nevertheless, there are no literary archaisms in Toplady that mar the beauty of his poetic style. The theology of his hymns is another matter.

Simplicity is a mark of greatness: and in his hymns Toplady shews a directness and a simplicity that may be truly termed sublime. If less simple in his language that Watts he is not guilty of using the latinisms and high sounding phrases of Charles Wesley. He does not, for instance, use such words as "implunged" or "consentaneous"; some of his best hymns are those in which monosyllables predominate. I take, as example, one of his least known and one of his best known hymns.

"At anchor laid, remote from home,
Toiling I cry, sweet Spirit come,
Celestial breeze, no longer stay,
But swell my sails, and speed my way.

Fain would I mount, fain would I glow
And loose my cable from below;
But I can only spread my sail;
Thou, Thou must breathe the auspicious gale."

"Your harps, ye trembling saints,
Down from the willows take:
Loud, to the praise of love divine,
Bid every string awake.

Tho' in a foreign land,
We are not far from home,
And nearer to our house above,
We ev'ry moment come.

His grace will to the end,
Stronger and brighter shine;
Nor present things, nor things to come,
Shall quench the spark divine.

Fastened within the vail,
Hope be your anchor strong;
His loving spirit the sweet gale,
That wafts you smooth along.

Or, should the surges rise,
And peace delay to come;
Blest is the sorrow, kind the storm,
That drives us nearer home.

The people of his choice,
He will not cast away;
Yet do not always here expect,
On Tabor's mount to stay.

When we in darkness walk,
Nor feel the heavenly flame;
Then is the time to trust our God,
And rest upon His name.

Soon shall our doubts and fears,
Subside at his control;
His loving kindness shall break through
The midnight of the soul.

No wonder, when God's love,
Perwades your kindling breast,
You wish for ever to retain
The heart transporting guest.

Yet learn in every state,
To make his will your own;
And when the joys of sense depart,
To walk by faith alone.

By anxious fears depressed,
When from the deep ye mourn,
"Lord why so hasty to depart,
So tedious in return!"

Still on his plighted love,
At all events rely:
The very hidings of his face,
Shall train thee up to joy.

Wait till the shadows flee;
Wait thine appointed hour:
Wait till the bridegroom of thy soul
Reveals his love and power.
The time of love will come,
When thou shalt clearly see,
Not only that he shed his blood,
But that it flowed for thee.

Tarry his leisure then,
Although he seem to stay:
A moment's intercourse with him,
Thy grief will overpay.

Blest is the man, O God,
That stays himself on thee!
Who wait for thy salvation, Lord,
Shall thy salvation see.

With the exception of the words "auspicious" and "Celestial" both poems have a simplicity which makes them understood by every wayfaring man.

Nothing is more dispiriting than a lifeless service, and nothing contributes so surely to this end as the haphazard choice of hymns. The selection of a good "praise list" is no mean work of art, for unless the praise of a service

"teaches our faint desires to rise
And bring all heaven before our eyes"

it has not been truly praise. It is, of course, undeniable that a hymn which lacks fervour may be fervently sung, particularly, if the tune is popular. Indeed! it is not too


It is an interesting point that in his hymns Toplady makes very free use of commas, rarely does he end a line without one (even when the sense makes it quite unnecessary) often he uses a colon when a semi-colon or even a comma would have been adequate. Further he never uses a capital letter when using a pronoun in the place of the divine name.
much to say that many congregations can be so "carried away" with a tune, that they forget what they are singing. How easy it is with a tune like "Sagina" to forget the fervour, grandeur and truth of Charles Wesley's "And can it be that I should gain an interest in the Saviour's blood?"; with such an inspiring tune how can one really grasp the significance of such words as

"He left His Father's throne above
So free, so infinite His grace,
Emptied Himself of all but love
And bled for Adam's helpless race:
'Tis mercy all, immense and free;
For, O my God, it found out me!"

or how can one to the strains of "Diadem" appreciate the reminder contained in the couplet

"Ye gentile sinners ne'er forget
The wormwood and the gall:"?

Now! whilst it cannot be gainsaid that certain hymns owe their immortality more to the tune to which they are wedded than to any particular virtue of their own, it is a fact worth recording that the fervour of Toplady's hymns strikes one on reading. His "Chamber Hymn", "What tho' my frail eyelids refuse" - perhaps better known as "Kind Author and ground of my hope" - is a case in point. Further, I have noted that although I have sung "Rock of Ages" to various tunes - even to some, which in my opinion, did not fit the words - yet on every occasion the fervour of this great prayer has impressed itself upon me despite the tune. Redhead's "Petra" or the even more plaintive "Wells" or "Petersburg", may enhance the

These words now read "Sinners, whose love can ne'er forget".
fervour of the words, but not even the singing of a football crowd can quite destroy it.

It is unfortunately true that there are certain individuals and even congregations that are afraid of fervour. Confusing it, as they do, with unintelligent emotionalism, they strive to avoid it, and in the end attain a state of such spiritual impoverishment that they never know the real "joy of Salvation". Certainly we are not all constituted alike, and all cannot worship as our Salvation Army brethren rejoice to, to the sound of a brass band; but if the fires of spiritual passion are damped down to a cold and formal rectitude, it will be a long time before the Church moves like a mighty army. Evangelical passion is the most clamant need of today, and fervour in worship aided by fervent hymns can be the means whereby God can "kindle a flame of sacred love on the mean altar of our hearts". James Martineau, preacher, teacher, and philosopher, is not one who could be lightly accused of sentimentalism and yet, despite his Unitarianism, he offers in the Preface of his "Hymns for Church and Home" a fine apology for fervour in religious poetry.

"The Editor of a hymn-book will not think it necessary to graduate the fervour, the imaginativeness, the grandeur of the compositions admitted into his volume, by the cold, level, and prosaic condition of mind which may possibly prevail among some who use it.
Thus, to damp the fire down to the temperature of the fuel, seems to offer but a small prospect of kindling anything. We must not thus forego the glorious power which art exercises in worship. Its peculiar function in connexion with religion is to substitute for the poor and low thoughts of ordinary men, the solemn and vivid images of things invisible that have revealed themselves to loftier souls, and to present the objects of faith before the general mind in something of that aspect under which they rise up before the great artists of poetry and of sound. These gifted men are to lift us; we are not to depress them. In sacred music we acknowledge this principle at once; we confess that it is a noble thing, when we think of the origin of things, and call God the Creator, to have within us the mighty transitions of Haydn's genius instead of our own puny dreams; to have the incidents of sacred story glow and live before us at the touch of a power like that of Handel or Spohr; to find ourselves at such bidding, with the 'Shepherds abiding in the field', not far from the holy chant falling on the midnight air; or to hear in a voice, melting as Christ's, 'Come unto me, ye weary'; or, as we pass from bereavement to bereavement of this world, to be haunted as with a sudden peace, by the echo of that unearthy strain, 'Blest are the departed'. Not less elevating is the poetry than the melody of faith, when it is equally left alone with its first fresh power, and no reduced halfway to prose as a condition of its entrance into worship."

If I was asked to sum up Toplady's hymns in a single word, I think the word would be 'rapturous'. They are not all rapturous, but that is undoubtedly the prevailing undertone of his best work. Listen to the last verse of "Happiness, thou lovely name:"

"Whilst I feel thy love to me,
Ev'ry object teems with joy;
Here O may I walk with thee,
Then into thy presence die!
Let me but thyself possess,
Total sum of happiness!
Real bliss I then shall prove;
Heaven below, and heav'n above."

The third verse of the hymn "Onward Christian Soldiers" is often quoted in satire by those who can only see the divisions
of the Church; they do not realise that the very hymn they quote is evidence of the essential unity of the Church. It is found in the hymnbooks of denominations of widely differing traditions and theological beliefs. Yet, this hymn written primarily for the Anglican Church by a high Churchman, is today the common possession of Christendom. In an article published in the "National Review" July 1903 Mr. Llewellyn Davies writes

"The composition of hymns is one of the surest signs of the spiritual life, and the use of hymns is a wonderful witness of Christian unity." and one might add the surest promise of a Church someday re-united. Yet, whilst differences of theological opinion do obtain it is obvious that hymns which contradict the basic tenet of any denomination must be excluded from that denomination's hymnbook. Bishop Christopher Wordsworth rightly observes,

"Christian poetry ought to be a medium for the conveyance of Christian doctrine. A Church which forgoes the use of hymns in her office of teaching neglects one of the most efficacious instruments for correcting error, and for disseminating truth, as well as for ministering comfort and edification."  

John Wesley looked upon his hymnbook as a "little body of experimental and practical divinity". His descendants apparently do the same, for I notice that whilst the new Methodist Hymnbook gives two of Toplady's hymns, its predecessor gave only one, the additional hymn is not

| "The Church, Dissemt and Nation".
| "The Holy Year" pp. 32-3. (xxxii-xxxiii)
"A Debtor to mercy alone", although every Methodist could sing cheerfully verses one and two, - indeed they might have been written by Charles Wesley himself - it is the third verse would not be accepted:

"My name from the palms of his hands,
Eternity will not erase;
Impressed on his heart it remains,
In marks of indelible grace;
Yes, I to the end shall endure,
As sure as the earnest is given;
More happy but not more secure,
The glorified spirits in heaven."  

Obviously no hymnbook, no matter how wide its sympathies, could include that verse and Charles Wesley's

"Ah! Lord with trembling I confess,
A gracious soul may fall from grace;
The salt may loose its seasoning power,
And never, never find it more.

Lest that my fearful case should be,
Each moment knit my soul to Thee;
And lead me to the mount above,
Through the low vale of humble love."  

As might be expected the Revised Church Hymnary includes "A Debtor to mercy alone" but not "Ah! Lord with trembling I confess" and in this is truly consistent. The two hymns reveal clearly and accurately the Calvinist and Arminian persuasion of the Church to which they belong. But the amazing thing is the number of hymns common to both Churches. In essentials the Christian Church is truly "one in faith, in doctrine, one in charity."

---

| Hymn no. IX Works. Vol. 6. page 402 |
| New Methodist Hymnbook Hymn No. 480 |
It could, I think, be validly maintained that Scriptural language is not an essential of a good hymn; Scriptural allusions, perhaps, but not necessarily Scriptural language. But, whilst not essential it is unquestionably a virtue in a good hymn. The book that moulded the style of Bunyan, so that an almost illiterate tinker could write one of the greatest religious classics, has been the literary as well as the spiritual found of inspiration of countless thousands. The majesty and purity of its diction are an inestimable asset to any who would sing "the Almighty power of God", who, in the fulness of time, sent forth His son, born of a woman, that He might reconcile the world unto Himself.

Toplady's hymns are full of Scriptural allusions, and occasionally he makes effective use of the actual text of Scripture.

"Wounded in our stead he is, Bruised for our iniquities."

"My Guardian, Stay and Leader be, My cloud by day, my fire by night."

This is particularly true of his paraphrases, where of necessity his subject matter is Scriptural.

Hymn XXV Works. Vol. 6. page 416
Hymn XVII Works. Vol. 6 page 409 (Compare page 323 "My lanthorn, guide and leader be, My cloud by day, my fire by night.")
I wish, now, to look at those characteristics of Toplady's hymns that are not reducible to any of the foregoing heads: to examine his similarity to Wesley, his almost entirely personal note, the quiet strain of mysticism that underlies his writings; and lastly - in the next chapter - his theology.

The fact that Sedgwick in his reprint of Toplady's "Poetical Remains" gives a list of seventeen hymns of Charles Wesley attributed to Toplady is significant; and speaks eloquently of the likeness of the two singers. In the compendium in Volume 6 of the "Works" I have been able to find only nine of Charles Wesley's hymns (these are named on page 165). Yet the fact that nine can be wrongly attributed shows that a strong similarity in style existed. His hymns have the tone and even the mannerisms of Charles Wesley. Whether this is due to conscious imitation or not it is impossible to say, but it is not very probable that Toplady was fashioning himself after any; it is much more likely that having been born into a generation used to rhymed couplets and formal metres he moved easily in, what was to him, a natural medium of self-expression. Not only the style but the subject matter of the two hymnists is strikingly similar. The following hymn might easily have come from the pen of Charles Wesley; indeed! when I first read it I immediately turned to see whether it was one that I had marked with the initials "C.W." and was suprised to find that it was not. The hymn is found amongst Toplady's youthful productions, but I feel that I am safe in asserting that it
is the expression not only of a mature mind, but of a sound religious experience.

"O when wilt thou my Saviour be,
O when shall I be clean,
The true, eternal sabbath see,
A perfect rest from sin!
Jesus, the sinner's rest thou art,
From guilt and fear and pain;
While thou art absent from my heart
I look for rest in vain.

The consolations of thy word,
My soul hath long upheld,
The faithful promise of the Lord,
Shall surely be fulfilled:
I look to my Incarnate God,
'Till he his work begin;
And wait till his redeeming blood
Shall cleanse me from all sin.

His great salvation I shall know,
And perfect liberty:
Onward to sin he cannot go
Who e're abides in thee;
Added to the Redeemer's fold,
I shall in him rejoice:
I all his glory shall behold,
And hear my shepherd's voice.

O that I now the voice might hear,
That speaks my sins forgiv'n;
His word is pass'd to give me here
The inward pledge of heav'n:
His blood shall over all prevail,
And sanctify the unclean;
The grace that saves from future hell,
Shall save from present sin.

Truly, this might well have found its place in the Methodist Hymn book, in the section "The Christian Life - Christian Holiness" \{ or in the Revised Church Hymnary in the section "The Christian Life - Prayer, Aspiration and Holiness" \}

\{ Works. Vol. 6. Pages 324-5. Poem XXII \}

\{ In the old Methodist Hymn book this section was called "For believers seeking full redemption". \}
much less worthy items are to be found in both.

Like Charles Wesley Toplady makes great use of the personal pronouns in his hymns, by far the greater part of which are prayers in verse. The following precise abundantly evidences this. In the first section his "Petitionary Hymns" number 42 and of these all but three are in the first person. The other three, numbered 11, 25 & 32, are the only ones in this section in which the plural "us" is to be found. Of the "Hymns of Thanksgiving" six out of fifteen contain the plural, whilst in the last section of 32 hymns, ten use the plural "us" or "we". From this it is apparent that Toplady is mostly conscious of his personal needs, need of God's presence, need of inward assurance, and need to give thanks.

In his polemical writings Toplady has but one theme, and that, the danger of Arminianism. The errors of this system of thought are "legion" and Toplady exhausts his vocabulary in railing against its tenets and those who professed them. Not so his hymns! They are more theological than his "theological dissertations". The hymns reveal a sound orthodoxy unmarred by the inconsistencies that abound in his polemics: although here too Toplady is more emphatic about "election" than he is certain; and one cannot but wonder at the favour of his "metrical" prayers if he was so sure of his election. Why so importunately pray for what God has eternally decreed to give? These two quotations from two of his hymns will
shew what I mean.

"Rise in vengeance from thy seat,
Jesus, Lord make haste to save:
Me, my soul to sift as wheat
Satan hath desired to have;
Let him not too far prevail
Suffer not my faith to fail."

---000---

"Yes! I to the end will endure,
As sure as the earnest is given,
More happy, but not more secure
The glorified spirits in heaven."

As I shall have to stress later, Toplady's prayers and his polemics reveal two strikingly different facets of his character. It has been said that "an Arminian prays like a Calvinist, whilst a Calvinist lives like an Arminian". However true this may be as a universal assertion it is certainly true of Toplady.

Whilst Toplady's Theological dissertations are almost entirely devoted to either an elaboration or defence of the doctrine of "Free Grace" as against "Free Will", little of a controversial character enters into his hymns. True, it is not entirely absent; "Rock of Ages" was no doubt a thrust at Wesley's doctrine of "Christian Perfection". Certainly a good deal of Charles Wesley's time must have been spent in composing certain of his poems; some of which remind one more

\begin{itemize}
\item Italics mine.
\item Poem XVI Works. Vol. 6 pages 320-1
\item Hymn IX Works. Vol. 6 page 403.
\end{itemize}
of "Holy Willie's Prayer" rather than a serious attempt at Christian Apologetics. Toplady in Hymn number five sets forth the "Method of Salvation" each verse of which stresses a particular Calvinistic doctrine. Taking the five points of Calvinism

- Unconditional predestination
- Particular Election
- Efficacious Grace
- Divine reprobation of the wicked
- Final perseverance of the Elect

he devotes to each a separate verse. It was, perhaps, at this particular hymn, though much more likely at Toplady's whole teaching, that Charles Wesley wrote his "Father whose everlasting love". I quote the hymn with its original italics. As the late Bernard Lord Manning observes "Here is a hymn which sounds today as if any one might sing it; but in Wesley's day it was a battle song of militant Arminianism." Originally this hymn contained seventeen verses, some of which are simply appalling.

"Father, whose everlasting love
Thy only Son for sinners gave;
Whose grace to all did freely move,
And sent Him down a world to save.

Help us thy mercy to extol
Immense, unfathomed, unconfined;
To praise the Lamb who died for all
The general Saviour of mankind.

| Works. Vol. 6. page 400
| The Hymns of Wesley and Watts. page 18.
Thy undistinguishing regard
Was cast on Adam's fallen race:
For all Thou hast in Christ prepared,
Sufficient, sovereign, saving grace.

Jesus hath said we all shall hope,
Preventing grace for all is free:
And I, if I be lifted up,
I will draw all men unto Me.

The world He suffered to redeem:
For all He hath the Atonement made:
For those that will not come to Him,
The ransom of His life was paid.

I have already mentioned that Toplady's burlesque was
too bad to be given the added notoriety of repetition, but
some of Charles Wesley's verses are almost as bad; their one
redeeming feature is, that unlike Toplady's, they are not
personal: they attack a dogma, not a fellow preacher.
Seizing upon Calvin's phrase "decretum horribile" which he
preferred to transliterate rather than translate, Charles
Wesley made very merry at the expense of his adversaries' doctrine.

"The righteous God consigned
Them over to their doom,
And sent the Saviour of mankind
To damn them from the womb:

To damn for falling short
Of what they could not do,
For not believing the report
Of that which is not true.

He did not do the deed--
(Some have more mildly raved),
He did not damn them, but decreed
They never should be saved."

Happily this effusion ends with the dedication of himself
to the proclaiming of the gospel of universal redemption.
"My life I here present,
My heart's last drop of blood;
0 let it all be freely spent
In proof that Thou art good:

Art good to all that breathe,
Who all may pardon have:
Whou willest not the sinner's death,
But all the world wouldst save."

At this distance of time from the controversy it is easy to smile at the "absurdities" indulged in by both sides, but the Wesleyan could not tolerate the doctrine that by the arbitrary decree of God, innocent babies were to be consigned to a doom they had never deserved and could not escape. They could not reconcile such a dogma - no matter how iron-bound its logic - with the teaching and example of Him who took little children in His arms and blessed them, saying 'of such is the Kingdom of Heaven'. With vehemence Charles Wesley cries

"Take back my interest in Thy blood,
Unless it streamed for all the race."

This doctrine of election ag against Universal redemption is implicit in certain of Toplady's hymns, but does not obtrude itself upon the reader. In his apologetics the theme is expounded ad nauseam, but it has to be looked for in the hymns. References such as the following are tucked away in various of his poems:

"Chosen of thee ere time began
I'll choose thee in return."

"The people of his choice,
He will not cast away."
"Sorrows and agonies and death,
Thou didst endure for me,
When all the sins of God's elect
Were made to meet on thee."

"And angels elect are sent down
To guard the elect of mankind."

"Not one of all the chosen race,
But shall to heaven attain."

"Jesus the lover of his own,
Will love me to the end."

"Not one object of his care
Ever suffered shipwreck there."

It will be obvious from these quotations and from other parts of his hymns that Toplady as a hymn writer is not the pungent controversialist revealed by his theological dissertations. His style is much less aggressive. Throughout his hymns there runs a quiet strain of mysticism. Had Toplady been told he was a mystic he would, doubtless, have vigorously denied it, and certainly there is no trace of mysticism in the dissertations just referred to; but as a hymn writer Toplady's soul winged its way to God: he found happiness in the fellowship of Jesus the crucified.

"Object of my first desire,
Jesus crucified for me!
All to happiness aspire,
Only to be found in Thee:
Thee to praise, and thee to know,
Constitute my bliss below;
Thee to see, and thee to love,
Constitute our bliss above."

Works. Vol. 6. page 410: 413: 415
He longed for the companionship of Christ, which was more to him than all to be desired:

"Compared with Christ, in all beside
No comeliness I see:
The one thing needful dearest Lord,
Is to be one with thee."

He rejoiced in the knowledge of the witness within:

"Witness of Christ within my heart,
My interest in his love display;
My interest in that better part,
Which never can be torn away."

Toplady's mysticism might be defined as the "flight of his lonely soul to the Alone God", he might well have written Charles Wesley's lines "Thou Shepherd of Israel and mine,"

"Ah! show me that happiest place,
The place of thy people's above,
Where saints in an ecstasy gaze,
And hang on a crucified God;
Thy love for a sinner declare,
Thy passion and death on the tree;
My spirit to Calvary bear,
To suffer and triumph with Thee."

'Tis there, with the lambs of Thy flock
There only, I covet to rest,
To lie at the foot of the rock,
Or rise to be hid in Thy breast;
'Tis there I would always abide,
And never a moment depart,
Concealed in the cleft of Thy side,
Eternally held in Thy heart."

He did write one of his grandest hymns on a similar theme and in similar strain, whilst the shades lengthened around him. His "When languor and disease invade this trembling house of clay" is a truly magnificent hymn. Unsuit,
as I have already observed, to congregational singing it yet
breathes the mystical language of one who knew that he was
but a sojourner here and that his citizenship was in heaven.
Whilst free from the extravagances of the "Quietism" that
prevailed amongst certain of the Christians of his day, he
could yet draw aside from the world of sin and noise and wait
with quiet spirit to hear that comfortable voice, which is

"Never in the whirlwind found
Or where earthquakes rock the place."

Toplady quietly trusted in God, and was not confounded; he
believed that the Father who stills the famished raven's cry
would grant him

"Even in affliction peace."

He was anxious for nothing but the presence of his Lord.

"Anxious, Lord for nothing here,
In every straight I look to thee;
Humbly cast my every care,
On Him that cares for me.

Never would I grieve for ought,
So Christ is mine and I am his;
I would never by taking thought,
Obstruct my inward peace.

He shall dwell in perfect rest
Whose mind is stayed on Thee,
Whom to keep within my breast,
My every care shall be;

View the lilies of the field;
They grow, but neither toil nor spin,
By their Maker's arm upheld,
Who clothes the earth with green.

See the ravens, day by day
Their Maker gives them food,
Lions rearing for their prey,
Do seek their meat from God;

Lean thou on his faithful word,
Nor by distrust provoke his wrath,
Cast thy burden on the Lord,
O thou of little faith."

Listen to a verse of his "Chamber Hymn":

"From evil secure and its dread,
I rest if my Saviour is nigh,
And songs his kind presence indeed
Shall in the night season supply;
He smiles and my comforts abound,
His grace as the dew shall descend,
And walls of salvation surround,
The soul he delights to defend."

and to his last hymn "The Dying believer to his Soul", which, I think, is one of his greatest, and so I propose to quote it in full; and then turn to an examination of the doctrinal teaching of his hymns as distinct from that of his polemical works.

"Deathless principle, arise;
Sear, thou native of the skies.
Pearl of price, by Jesus bought,
Ye his glorious likeness wrought,
Go, to shine before his throne;
Deck his mediatorial crown:
Go, his triumphs to adorn:
Made for God, to God return.

Le, he beckons from on high!
Fearless to his presence fly:
Thine the merit of his blood;
Thine the righteousness of God.

Angles, joyful to attend,
Nefering round thy pillow bend;
Wait to catch the signal giv'n,
And escort thee quick to heaven.

Is thy earthly house distresser?
Willing to retain her guest?
'Tis not thou, but she must die:
Fly, celestial tenant, fly.
Burst thy shackles, drop thy clay,
Sweetly breathe myself away:
Swinging, to thy crown remove;
Swift of wing, and fir'd with love.

Shudder not to pass the stream:
Venture all thy care on him;
Him, whose drying love and power
Still'd its tossing, hushed its fear.

[...]

[...]

[...]

[...]

[...]

[...]

[...]
Safe is the expanded wave;  
Gentle as a summer's eve;  
Not one object of his care  
Ever suffered shipwreck there.  
See the haven full in view!  
Leve divine shall bear thee through.  
Trust to that propitious gale;  
Weigh thy anchor, spread thy sail.

Saints, in glory perfect made,  
Wait thy passage through the shade:  
Ardent for thy coming o'er  
See, thy thron the blissful shore.  
Mount, their transports to improve:  
Join the longing their above:  
Swiftly to their wish be giv'n:  
Kindle higher joy in heaven.  
----Such the prospects that arise  
  To the dying Christian's eyes!  
  Such the glorious vista, Faith  
  Opens through the shades of death!
Chapter 8.

TOPLADY THE HYMN-WRITER.

Doctrine.

Toplady's hymns are best characterised by his own term "stubborn orthodoxy". They are unquestionably the orthodoxy of his day. Commencing from the doctrine of the Sovereignty of God he unfolds the "plan of salvation".

Man is sinful and in his sinfulness, helpless; but by God incarnate in Christ Jesus he is redeemed by the death of the Cross and made fit for the heaven he has never deserved and which he, unaided, could never have attained. This, in a sentence, is the "theology" of Toplady's hymns. A student of Toplady's hymns cannot help being struck by the fewness of his references to the Church, and to the fact that he never once writes on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. The main theme of Toplady is his need of God and his confidence in Christ's Atoning work.

Toplady's DOCTRINE OF GOD.

God is supreme and absolute. He is the creator and father of mankind, and also Father of the Elect by Grace. It is He who through His Spirit convicts men of sin, and He alone, in Christ, is Saviour. By His eternal decree, sworn

\[ \text{In Poem xxv. Vol. 6. page 327, Toplady has written on the text I Cor. X 31; but it is not a hymn on the Holy Communion as it is a "grace before meat".} \]
before the world was, He has saved His own. Men in His sight are sinful worms, and as such have no claim on either His mercy or His grace. His throne is in the heavens and before Him all created things must bow. In places He is portrayed as cruel, capricious and revengeful. True! when so portrayed it is when Toplady is paraphrasing certain Old Testament passages. Storms are the weapons of His wrath, and in all the wonders of the firmament His glory is revealed. Little in Toplady's hymns suggests the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, it is Jehovah that is revealed. Jehovah, righteous in anger, and yet to fulfil His eternal decree is prepared to shew a merciful face to some, but to others, the iron hand of implacable wrath. Indeed! before He forgives the few He has to be propitiated by the sacrifice of His Son. Listen as Toplady sings of His God.

"The sky's a veil, the outward scene
Proclaims the majesty within;
Which boundless light, tho' hid behind,
Breaks out too great to be confined.

The heaven thy glorious impress wears,
Thine image glitters in the stars:
The firmament, thine high abode,
Seems too the spangled robe of God.

Whene'er its beauty I admire,
Its radiant globes direct me high'r,
In silent praise they point to thee,
All light, all eye, all majesty!

Yes, Lord, each shining orb declares
Thy name in dazzling characters;
As precious gems they dart their rays,
And seem to form a crown of praise."
Yet this majestic Being who asks for love and obedience can also act like a spoilt child demanding not only propitiation but revenge.

"In vain my judgments are abroad, Tokens of an offended God; Nor wrath, nor mercies can prevail, Nor love of heaven nor fear of hell.

I gave you, in your greatest need, Cleanliness of teeth, through want of bread; Each face was pale, and weak each knee, Yet have ye not returned to me.

Have I not marred the ripening grain, With scorching heat and want of rain? And frustrated your rising hopes, By withered trees and blasted crops?

Your figs and olive trees I smote, Your vineyards I consumed with drought; Mildew and canker-worms bereft The earth of what the drought had left.

Hear then the message of the Lord, The awful thunder of His word: Since all my judgments strive in vain To kindle fear in stubborn man.

Myself in judgment shall appear, And call thee Israel to my bar: As hardened Pharaoh blind and proud, Prepare to meet Thy hostile God.

Prepare to meet your dreadful foe, Omniscient and Almighty too: Whose terrors heaven and earth proclaim, The God of glory is his name."

The God Toplady has portrayed here is one that demands love with menaces.

"Then shall they cry to me in vain: Thou asked with tears, no aid I'll grant, Because they did my words disdain, And trample on my covenant.

Me for their God they will not have,
Therefore I give them to the sword:

When wilt thou turn to me thy God?
When wilt thou seek my injured face?
'Till then my wrath shall drench in blood,
The hardened unbelieving race.

It is only fair to emphasise that Toplady is here paraphrasing Old Testament prophecies, but even then, these paraphrases make more terrible reading than the Scriptures themselves.

In one of his hymns to the Trinity, Toplady addresses the Almighty as "Father, Creator of mankind" whilst in another place he speaks of Him as "My Father too by grace". It is doubtless to the eternal decree that Toplady is here referring, for he emphasises that God chose his own when He laid the foundations of the earth.

"Eternal hallelujahs
Be to the Father given,
Who loved his own
Ere time begun,
And marked them out for heaven".

On this theme he has much to say.

"But not for works which we have done,
Or shall hereafter do;
Hath God decreed on sinful worms,
Salvation to bestow.

The glory Lord, from first to last
Is due to thee alone,
Aught to ourselves, we dare not take
Or rob thee of thy crown.

Hymn V page 346 Vol. 6.
Para. XIV page 373 Vol. 6.
Our glorious surety undertook
To satisfy for men,
And grace was given us in him
Before the world began.

This is thy will, that in thy love
We ever should abide,
And lo we earth and hell defy
To make thy counsel void.

Not one of all the chosen race
But shall to heaven attain;
Partake on earth the promised grace,
And then with Jesus reign.

Toplady's **DOCTRINE OF CHRIST:**

Toplady's doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ is marked by a sound orthodoxy. There is no flirting with Unitarianism in his writings. Jesus is the Son of God, yea Jesus is God Incarnate. The Son is eternal with the Father; He is *Very God of very God*, begotten, not made, being of one substance with Father, by whom all things were made. Concerning this truth he raises his voice in mellifluent tones.

"Salvation to thy name;
Eternal God, and co-eternal Lamb,
In power, in glory, and in essence, one."  

"All our sins, dear Lamb of God,
Are for Thy sake forgiven,
Jesus thy restoring blood
Entitles men to heaven;
Self existent, Lord of all,
Uncreate, with God the same,
Bought by thee on thee we call,
Exulting in thy name."

In a hymn entitled "Christ the Light of his people" he uses the following phrase:

"Shine then thou uncreated ray!"

---

Few modern theologians would contest Toplady's writings on the subject of the Person of Christ, but they would have little hesitancy in rejecting his interpretation of Christ's Saving Work. It is on the question of the Atonement that Toplady, whilst faithful enough to the orthodoxy of his day, antagonises the modern reader. The picture Toplady paints of God in His relation to Christ is a very different one from that painted by our Lord Himself. Jesus says nothing about bearing the anger of God and of His being made a curse for man, and a punishment for his sin. Such a conception of the Atonement makes God an ogre. It is the Old Testament conception of sacrifice which colours all Toplady's soteriological thinking. Jesus is a vicarious offering: He is a ransom: He bears His Father's wrath: He is made a curse for man: He endures man's penalty and punishment. The following quotations are typical of Toplady's teaching of Christ's atoning work.

"Slain in the guilty sinner's stead,
His spotless righteousness I plead,
And His availing blood:
Thy merit, Lord, my robe shall be,
Thy merit, shall atone for me,
And bring me near to God."

"Object of my first desire
Jesus crucified for me."

"Guilty and worthless as I am,
It all for me was giv'n;
And boldness through His blood I have,
To enter into heaven."
"To Jesus our friend,
Our thanks shall ascend,
Who saves to the utmost, and loves to the end;
Our ransom he paid,
In his merit arrayed
We attain to the glory for which we were made."

............... 

"Whom heaven's angelic host adores,
Was slaughtered for our sin,
The guilt, O Lord, was wholly ours,
The punishment was thine:
Our God in flesh to set us free,
Was manifested here;
And meekly bare our sins that we
His righteousness might wear.

Imputatively guilty then
Our substitute was made,
That we the blessings might obtain
For which his blood was shed."

............... 

"Jesus was punished in my stead,
Without the gate my surety bled
To expiate my stain."

............... 

"Amazed, O earth, the tidings hear;
He bore, that we might never bear,
His Father's righteous ire."

............... 

"The Lord of life, who suffered death
That we might heaven regain:
The source of blessing, who on earth,
Was made a curse for man."

............... 

It will be obvious from these quotations that there is little in Toplady's gospel that suggests an anxious Father
on the house-top scanning the horizon in search of a returning son. The emphasis is almost entirely on Christ's agony and bloody sweat as a sacrifice that propitiates an angry God. Very definitely there is no suggestion whatever of what would now be called "The Moral Persuasion Theory". The Cross is much more Godward directed than it is manward. Toplady is endeavouring to make the sinner favourable in God's sight by the substitution of one acceptable to God. He does not stop to ask himself the question "What difference does the Cross make to God?" If it makes any difference at all it cuts at the root of his main argument, for in effect it means that something done in time has wrought a change in God; where, then, the doctrine of Immutability? There is little here to suggest an irrevocable decree, for the time factor has definitely altered the divine outlook. It is not much use to say in reply (as Toplady might have done) that God eternally decreed His own change of heart by an act to be done in time; for if God could so decree he could equally well have decreed that no such change would be necessary.

The legalism of Toplady carries no conviction today, rather is it the outraged love of the Father who gives His very self, who reveals once in time what He is eternally; who from His cross offers salvation to all who pass by. The picture of an angry Father will never lure men from the sin that ensnares by its pleasure. It is when the grace of God constrains the sinner to watch with
his Saviour beneath the deepening shadows of the olive trees, and see his sweat of blood, or to follow in the wake of the rabble hordé and stand in the judgment hall to behold his Redeemer scourged, and later to see Him sink beneath the weight of His jübbe, ere He is lifted up to die. It is when man hears the last expiring cry that shakes the earth and veils the sun, that, with the Roman centurion, he exclaims "Truly this was the Son of God!". No suggestion of propitiation, no violated honour appeased, no blood-dripping sacrifice upon an altar, only a Father's heart broken appeal to those who had scorned and rejected Him. Well might Charles Wesley sing:

"Tis Love! tis Love! Thou diedst for me! I hear Thy whisper in my heart; The morning breaks the shadows flee; Pure universal love thou art; To me, to all, Thy mercies move; Thy nature and Thy Name is Love."

\[ R.C.H. Hymn 416. \]
\[ It need scarcely be said that Charles Wesley does not always reach this height; like Toplady he writes of an angry God. \]

"For what you have done His blood must atone: The Father hath stricken for you His dear Son. The Lord, in the day of His anger, did lay Your sins on the Lamb, and He bore them away."

"His death is my plea; My advocate see, And hear the blood speak that hath answered for me My ransom He was when He bled on the Cross And by losing His life He hath carried my cause."

\[ Hymn No. 161: Methodist Hymn Book 1904 Edition. \]
Toplady's emphasis is unquestionably Levitical. Washed in blood is a theme of which he never tires and to which he returns again and again. On occasions it is "drowned in blood!".

"All my sins imputed were
To my dear, Incarnate God;
Buried in His grave they are,
Drowned in his atoning blood."

Sometimes his imagery is even more revolting as when he speaks of a "slaughtered lamb".

"Dying Redeemer, Slaughtered Lamb
Thou pourest out thy blood for me."

This blood of Atonement appeases God, cleanses His Church, and brings men to heaven:

"O precious blood, O glorious death,
By which the sinner lives!
When stung with sin, this blood we view,
And all our joy revives.

We flourish as the watered herb,
Who keep this blood in sight,
The blood that chases our distress
And makes our garments white.

The blood that purchased our release,
And washes out our stains,
We challenge earth and hell to show,
A sin it cannot cleanse.

Our scarlet crimes are made as wool,
And we brought nigh to God:
Thanks to that wrath appeasing death;
That heaven procuring blood.

The blood that makes his glorious Church
From every blemish free;
And, O the riches of his love!
He poured it out for me."
Guilty and worthless as I am,
It all for me was given;
And boldness, through his blood, I have,
To enter into heaven.

Thither in my great surety's right,
I surely shall be brought!
He could not agonize in vain,
Nor spend his strength for nought.

He wills that I and all his sheep,
Should reign with him in bliss;
And power he has to execute
Whatere his will decrees.

The Father's everlasting love,
And Jesus precious blood,
Shall be our endless themes of praise;
In yonder blest abode."

"There is healing in the pain of Christ" writes Toplady in one of his Epitaphs.

"By virtue of his dying pains
She finds the rest that still remains
For every child of God".

Christ's healing and cleansing blood is efficacious for the direst outcast, for Christ "was bent the worst to save": and He

"Can make the foulest clean
Can wash the Ethiopian white,
And change the leopard's skin."

Throughout Toplady's hymns it is the legalistic interpretation of the Atonement that prevails. It is atonement by blood, but mostly in terms of the sinner's "crime", his "penalty", his "sentence" or his "reprieve".
"Look on the wounds of Christ for me,  
My sentence graciously reprieve:  
Extend thy peaceful sceptre, Lord,  
And bid the dying traitor live."  

"Jesus, by whose grace I live,  
From the fear of evil kept,  
Thou hast lengthened my reprieve,  
Held in being while I slept."  

"My crimes he did on Calvary bear,  
The blood that flowed for sinners there  
Shall cleanse me from them all."  

"From thy supreme tribunal, Lord,  
Where justice sits severe,  
I to thy mercy seat appeal,  
And beg forgiveness there.  
Tho' I had sinned before the throne  
My advocate I see:  
Jesus, be thou my judge, and let  
My sentence come from thee.  
The law was satisfied by him  
Who flesh naked for me was made:  
Its penalty he underwent,  
Its precepts he obeyed."  

It will be apparent from these quotations and from the 
tenor of Toplady's theology as a whole, that there is 
little place for mercy. Toplady would have denied this;  
he would have held that it was on the Lord's mercy we were  
not consumed; but what mercy is shewn is shewn only to the  
elect. God could have condemned all his creation, and all  

| Works. Vol. 6 page 309. | Ibid. page 310. |
| " 6 " 318. | " 334-5. |
were equally deserving of that condemnation, but it pleased Him to shew His mercy by electing before the foundation of the world those who were to be the recipients of His favour and His grace. Nevertheless, throughout Toplady's writings there runs a stern, forbidding note. In his polemics, as will be shown later, there is an unbending necessitarianism: from a Sovereign will there follows an inexorable decree. Logic runs riot and produces a caricature of the Divine love. How much nearer is Horatius Bonar to the heart of God when he sings of His love, "eternal and yet ever new"?

Toplady's **DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT & THE TRINITY**.

Toplady is a Trinitarian: of that there is no doubt. One of his best hymns is addressed "To the Blessed Spirit", whilst other three are also addressed to the Holy Spirit and the Trinity; these are separate from references in his other hymns of which there are not a few. It should, however, be noted that they are references, rather than an attempt to develop any systematic treatise. Toplady simply accepts the teaching of the creeds without criticism or elaboration. God and the Holy Spirit are One. God is Co-eternal with the Spirit. Jesus is addressed as

"Our triune, sovereign, our propitious Lord!"

The Holy Spirit is a subject of praise and a recipient of prayer. In His omniscient wisdom He knows the number of the grains of sand. He is the source of light,
consolation, unction and power: He guards, guides, teaches, supports and enlightens man, in whose heart He makes known and seals the peace of God.

I will give the whole of Toplady's Hymn "To the Blessed Spirit" and indicate his references in other places.

"Holy Ghost, dispel our sadness,
Pierce the clouds of sinful night,
Come thou source of sweetest gladness,
Breathe thy life and spread thy light!
Loving Spirit, God of peace,
Great distributor of grace,
Rest upon this congregation,
Hear, 0 hear our supplication.

From that height which knows no measure,
As a gracious shower descend;
Bringing down the richest treasure,
Man can wish or God can send;
0 thou glory shining down
From the Father and the Son,

Grant us thy illumination!
Rest upon this congregation.

Come, thou best of all donations,
God can give, or we implore;
Having thy sweet consolations,
We need wish for nothing more;
On our souls thy graces shower;
Author of the new creation,
Make our hearts thy habitation.

Known to thee are all recesses
Of the earth, and spreading skies;
Every sand the shore possesses,
Thy omniscient mind describes:
Holy fountain wash us clean;
Both from error and from sin!
Let us fly what thou refusest,
And delight in what thou choosest.
Please return to pages 157 ff found between pages 107 and 108. Fastened together with paper clip. These pages were unfortunately misplaced in this copy during binding.

J.Y.
Toplady calls his hymn "A living and dying prayer for the Holiest Believer in the world", but it is also a living and dying prayer for the most hopeless sinner. Before the love of which "Rock of Ages" sings, neither passion nor pride can have a place.

But this hymn is not only concerned with the doctrine of justification by faith, and the utter helplessness of man to merit salvation; it makes reference to Toplady's conception of heaven; and to this return will be made a little later in this chapter.

Before leaving the subject of "Grace" in Toplady's hymns, reference must be made to his doctrine of election. As already pointed out this doctrine does not intrude itself upon the readers' notice, yet it is clearly taught. The sinner is justified by grace only if his justification was decreed of God ere time began. Nothing that the individual may do - be his actions good or bad - can influence his acceptance with God; he is saved or lost according to the eternal decree. Toplady regards "Election" as the "fairest daughter of Eternity"

"Electing goodness firm and free,
My whole salvation hangs on thee,
Eldest and fairest daughter of eternity."

It is curious that Toplady is not able to perceive his own inconsistency in his doctrine of election; this is particularly

Works. Vol. 6 page 396.
Compare with verse 4 on page 407 of Vol. 6.
true of his apologetics; but even in his hymns he tries to reconcile (perhaps not consciously) the Necessitarianism that flows from the eternal decree with individual effort and resolve. Not infrequently he urges his hearers to "cast themselves on God", to choose Christ, or to forgo self-righteousness, quite regardless of the fact that such an act of self-determination is quite impossible in a system of iron-bound necessitarianism, such as his. But this point will be examined in detail in the next chapter.

Toplady's ESCHATOLOGY:

Few, even amongst the obscurantists, would today accept Toplady's eschatological teaching; though it was doubtless regarded as "sound doctrine" in his day. His concept of both heaven and hell is spatial. Heaven is a place above the skies and is the home of the Church Triumphant. Here the redeemed, delivered from the shackles of the spirit-imprisoning body stand before the throne and

"There, for ever, Sing the Lamb's new song of love."

The Saviour receives

"The faithful few, who for His sake On earth were justified:"

and reveals Himself to them wearing

".......that very flesh On which my guilt was lain;"

"Praise thou curtain of the sky, (Hiding heaven from mortal eye)" Vol. 6 page 357
Toplady's own phrase: see Vol.6 page 421 & page 422 verse 4.
Works Vol. 6 page 345 verse 10. Ibid page 388
Seeing that the occupants of hell are, according to Toplady, doomed to that terrible fate before they were conceived, one wonders why we should either seek to importune them before they reach there, or portray the misery that awaits them when they arrive. In his hymn on Judgment he does both.

"See next the guilty crowd arise, 
Beholding, with reluctant eyes, 
The glories of the Lamb, 
While taunting fiends impatient wait, 
To hurl them from the judgment seat, 
To hell's eternal flame.

Hark! as they mount, by devils borne, 
To meet their judge, on earth their scorn, 
Despairingly they cry 
'Fall on us rocks with all your load 
And screen us from the wrath of God, 
And hide us from his eye."

What thought can paint their black despair, 
Who this tremendous sentence hear, 
Irrevocably given, 
"Depart ye cursed, into hell, 
With everlasting burnings dwell 
Remote from me and heaven?"

Then follows this curious verse:

"But O thou saviour of mankind, 
Display thy power, and to the blind 
Effectual light afford: 
Snatch them from unbelief, 
And now compel them to come in, 
And tremble at thy word."

to be followed by one even more curious from the pen of one who believes in absolute predestination.

"Ye reasoners, make the wisest choice; 
Listen in time, to reason's voice, 
Nor dare almighty ire: 
Turn, lest my hottest wrath ye feel, 
And find, too late, the flames of hell 
No metaphoric fire."
The inconsistencies in this hymn are so glaring that one is amazed to think that a scholar versed in metaphysics could possibly overlook them. In the last verse an appeal is made to reason and to choice. When we ask a person to "turn" we presuppose a volitional reaction, but where can there be free volition or free choice on the part of a being whose destiny was determined er he was conceived, or "time began its race"? Such an appeal is but a mockery of one's impotence.

Toplady does not hesitate to dogmatise, but does not see that if every volition is but a link in an endless chain of cause and effect, and nothing can be other than it is, then his thinking cannot be other than it is. His conclusions are always contained in his first premises and in consequence his argument is a petitio principii. If nothing can be other than it is, and that by divine decree, then my whole system of philosophy cannot be other than it is; such reasoning is self-destructive for I cannot help thinking as I do, and I cannot even criticise my thinking, since there is no knowable standard. This was one of the problems confronting the Sophists. It confronted Toplady, but he did not face up to it. In the next chapter we will see how Toplady riots in confusion as he tries to reconcile Necessitarianism and moral responsibility.
Chapter 9

TOPLADY--THE THEOLOGIAN.

It is essential, for an understanding of Toplady, that it be remembered that nowhere does he set out to outline a system of theology. He is not writing a treatise on Christian Apologetics, he is engaged in controversy. This accounts for his uncompromising and dogmatic tone and also for what appears to be almost endless repetition. Again and again he traverses the same ground repeating the same arguments and replying to the same criticisms.

His two largest works are a vindication of Calvinism as the teaching of the Anglican Church. In these two treatises, as already observed, Toplady is not so much concerned with the truth or error of Calvinism, but with the question whether it is or is not the teaching of the Church of England.

In his other works he is either expounding or defending the doctrine of "Free Grace"; or else exposing the iniquity of his opponents' doctrine of "Free will". At times it seems that the latter is his chief concern. It is open to question whether Toplady is really a "Calvinist". I hazard the suggestion that he could more truly be designated an anti-Arminian, or, more simply, a Necessitarian. He is prepared to call himself a "Fatalist" so long as he can use the prefix Christian.
Calvin arrived at the doctrine of Predestination by logical reasoning, and admitted that the decree was "awe-full"; but Toplady makes it the foundation and cornerstone of his whole thesis. Calvin is in a sense apologetic concerning the "decretum horribile", but Toplady glories in it. He is at great pains to expound the Latin "horribilis" and to expose the dishonesty of Wesley and Sellon in transliterating the phrase rather than translating it. Calvin had said "Decretum quidem horribile fateror; inficiari tamen nemo poterit, quin praesciverit Deus, quem exitum esset habiturus homo, antequam ipsum conderet." Concerning this Toplady is at pains to say, "Calvin might well term God's adorable and inscrutable purpose respecting the fall of man decretum horribile: not an horrible, but an awful, a tremendous and a venerable decree. A decree, the divine motives to which can never be investigated by human reason, in its present benighted state; and concerning which, we can only say in the language of Scripture, How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

Calvin found Predestination inherent in his system, it was the corollary of the doctrine of the Sovereignty of God, but Toplady commences with the doctrine of Predestination and adduces God's Sovereignty in support.

When Toplady is not extolling Calvinism he is exposing the fallacies of the followers of Arminius whose
"heresies", he maintained, were "the grand religious evil of the age" and the chief cause of the spiritual poverty of the people. "We have generally forsaken the principles of the Reformation" he writes, "and Ichabod, or thy glory is departed, has been written, on most of our pulpits and church doors, ever since." This is scarcely surprising if Arminianism was half so dangerous a doctrine as Toplady suggests, he even goes so far as to say it is Atheism.

This statement, found in his Preface to Zanchius's discourse on Predestination, may be advanced as a sample of Toplady's logic; there he says "I defy all the sophistry of man, to strike out a middle way. He that made all things, either directs all things that he has made, or has consigned them over to chance. But, what is chance? a name for nothing. Arminianism, therefore, is atheism." He further suggests that its coincidence with pelagianism makes it favourable to the Vatican, in that it makes easy the transition to Popery. "I must repeat that Arminianism 'came from Rome,' and leads thither again". In section two of the first volume of his Works, which is headed, 'Arminianism charged and proved on the Church of Rome', Toplady labours to vindicate this statement; and to do so gives thirteen extracts from the decrees of the Council of Trent. It is hard to say whether the Church of Rome or the doctrines of Arminius are the more hateful to Toplady. Incidentally he seems to have
forgotten that the Council of Trent had been in session fifteen years before Arminius was born. Certainly, in Toplady's opinion, the Roman Catholic Church was "the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." The most exquisite insult he could hurl against Wesley (and let it be said again, for sheer insolence and studied rudeness Toplady stands unsurpassed) is to accuse him of philandering with Rome.

Toplady's two main works reveal a diligent student, but whilst he delves deeply into history and quotes scores of authorities for his position, he completely ignores or misrepresents facts that weigh against him. His zeal blinds his vision, and it does not seem ever to dawn upon him that he could possibly be in error. As one writer has sarcastically observed, "It would appear from Toplady's dogmatism that he had been a privy councillor before the foundation of the world, and enjoyed the confidence of the Almighty before He promulgated the eternal decrees." His representation of Wesley's theology is illustration of his incompetence fairly to evaluate evidence, other than that which favours his cause. If Toplady's judgment is accepted the cultured John Wesley, sometime Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, and the "illiterate" Thomas Olliver, author of "The God of Abraham Praise" preached a gospel which was a mixture of "Heathenism, Pelagianism, manichaeism and Antinomianism".
Any student of Church History knows that none of the heresies just named, could truly be regarded as part of the teaching of Arminius. He was no dualist as were the Manichaeans, nor did he believe, with Pelagius, that children were born without moral inheritance. He emphasised man's need of grace and was as ardent a believer as Toplady in man's inability to save himself, and of his entire dependence upon the Holy Spirit's energies. Further to describe as an "atheist" a scholar and a saint of the calibre of Arminius, is a perversion of language as well as a pathetic illustration of Toplady's readiness to vilify the dead as well as the living. Moreover, when in support of his opinion that Arminius was an atheist, he states that James I so described him, one feels that he must have been hard pressed for an "authority". This is the more apparent when he advances as evidence of the "obscurity of Arminius" the fact that the Royal Theologian had not heard of him until after he was dead. It is scarcely too much to assert that Arminius was one of the most outstanding figures of his generation; certainly a Professor of Divinity around whose person a fierce controversy is raging, is not one to whom the term "obscure" could fittingly be applied. But such is Toplady's obsession with abstract theological theory that concrete facts are overlooked. It has been said that "those well versed in the recondite, often find the obvious out of their focus", so must it have been with Toplady.
It is true that in a footnote to his translation of Zanchius, Toplady appends an outline of the salient features of Arminianism, but to a superficial reader it is clear that he is presenting them in as unfavourable light as he can. He is arranging his skittles so as to make them easy targets; so antagonised is Toplady by the faith he once embraced, that he is not able to represent it as it was really taught. Instead he exhausts his tempestuous vocabulary in railing against it. The following quotations from his writings are typical. "Your Lordships lament the visible encroachments of Popery.---Arminianism is at once its root, its sunshine and its vital sap. Arminianism has opened the hatches to this pernicious inundation." Arminianism is the pandorean box from which this evil also hath issued.

And though Methodism appears, at present, rather to resemble

"The Arminians will not allow election to be an eternal, peculiar unconditional and irreversible act of God. They assert, that Christ died, equally and indiscriminately, for every individual of mankind; for them that perish, no less than for them that are saved. That Saving grace is tendered to the acceptance of every man, which he may or may not receive, just as he pleases. Consequently the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit is not invincible, but is suspended, for its efficacy, on the will of man. That saving grace is not an abiding principle; but those who are loved of God, ransomed by Christ, and born again of the spirit, may (let God wish and strive ever so much to the contrary) throw all away, and perish eternally at last."

"Works" Vol. V. p.184

Works Vol. 2 page 353
a standing pool, than an increasing stream; we know not how soon it may become a running water, and enlarge itself into an overflowing flood; if the corrupt tenets vented with such raging zeal in Mr. Wesley's meeting houses, should, unhappily, be re-echoed from the pulpits of the established Church. "Arminianism lies within a bow shot of Socinianism and Deism." "Who sees not, that the Arminian scheme, if probed to the bottom, opens by necessary consequence, the flood gates of practical licentiousness; and with all its pretences to good works is, in reality, but varnished antinomianism?" One could go on indefinitely, but enough has been quoted to show that Toplady regarded Arminianism "as the gangrene of the age," its teaching is likened unto Joseph's coat of many colours; whilst Calvinism is a seamless robe.

At the outset of this chapter I questioned whether Toplady could truly be called a "Calvinist", and whilst I am of the opinion that John Calvin might have hesitated to have included him amongst his disciples, I still recognise that Toplady was a Calvinist in that he was a predestinarian; but, as previously emphasised, whilst predestination was the corollary of Calvin's doctrine of God, it is the starting point of Toplady's theology and the plumb-line by which every doctrine is tested.
This is soon clear to any reader of Toplady; for no matter what text he seeks to elucidate, he either starts from or arrives at the doctrine of Election. It is his one theme and all his other theological teaching is incidental to it. Even his sermon on "God's Mindfulness of Man" is an exposition of Predestination: and despite the fact that he takes his text from Psalm 8, he commences with the assertion that the Messiah is the Creator, and that God's mindfulness of man was manifested, before time began, in the eternal decree. In short, Toplady's theology, as contained in his polemical Works, can be summed up in a sentence: "God, from all eternity, decrees the salvation of some, and the damnation of others, and that quite irrespective of human effort and moral worth." The following quotations from his translation of Zanchius are typical of his whole philosophy.

"God did from eternity, decree, to make man in His own image; and also decreed to suffer him to fall from that image in which he should be created, and, thereby, to forfeit the happiness with which he was invested: which decree, and the consequences of it, were not limited to Adam only; but included, and extended to, all his natural posterity."

"We assert, that as all men, universally, are not elected to salvation, so neither are all men, universally, ordained to condemnation."

"Those who are ordained unto eternal life, were not so ordained on account of any worthiness foreseen in them, or of any good works to be wrought by them; nor yet for their future faith: but, purely and solely, of free sovereign grace, and according to the mere pleasure of God."
"Not one of the elect can perish, but they must all necessarily be saved. The reason is this: because God simply and unchangeably wills, that all and every one of these, whom he hath appointed to life; should be eternally glorified."

"Of those whom God hath predestinated, none can perish, inasmuch as they are his own elect."

"The non-elect were predestined, not only to continue in final impenitency, sin and unbelief; but were likewise, for such their sins, righteously appointed to infernal death hereafter."

From the foregoing it will be seen that Toplady was not so much "a man of one book" as a man of one theme. True, he holds, and holds tenaciously, that his teaching is the "sincere milk of the word", and "with the stone of God's word" in his hand, he is prepared to meet all assailants of his creed. Toplady's "standards", then, are primarily "the Word of God as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments" and teaching embodied in the XXXIX Articles of the Anglican Church. These he further upholds by his reading and his historical researches.

As one would expect the teaching of Toplady concerning the Bible was the "orthodoxy" of his day. In uncompromising language he upholds the teaching of the

Works vol. 5 p. 245. † Ibid p. 255.
Order of Ordination of Church of Scotland.
Toplady's phrase. See page vol.
It is interesting to note, in passing, that whilst Toplady speaks in the superlative of Calvin, and of his Institutes, he makes very little reference to them, or to the Westminster Confession. It is to Zanchius that he turns most readily for support.
Reformers, who in the place of an infallible Church had set up an infallible book. Toplady, as pointed out in the previous chapter, did not give much place to "Natural Theology"; it was true that God had revealed Himself in His creation, but He had also given the added light of His Word; and it is to this Word that Toplady makes his appeal.

In a sermon to his fellow clergymen (Clerical Subscription no Grievance) he says,

"I begin with the divine inspiration of the writings of the Old Testament. The authenticity of those inestimable books has received the repeated sanction of Christ's unerring attestation....Those writings He frequently quoted, and to them He frequently appealed, as sacred and infallible."

"The Old Testament is divine: the facts it relates, and the doctrines it contains, are true: its prophecies are infallible: and it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than for one tittle of the law to fail."

In his "A Caveat against unsound Doctrines", a sermon preached in St. Ann's Church, Blackfriars, he makes clear what is his "supreme rule of faith and life", and also his "subordinate standard".

"I shall arm myself, this afternoon, with a two fold weapon: with the Bible in one hand; and our Church articles in the other. I shall appeal at once, for all I have to say, to the authority of God's unerring oracles; and to their faithful epitome, the decisions of the Church of England. They who, perhaps, set light by the Scriptures, may yet pay some decent deference to the Church; and they, who, it may be, pay little attention to church-determinations, will render explicit credit to the Scriptures."

In yet another sermon - "Jesus seen of Angels" - which he preached before his own congregation at Broad Hembury,
he announces his belief that

"Christ crucified is the central point, wherein the lines of both Testaments coincide. They testify of me saith the Son of God. And yet, though the Scriptures were dictated by his Spirit, and hold the lamp of knowledge and happiness, how many cast the precious charter behind their backs, or even trample it under their feet."

In his doctrine of Scripture, then, Toplady is in accord with Calvin: for although he does not use Calvin's words, he undoubtedly shares the sentiments expressed in the "Institutes" (I.vi.2). "If true religion", writes Calvin, "is to beam upon us, our principle must be that it is necessary to begin with the heavenly teaching, and that it is impossible for any one to obtain even the minutest portion of right and sound doctrine without being a disciple of Scripture."

Toplady was "a disciple of Scripture": he quotes at great length from both Old and New Testaments, and attaches equal weight to an observation of the "Song of Solomon" as to the words of our Lord Himself. Without any question, he is a verbal inspirationist, and uses the Bible as an armoury of proof texts. Ignoring all considerations of exegesis, he gives universal application to statements made to a particular individual and limited to a particular occasion. Moreover, limiting Toplady has no hesitancy in the application of Scripture when this is necessary to his thesis; as, for instance, when writing on the Virgin Birth:

"If we trace the adorable Mediator, from infancy, to a state of youth, we shall find him busied in following the occupation of Joseph, his
reputed father. It is recorded in the gospel, that the Jews said, concerning him, Is not this the carpenter, the Son of Mary?"

Toplady, here, does not finish the text he commences, for Mark 6:3., continues "the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us?"

Moreover, he avoids quoting from St. John (6:42.) "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?" or from St. Luke (4:22.) "And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?". Again, when quoting from St. Paul's letter to the Romans on the subject of Predestination, he says "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all" simply means "all the elect". St. Paul did not say so, but Toplady must supply the limitation in order to maintain his thesis. The same readiness to narrow the meaning of passages is found in Toplady's use of the XXXIX Articles and the Liturgy of the Church of England: to wit, his limitation of the term "whole world" as found in the consecration prayer for the administration of Holy Communion. The prayer reads: "Almighty God, who of thy tender mercy didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the Cross for our redemption; who made there (by the one oblation of himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world." Toplady, however, makes haste to amend this
by adding:

"Do not let that expression, the whole world, stumble you. You remember what our Te Deum says: 'When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers.' So in the above article,--The oblation of Christ once made for all the sins of the whole world; i.e. the whole world of believers: for God's elect are a world within a world. The whole world is a Scripture term, and the compilers of our articles did well in adopting it. But do you imagine that every individual of mankind is meant? surely no; for, were redemption thus universal, salvation would and must be of equal extent: otherwise, either God the Father would be unjust, or the blood-shedding of Christ could not be (what our articles affirm it to have been) a perfect satisfaction for all sin."

He likens the Bible to a stone and reason to a sling, but he cuts his stone to fit his sling. His entire polemic is an argument a priori. In parenthesis, I would note that Toplady's use of reason differs from his teaching concerning it. He does think, even though he only moves in a narrow circle of thought. His trouble is that he is in bondage to his own pre-conceptions. He does not approach the facts of life as he sees them, but rather tends to approach them as he thinks they ought to be. He quotes against his adversaries a passage from Gray, without recognising its aptness to himself.

"All looks infected, that the infected spy;
As all seems yellow, to the jaundiced eye."

Yet, in so far as Toplady can be called a "thinker" he is inconsistent, for, like Calvin, he holds that reason, like all other powers of man, was corrupted by the Fall.

"An unrenewed man has not one spiritual sense left."  "We cannot think a good thought of ourselves; much less can we say well, or do well of ourselves."

It might be held that Toplady is speaking only of unregenerate man, and as he was happily not one of them, the Spirit of God could use him. Certainly, he reasons, if only in a circle. In one of his sermons he speaks of the absolute knowledge of God:

"Men, indeed, grow wise by observation and experience. But eternity itself can add no improvement to the knowledge of that all-wise, all-comprehending mind, to whom all futurity is open, 'from whom no secrets are hid', and who holds in his own hand the entire chain of second causes."

Then follows this remarkable sentence

"These are first principles, equally inculcated by reason, religion of nature, and by Christianity, the religion of the Bible."

Still, whatever emphasis Toplady may in places lay upon reason, his main theme is that everything is subordinate to the Word of God.

"The Word of God directs us to the Spirit of God; the Spirit of God makes that word effectual; and the true ministers of God act in the most absolute subserviency to both."

I have already said that Toplady is a verbal inspirationist, he is also a literal interpretationist; indeed, his emphasis is such that he can best be described as one who preaches the verbal infallibility of the Bible. If he had sought to hear the message of Scripture as a whole, he would have had a very different gospel to preach; but as it is, he chooses his text in support of his theological convictions. Toplady had been brought up in an Arminian atmosphere, he had been a rabid free-willer, he was, however, delivered from the trammels of Arminianism, and, as converts are wont, became possessed of a passionate zeal for his new faith; hence he brings not an open mind but a definite system of thought to the bar of Holy Writ. It is not, therefore, surprising that he saw what he wanted to see, and found what he wanted to find. It has been said of Calvin that he allowed more liberty in the interpreting of Scripture than in the matter of doctrine. His general rule for deciding the meaning of a doubtful passage was that which accords with faith; but faith was used as a synonym for accepted dogma. Hence the Scriptures were interpreted in the light of his own dogmatic system. Toplady reasons in a similar way. The supreme Rule of Faith is the Scriptures, but when doubt as to actual meaning arises, then Toplady interprets in accordance with his pre-conceptions. This is very clearly seen

† Tholuck: Merits of Calvin, page 16.
in an examination of Chapter 4 of his Christian and
Philosophical Necessity Asserted; which is a long string of
quotations beginning with Genesis xx:6, and ending with Jude
iv. A favourite text with Toplady is Isaiah 45:7. "I form
the light and create darkness: I make peace and create evil."
Commenting on this passage in his book "The Problem of Evil",
Dr. Whale observes "That this is the exalted language of
poetry rather than precise prose." Such a suggestion
Toplady would have scornfully rejected; and would have drawn
from such an observation the conclusion that the whole of
the Old Testament - if not the whole of the Scriptures - was
just meaningless poetry. 'Reductio ad absurdum' was the
method Toplady delighted to employ when examining the tenets
of those who disagreed with him. To illustrate his use of,
and his attitude to, the Bible I give the following quotations
from his works.

"The Lord of Hosts hath sworn (i.e. hath solemnly
and immutably decreed), saying, Surely as I have
thought, so shall it come to pass: and as I have
purposed, so shall it stand. This is the purpose,
which I purposed upon the whole earth; and this
is the hand that is stretched out upon all
nations. For the Lord of hosts hath purposed,
and who shall disannul it? And his hand is stretched
out, and who shall turn it back? Isa. xv.24, 26, 27.
Grand and conclusive questions! Questions, however,
which lordly Arminianism can solve in a moment.
Who shall disannul God's purpose? Why human free-will
to be sure. Who shall turn back God's hand? Human
self-determination can do it, with as much ease as
our breath can repel the down of a feather!"
"Shall there be evil in a city (viz. any calamitous accident, as it is commonly called), and the Lord have not done it? Amos iii. 6. --- Impossible." "What idea St. James entertained, concerning free-will and self determination, fully appears from the following admonition: Ye know not (much less can ye be disposers of) what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? it is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away. Ye ought to say, if the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that, James iv. 14, 15. Why did St. James reason in this manner? Because he was endued with grace and sense to be a necessitarian."

"There are certain men crept in unawares, who were before, of old, ordained to this condemnation. Jude 4. If so, were not the sin and condemnation of those men necessary and inevitable?"

And one last quotation to show Toplady's attitude to new thought.

"It might have been happy for that fine, but too excursive Theorist, D. Conyers Middleton, if he had not, with more rashness than good speed, endeavoured to overlap the boundary, which God himself has fixed, to the present extent of human knowledge. Were we even to grant the doctor his favourite hypothesis, viz. that the whole Mosaic account of the fall is merely allegorical; the origin of evil would still remain as dark, and as deep at the bottom of the well, as ever. For to what does this boasted allegory amount? Dr. Middleton shall give it us, in his own words. (Works, Quarto. Vol. II. p. 149). "By Adam, we are to understand reason, or the mind of man. By Eve, the flesh or outward senses. By the serpent, lust or pleasure. In which allegory, we see clearly explained the true causes of man's fall and degeneracy; that, as soon as his mind, through the weakness and treachery of his senses, became captivated and seduced by the allurements of lust and pleasure, he was driven by
God out of Paradise, i.e. lost and forfeited the happiness and prosperity, which he had enjoyed in his innocence.

With all due respect to very superior a pen, I would offer an observation or two on this passage, --- 1. If Adam and Eve, and the serpent, and the trees of knowledge and of life, and the very paradise where they grew, were all allegorical (i.e. fabulous and unreal); might n't an atheist suppose, with equal reason, that the adorable Creator, whom this same history terms God, is as allegorical a being as the rest? --- 2. If the fall itself, as related in Scripture, be no more than a piece of moral fiction; what security have we that the Scriptural account of redemption, is not equally fictitious? Indeed, where is the necessity, or so much as the propriety, and reasonableness, of imagining, that an allegorical ruin requires more than an allegorical restoration?

3. Among a multitude of other objections, which clog the wheel of this unsatisfactory scheme, the following is one; that the difficulty of accounting for the rise of evil, still subsists in all its primitive and impenetrable obscurity. For, (1) How came the "allurements of lust and pleasure" to exist at all? especially, in a state of absolute innocency? -- (2) How came man's "outward senses" to be so very easy of access, as to fly open, like the doors of an enchanted castle, at the first appearance of this said gigantic lady, called "Allurement"? -- (3) How came the human mind to yield itself so tame a captive to those seducing senses? Not to ask (4) Why the senses themselves were originally indue with that "weakness and treachery", and power of "seduction", which the doctor so freely places to their account? -- I think myself warranted to conclude, that this masterly allegorizer has not clearly explained, nor so much as thrown the least glimmering of explanation upon "the true causes of man's fall and degeneracy." What then do we gain by reading Moses through the doctor's allegorical spectacles? So far from gaining, we loose the little we had.

It will be noticed at once that Toplady, as was his wont, confuses the issue. Dr. Middleton does not set out to
explain the origin of sin, but only to interpret a narrative. Toplady does not see that a fact is none the less a fact, because it is expressed allegorically. The fall of all mankind is a fact too palpable to deny, nor does Dr. Middleton attempt to deny it; he is only concerned to find understanding of an ancient, but divinely inspired, legend. Toplady is content to accept the Genesis account as literal history; but makes no attempt to solve the difficulties his position creates. He finds it easier to ridicule those who try. His authority is a verbal interpretation of an infallible book and one fears that he comes to the Bible to seek support for his thesis, rather than to learn the message its inspired pages contain.

The same may be said of his attitude to the XXXIX Articles. He does not seek so much to examine them, as to dogmatise concerning them. That they are patient of a Calvinistic interpretation is a fact none can gainsay; that they can bear no other interpretation is an unwarranted assumption. Wesley was equally as fine a scholar as Toplady, and he was definitely of the opinion that the Articles, the XVII in particular, were framed so adroitly as to permit of either a Calvinist or an Arminian interpretation. Toplady labours to prove that the Church of England was "officially" Calvinistic, and that its Articles could not be subscribed to by an Arminian; but one of his own arguments is his own refutation. By pleading the Lambeth Articles in support of
his case he adduces one of the strongest proofs he could for the fact that the Church of England had never committed itself to a strictly Calvinistic creed. If the XXXIX Articles were as unquestionably Calvinistic as Toplady asserted why was it necessary for Whitgift - who was no friend of the Presbyterian movement led by Thomas Cartwright - to formulate this more forthright confession of faith. If the later Arminian position was so surely exiled from the Articles it was scarcely necessary that it should receive a second edict of banishment. Despite the erudition of Toplady's "Historic Proof" Calvinism has never been the official creed of the English Church; and this, despite the ruling influences within the Church during the reign of Elizabeth. But for her prescience and the strong common sense of the lay mind as shown in Burleigh the Lambeth Articles would have become the law of the Church. Later on, in the light of the Arminian controversy, the House of Commons tried to maintain that they were the official interpretation of the existing formularies. To this Charles I replied with his declaration. Thus, first the clerical party and afterwards the laymen failed in imposing them on the Anglican Church. With the summoning of the Westminster Assembly, however, and the imposition of the "Solemn League and Covenant", it seemed as though the day of final triumph had come. That the Westminster Confession and Catechism enshrined the pure Calvinistic faith has never been questioned. They were, however, imposed only by the House of Commons,
and the Assembly of Divines had no real ecclesiastical authority. Along with the directory they may have been held to be the law for the Establishment during the period of triumphant Puritanism. Even then it may be doubted whether they any more than the "Holy Discipline" had any wide practical predominance outside London and Lancashire. The provisions of the Instrument of Government and the Humble Petition and Advice made distinctly for toleration in this matter, if not in others. The whole fabric, however, was swept away at the Restoration, and with the Act of Uniformity of 1662 vanished the last danger of a Church officially Calvinistic in polity, if not in creed. By the time Toplady was required to subscribe to the XXXIX Articles the influence of Laud has softened the worst austerities of extreme Calvinism, and there were many who gave to the Articles an Arminian interpretation. As emphasised earlier, these roused Toplady to flaming anger, for having decided that the Articles were Calvinistic, he would tolerate none who did not share his views. One of his sharpest barbs he reserved for the Socinians, but his character would have been enriched if he had taken to heart the Preface of their Racovian Catechism.

"Let everyone enjoy the freedom of his own judgment in religion; only let it be permitted to us also to exhibit our view of divine things without injuring and calumniating others. Do you alone carry the key of knowledge so that from you nothing in the sacred Scriptures is locked up, nothing sealed; and so that no one can open what you close, or close what you open? Why do you not remember that One alone is our Master, to whom these prerogatives belong - even
Christ; but that we are all brethren to no one is given authority and dominion over the conscience of another? For, though some of the brethren may excel others in spiritual gifts, yet in respect to freedom and the right of sonship all are equal."

Unhappily Toplady was not cast in the mould that makes for toleration; for him the faith of the Anglican Church was the teaching of John Calvin. He read its Articles through Calvin's eyes; and upon them based his theology. It is, however, questionable whether Toplady was as loyal to the Articles of the Church of England as he professed to be; for whilst he gave to the seventeenth a permissible, if extreme interpretation, he tends to limit the teaching of Article XXXI.

Preface to Racovian Catechism quoted from P. Carnegie Simpson's "The Church and The State", pages 156-7
Chapter 10.

TOPLADY THE THEOLOGIAN--HIS DOCTRINE.
As I have already tried to outline Toplady's Theology as contained in his hymns, some little repetition will be inevitable as I seek to delineate the teaching of his controversial writings. For whilst it is hard to reconcile the singer and the apologist, there is one ground common to both — namely, their faith.

Toplady's "Apologetics" are almost entirely devoted to the doctrine of the "Decretum horribile"; everything else is subordinate. Some souls are predestined to salvation, others to damnation; and from this dogma all Toplady's theology flows. God to maintain His decrees must be Sovereign & Absolute: Christ effects the salvation of the elect by taking the curse of their sin upon Himself: Man, by the divinely permitted Fall, is totally depraved, but God, to manifest His glory and grace, saves some of these utterly helpless and undeserving creatures: Heaven is the everlasting home of those whom He is pleased to save, whilst hell is the place of the endless torment endured by the reprobate. Whatever theological doctrine Toplady seeks to elucidate, it is always against this background: indeed, this "background" is Toplady's theology; and by far the larger part of all his writings, is either an exposition or defence of this creed; to maintain which he is driven into the position of absolute Necessitarianism. Nothing so antagonises him as the doctrine of free-will; and for the philosophical idea of
self-determination he has only contemptuous scorn. The remark that Shakespeare puts on the lips of Cassius, would have been to Toplady not only the sheerest nonsense, but plain blasphemy. For whether a man was an "underling" or not, rested entirely on the sovereign will of Him who decreed every event of every life long before any man saw the light of the stars.

The ethical problems that such a philosophy begets are not quite ignored by Toplady, but he tries to hide the issue from himself, and others, by cloudy word-spinning; and when driven to examine the metaphysics of his dogma, he always takes refuge in "the inscrutable purposes of God". "Simply acquiesce," he writes, "in the plain scripture account; and wish to see no further, that revelation holds the lamp. It is enough for you to know, that the Judge of the whole earth will do right." ^ "Be satisfied with St. Paul's answer: Nay, but who art thou, O man, that replies against God? The apostle hinges the matter (predestination) entirely on God's absolute sovereignty. There he rests it, and there we ought to leave it." ¶ By this means Toplady is able

¶ "Men at sometime are masters of their fates:
The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, But in ourselves, that we are underlings." Julius Caesar: Act 1.

to enjoy the best of both worlds: on the subject of the eternal decrees he can dogmatise as much as he wishes, but when pressed for a rationale he can always plead a reverent and humble agnosticism.

As in the case of his hymns I will seek to give the gist of Toplady's teaching; offering, as evidence, quotations from his "Works", and as far as possible a quotation from various of them, in order to show how the same theme runs through them all. After which I will attempt a brief critique of his teaching as a whole, and volunteer an appreciation.

DOCTRINE OF GOD.

The two prevailing thoughts in Toplady's doctrine of God are "Regalism" and "Legalism". The King is the Judge, against whose sentence of life or death, there is no appeal. Toplady, like Calvin, holds that God is Sovereign, and that He is unlimited and absolutely independent. His Omnipotence cannot be defeated. He does what He pleases with the wills of men; and so far as He and His purpose are concerned, "Prevention is not better than recovery", for the Fall and utter ruin of man is the decree of His holy Omnipotence, which uses all things to carry out His unalterable designs of Providence and Grace; for all the good done on earth, God does Himself. It is His decree, and His decree alone, that disposes of every event. Evil is permitted by Him to promote the accomplishment of His purpose. Whatever
comes to pass, from first to last, is the will of God,
in whom there are no after-thoughts, and to Whose knowledge
eternity can add nothing.

"The Scripture doctrine of predetermination ... 
.....assures us, that all things are of God. That all our times, and all events, are in his hand. Consequently, that man's business below, is to fill up the departments, and to discharge the several offices, assigned him in God's purpose, from everlasting; and that having lived his appointed time, and finished his allotted course of action and suffering; he, that moment, quits the stage of terrestrial life, and removes to the invisible state."

"It cannot be questioned, but God does all things, and ever did, according to his own purpose: the human will cannot resist him, so as to make him do more or less than it is his pleasure to do, since he does what he pleases even with the wills of men." 

"We have a saying in common life, that prevention is better than recovery. But in the present question, the proverb fails. Satan neither stole nor forced his way into Paradise. He neither escaped the notice nor mastered the power of him whose presence fill eth heaven and earth. Omniscience cannot be deceived. Omnipresence cannot be eluded. Omnipotence cannot be overpowered. With regard, therefore, to the first entrance of moral and natural evil; both one and the other would most certainly have been totally precluded, by a Deity possessed of infinite wisdom and power, had not recovery (though we cannot yet discern how) been better than prevention. The keeper of Israel, who neither slumbereth nor sleepeth, was invariably mindful of his people, even when he suffered human nature to be shipwrecked in Adam."
"Of course, all the good that is wrought in men, comes from God, as the gracious effect, not as the cause of his favour; and all the evil which God permits (such are his wisdom and power) is subservient to promote, instead of interfering to obstruct, the accomplishment of his most holy will."

At the opening of his translation of Zanchius, (whom Toplady regards as a perennial fount of inspiration and truth) there is a long disquisition on the nature of the attributes of God, and from this we learn that

"God is, and always was, so perfectly wise, that nothing ever did, or does, or can, elude his knowledge. He knew, from all eternity, not only what he himself intended to do, but also what he would incline and permit others to do. Acts xv.18. 'Known unto God are all his works, from eternity'. Consequently, God knows nothing now, nor will know anything hereafter, which he did not know and foresee from everlasting: his foreknowledge being co-eternal with himself, and extending to everything that is or shall be done."

"The Deity is possessed not only of infinite knowledge, but likewise of absolute liberty of will: so that whatever he does, or permits to be done, he does and permits freely, and of his own good pleasure. Consequently, it is his free pleasure to permit sin; since, without his permission, neither men nor devils can do anything."

"The will of God is never contrary to itself: he immutably wills the salvation of the elect, and vice versa: nor can he ever vary or deviate from his own will in any instance whatsoever."

"The brief of the matter is this; secret things belong to God, and those that are revealed belong to us: therefore, when we meet with a plain precept, we should simply endeavour to obey it, without tarrying to enquire into God's hidden purpose."

To the support of his position Toplady calls the testimony of countless divines, but — and this is a curious fact—whilst
he rarely quotes from Calvin's Institutes in support of Calvinism, he makes fairly frequent appeal to Luther. With pleasure he records the agreement with his creed of the early Fathers and the Reformers. Volumes one and two of his "Works" are filled with the callings of ripe scholars, whilst volume four is, for the greater part, an anthology of the sayings and writings of his contemporaries. He is happy alike to quote Clemens Romanus, St. Austin, or St. Jerome, as he is to record the beliefs of Madan, Serle, or Hervey. With great satisfaction he records his approval of a sermon on "Providence" by Bishop Hopkins, a quotation from which I will use to close this section.

"A sparrow, whose price is but mean, two of them valued at a farthing (which some make to be the 10th part of a Roman penny, and certainly one of their least coins), and whose life therefore is but contemptible, and whose flight seems giddy and at random; yet it falls not to the ground, neither lights anywhere, without your father. His all-wise providence hath before appointed what bough it shall pitch on, what grains it shall pick up; where it shall lodge, and where it shall build; on what it shall live, and when it shall die. Our Saviour adds, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. God keeps an account, even of that stringy excrescence. Do you see a thousand little motes and atoms wandering up and down in a sunbeam? It is God that so peoples it; and he guides their innumerable and irregular strayings. Not a dust flies in a beaten road, but God raiseth it, conducts its uncertain motion, and, by his particular care, conveys it to a certain place before appointed for it; nor shall the most fierce and tempestuous wind hurry it any further. Nothing comes to pass, but God hath ends in it. Though the world seem to run at random, and affairs to be huddled together in blind confusion and rude disorder; yet, God sees and knows the concatenation of all causes and effects,

This St. Clemens Romanus Toplady considers is the same Clement Paul numbered amongst his fellow-labourers.
and so governs them, that he makes a perfect
harmony out of all those seeming jarrings and
discords.—It is most necessary, that we should
have our hearts well established in the firm and
unwavering belief of this truth: that whatsoever
comes to pass, be it good or evil, we may look
to the hand and disposal of all, to God.—In
respect of God, there is nothing casual or
contingent, in the world. If a master should
send a servant to a certain place, and command
him to stay there, till such a time; and presently
after, should send another servant to the same
(place); the meeting of the two is wholly casual,
in respect of themselves; but ordained and fore­
seen by the master who sent them. So it is in
all fortuitous events here below. They fall out
unexpectedly, as to us; but not so as to God. He
forsees, and he appoints, all the vicissitudes
of things."

_Doctrine of the Person of Christ._

To an elaboration of the doctrine of the person of Jesus
Christ, Toplady gives no place. His "orthodoxy" cannot be
gainsaid, but it is glimpsed rather than beheld. Nevertheless,
as Egyptologists can, from remaining stumps and pillars, rebuild,
in imagination, some ancient temple, so that its onetime glory
is perceived; in similar fashion can the reader of Toplady piece
together his doctrine of Jesus Christ from isolated statements
concerning Him. From his sermon "Jesus seen of Angels" we
learn Toplady’s conception of the Incarnation and his opinion
of the various episodes that marked the life and ministry of
the Nazarene. In _some_ of these opinions Toplady allows his
imagination full scope, for his conclusions are pure conjecture.
From whence does he learn of the physical beauty of Jesus? His analogy of the Temple is far from satisfying. Whilst his statement concerning John's baptism of Christ raises many theological questions; especially as Toplady rests his argument upon an "if".

"If baptism be confessedly an acknowledgement of human sinfulness, how came he (Christ) to divide the waves of Jordan, who was infinitely holy as God, and immaculately righteous as man? Probably, because he was made sin for us. In a way of imputation, the Lord laid on him the iniquity of all his people. Hence, though absolutely sinless, he was baptised as a sinner. And this practical declaration of his atoning character, was part of that exterior righteousness, which, as the victim and substitute of his saints, it became him to fulfil."

Earlier, in this sermon, Toplady had categorically asserted

"Whoever is brought to the baptismal font, is brought thither as a sinner. And the whole ceremony is a solemn recognition of human guilt, as well as strikingly emblematical of the way and manner in which pardon and sanctification are attained; even by the effusion of the Messiah's blood, and the hallowing agency of his blessed Spirit."

It is suprising to find Toplady - antagonised as he was by Rome and all her works - believing in "Baptismal Regeneration".

---

"The man Christ Jesus, being formed without sin, and by the immediate agency of the Holy Ghost, was doubtless, transcendently fair, and augustly beautiful. Hence his human nature was compared to the temple: a structure eminently holy, and peculiarly elegant. Prior to his sufferings, he was literally fairer than the children of men." Works. Vol. 3. page 77.

Works. vol. 3 page 68. Ibid page 68.
"The blessed Jesus......vouchsafed to stamp the highest authority on the laver of typical regeneration, by his own personal submission to the ordinance of baptism."

In parenthesis I would like to point out that it is not easy to arrive at Toplady's sacramental position. It is not clear whether he was a sacerdotalist or not. Certainly he is quite definite that sacramental grace does not in any way depend on the moral character of the officiating priest; but whether Toplady regards it as operating through the faith of the recipient, or by virtue of a valid ordination, it is not possible to say. I incline to the view that if he had been pressed, he would have fallen back on his statement that the "Church of England was the best and purest visible Church in the whole world."; and that she was the pure channel of grace, quite apart from the moral character of her clergy. In his letter to Mr. F. he writes,

"I am thoroughly persuaded, was the glorious company of the Apostles to live again on earth, at this very time, and to live in England; not one of them I verily believe, would be a dissenter from our established Church: though they would all deeply lament the dreadful state of spiritual, of doctrinal, and of moral declension, to which the greatest part of us are reduced."

It is probable that Toplady would have held that individual faith and validity of ordination were equally essential; one being of little value without the other. But, as I have already

Works. vol. 3. pages 67-8. ibid page 14.

" vol. 6 page 288
said, it is not possible to dogmatise, in that there is not sufficient data available.

Whatever doubts, then, one may have as to whether Toplady was a sacerdotalist, none can be entered against his fidelity to the Apostles' Creed. His sermon on "Jesus seen of angels" could be well described as a running and picturesque commentary on that part of the Creed that refers to our Lord. Whilst, from other parts of his writings one gleans his loyalty to the faith of his Fathers. Jesus is God Incarnate.

Co-dweller with God in Eternity, He, having made darkness the swaddling bands of the earth, is Himself swaddled as an infant, and laid in the feeding place of the ox. Toplady rejoices that angels were His first workmanship, whose

"...bliss began with the first sight of him. They saw him, they loved and worshipped, until the fulness of time was come, when the Ancient of Days became an Infant of Days, and God the Son was found in fashion as a man." 1

Yet, before He is cradled in a manger he laid

"the foundations of the earth, and by his excellent wisdom, made the heavens;" 2

But though Co-eternal, He is, nevertheless, subordinate to His Father; although Toplady is not very sure on this point. His exposition of I Corinthians xv. 28, is interesting though not particularly illuminating. Still he holds firmly to the divinity of Christ which

"will for ever continue to make His righteousness so infinitely meritorious and effective." 3

Works vol. 3 page 66 4 ibid page 67 5 ibid p. 226.

Compare Works Vol.3 pages 132-5 where Toplady teaches that Christ is either God or a blasphemer.
He asks,
"Can we be exalted in the righteousness of a creature? Would God the Father accept, and command us to trust in the Atonement of a finite being? By the same rule, we might (with the impudent papists) trust in the supposed merits of the Virgin Mary, or St. anybody else. And by the same rule, we might descend a step lower, and (with the still more impudent pelagians) trust in our own supposed merits, and burn incense to the withered arm of our own blasted free-will. In short, there is no end to the horrible impieties which flow from trampling the divinity and righteousness of Christ underfoot."

Being co-eternal with God, Toplady maintains, that Christ could not have died had he not taken man's guilt upon him. He is rendered mortal by identifying Himself with mortal sin. Whilst He is as truly man as He is truly God, it is by His identification of Himself with fallen man that He can know death; seeing that He was, like our first parents prior to the fall, naturally immortal. His own words run thus:

"In the front of religious mysteries, St. Paul places the miraculous and supernatural incarnation of Jesus Christ. 'God was manifested in the flesh'; God the Son, who, in the covenant of redemption, had taken upon him to deliver man, became man to accomplish that deliverance. The truth of his divinity is demonstrable from the whole current of Scripture; and the truth of his human nature, or the reality of his manifestations in the flesh, is evident, from his having been liable, in general, to the sinless infirmities incident to men. He slept; he shed tears; he experienced hunger, thirst, and weariness; he was acquainted with pains of body and distress of mind. In one respect, indeed, he seems to have been exempted from the common lot of other human beings; we nowhere find, to the best of my remembrance, that he ever so much as once experienced any attack of sickness or disease. The reason of this extraordinary circumstance, was, no doubt, owing to the sinless formation of his humanity, by
the immediate operation of the Holy Ghost. Sin was that which introduced every kind of damage into the human system; and disease amongst the rest. But the man Christ Jesus was formed and conceived totally without stain. Hence he was like our first parents before the fall, naturally immortal; nor could he have died, had he not, by an act of gracious reception, taken the guilt of men upon himself, and become responsible to divine justice for the utmost payment of their penal debt." "For, exclusively of his union with the second person in the Godhead; his absolute freedom from sin would have been a certain security from the possibility of dying." 

Toplady continues:

"As Christ was manifested in the flesh, so was he justified in the spirit: not only justified as to the divinity of his person and mission, and proved to be the Son of God by the miracles which he wrought in conjunction with the holy Spirit; but likewise spiritually justified by God the Father, from all those sins, which, as the dying surety of his people, he had taken upon himself to expiate."

It is apparent in Toplady's polemics as it was in his hymns that his main concern with Christ is His Atoning work. I have already shown that he was not indifferent to the doctrines surrounding His Person, but it was to His sin-destroying Mission that Toplady ever turns his listeners' eyes and ears. The death of Christ was irresistibly predestined; it is our only hope; in it Christ fulfilled the law, and by His righteousness we are justified. As this doctrine of justification is inextricably bound up with the doctrine of predestination I propose to leave Toplady's theology on the "Work of Christ" until I have discussed his doctrines of Man and Sin.

Works, vol. 3 pages 62-3
" v. 3 " 63-4
At the commencement of this chapter I emphasised that Toplady nowhere attempts a unified or systematised theology; this is particularly true of his

**DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT & THE TRINITY.**

These two doctrines (or expressions of one) are certainly taught, if not clearly defined. Toplady believes in "One God the Father Almighty" who manifests Himself once in time in the Man Christ Jesus, and Who is mediated forever in the Paraclete. The Holy Spirit is the Divine Agency operating in the world, and in a particular way in the hearts of the elect.

"The holy Spirit gives faith"  

It makes

"and will continue to make the preaching of Christ crucified, the grand channel of His converting power."  

Yet "A soul once born of the Holy Ghost, is never unborn, from that day forward. The power of indwelling grace exerts and displays itself with increasing strength and brightness: but regeneration, or the infusion of spiritual life, neither needs nor can admit of repetition. All subsequent revivals, whether in a way of holiness, support or consolation, are but expansions of the original principle, occasioned by the Holy Spirit's repeated breathings on the spark which he primarily inspired, and which nothing can totally extinguish."  

It is the ministry of the Holy Spirit to

"bend the gospel bow and wing an arrow to (the sinner's) your hearts."  

and to sanctify, and restore comfort.

| Works. Vol.3 page 65. Ibid p. 64. | ibid p. 249 |
When writing of Toplady's doctrine of the Holy Spirit as shown in his hymns, I commented that he was soundly Trinitarian, but questioned whether he did not drift into Tritheism. The same criticism can be made of his "apologetics". There is no suggestion of Docetism in his doctrine of Christ, nor any of Sabellianism in his doctrine of the Trinity. He endeavours to uphold the ancient faith, "Neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the Substance." "For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son: and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one: the glory equal, the Majesty co-eternal." But in practice he preaches as though there were three distinct entities, each possessed of a different function. In his sermon "Joy in Heaven over one repenting sinner" he observes:

"God the Father acquiesces with complacency, in the soul that is thus brought to His mercy seat. The glorified Redeemer sees the reward of his mediatorial obedience unto death, and is satisfied. The Holy Spirit smiles on His own work, hastens to comfort the sinner he has subdued, and goes on to accomplish the sanctification he has began."

Principal S. Cave, in his book "The Doctrines of the Christian Faith", writes "In the unthinking piety of the Church, the 'persons' of the Godhead have been so distinguished that it is possible to read in a revivalist magazine of prayers for a sick child being offered in vain to God the Father and to God

---

Quoted from Dr. Whale's "Christian Doctrine" p. 117.
Works. vol. 3 page 354
Compare vol. 3 page 174. "Both his purposes and his covenant were framed and fixed and agreed upon, by the persons in the Trinity."
the Son, although, when offered to God the Holy Spirit the child immediately was healed." Toplady does not drift so far - that would be sheer "polytheism" - but does tend to separate function, as to give the impression that he is thinking in terms of three personalities; and once the Trinity is thought of in terms of three subjects, Tritheism is inevitable. Perhaps the best way to express Toplady's position is to quote his approval and acceptance of the doctrine of the Anglican Church.

"Nothing short of Trinity in unity could justify the commission, which our blessed Lord gave to his apostles and their successors to baptize in the name or into the knowledge and worship, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. If the Son of God were not God the Son, if the Spirit of God were not God the Spirit, the administration of baptism in their name would be an act of highest profaneness and idolatry. The doctrine, therefore, of a trinity of persons in the unity of one divine nature, is a doctrine of express revelation; a doctrine of the utmost consequence; and which lies at the very root and foundation of the Christian system. Give up this, and you give up all. The whole of Christianity is but an empty name without it. Blessed be God, the faith of our own Church, respecting this capital point, most exactly harmonises with the law and the testimony; for she affirms, that, 'in unity of this Godhead, there be three persons, of one substance, power and eternity; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.' And elsewhere, she thus speaks: 'That which we believe of the glory of the Father, the same we believe of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, without any difference or inequality.'"
In seeking to outline Toplady’s doctrines of MAN, SIN AND GRACE,

I shall have to include his doctrines of Predestination and election: and these constitute the very marrow of his theology; which includes

- The Fall and Original Sin
- The enslavement of the will
- The Law as the standard of righteousness
- The mediation of salvation through Christ
- Repentance
- Justification.

Concerning the doctrine of the Fall Toplady has no doubts. He is in the happy position of knowing his own mind, and of knowing that his doctrine has the support of Scripture, and is attested by the facts of every day life. A present day preacher would, doubtless, not present his case as did Toplady; nor would he interpret Scripture in the same way. But he would not attempt to deny that there is something terribly wrong with mankind. If he took the terrible list of the Apostle in his letter to the Galatians (v.19), and it expressed in modern terms, by saying that drink, lust, greed, gambling, cruelty, selfishness, are still rampant in every nation and manifest in every city, he would only be confessing that sin is the real cause of human misery: and even if Agnosticism was accepted, and God left out of account, it would still be obvious that humanity needs nothing so much as to be saved from it. He would preach “original sin”, but would not interpret it as did Toplady; nor would he treat the Old Testament story of the Garden of Eden as literal
Toplady does not hesitate to do so; nor — as I shown already — does he hesitate to pillory any who do not. That Adam was a man, and Eve a woman created from a rib, he does not doubt, nor does he doubt the source of temptation was a particular fruit; although he regards it as idle to speculate the kind.

"Whether it was a pomegranate, or a cluster of grapes; an apple, or a citron; scripture has not revealed, nor are we concerned to know."  

Adam and Eve, or as he prefers to call them, our first parents are the source of human sinfulness. Before their fall they were morally perfect, as befits the creation of God; but they fell from their holy state, and all born of their corrupted stock inherit their original taint; and are rendered mortal. Rejecting any idea of metempsychosis, Toplady holds man to be the special creation of God, and that he was sinless and deathless.

"The sacred oracles acquaint us, that the first man was created spiritually and morally upright: nay, that he was made after the image of God; and was (in some respects, and with due allowance for the necessary imperfection inseparable from a creature) the living transcript of him that formed him. This phrase, the image of God, is to be understood chiefly in a spiritual, and entirely in a figurative sense. It does not refer to the beauty, and to the erect stature of the body; but to the holy and sublime qualifications of the soul. The grand outlines therefore, of that divine resemblance, in which Adam was constructed, were holiness, knowledge, dominion, happiness, and immortality."  

Through sin, carnal, as well as spiritual, death became the
inheritance of the primal pair and all their descendants: and on this fact Toplady bases his doctrine of Original Sin, which is the inescapable endowment of every new born babe.

"We need but look within ourselves, for abundant proof, that our nature must have been morally poisoned in its source; that our first parent sinned; and that we, with the rest of his sons, are sharers in his fall."

"God's word expressly declares, that, By the disobedience of one man, many were constituted sinners, Rom. v. 19. They are in the divine estimation considered as guilty of Adam's own personal breach of the prohibitory command. Now, the judgment of God is always according to truth. He would not deem us guilty, unless we were so. And guilty of our first parent's offence we cannot be, but in a way of imputation."

In his sermon "A Caveat against unsound Doctrines" he urges

"As soon as we are born we go astray. Nay, I will venture, on scripture authority, to carry the point higher still. All mankind are guilty and depraved before they are born. Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. A thunderbolt to human pride, and a dagger in the very heart of natural excellence!"

This quotation, it might be noted, is typical of Toplady's use of Scripture. No attempt is made at exegesis. An isolated statement made by a conscience-stricken king (if indeed, it can be attributed to David, roused to repentance after the visit of Nathan; Cheyne and Robertson Smith doubt this, and give the psalm a national rather than a personal application.); is accepted at its face value, and because it harmonises with his position, Toplady uses it as an irrefutable argument. Had any one questioned the validity
of Toplady's use of his "proof texts" he would instantly have impaled them for blasphemously questioning the infallible oracles of the Most High. He paints man's fallen state in black, pure and unrelieved. He quotes from Calvin's Institutes: "The corruption of our nature is always operative; and constantly teeming with unholy fruits: like a heated furnace which is perpetually blazing out; or like an inexhaustible spring of water, which is forever bubbling up and sending forth its rills." and from his knowledge of the Classics he informs his readers "that man, if not well and carefully cultivated, is the wildest and most savage of all animals". (Plato) "Nature has infused vice into every created being". (Propertius) "The seeds of vice are innate in every man." (Horace)

"The dignity of human nature", was apparently a popular theme in some quarters, even in Toplady's day: but it received no subscription from him.

"There are some who talk much concerning the dignity of human nature. Upon Christian principles, the dignity of man is great indeed: a dignity, however, not natural, but derived from the condescending lover and restorer of lost sinners." 

Calvin's Institutes, l. iv. c.15. Quoted from Toplady's Works, vol. 3 page 354
Toplady's Works, vol. 3 page 354

109
Far from thinking of unregenerate man as possessed of any "dignity" he thinks of him as a "wild ass". "Vain man" he writes:

"born as a wild ass's colt! 'How keenly', says a fine writer, 'is this comparison pointed! Like the ass: an animal, remarkable for its stupidity, even to a proverb. Like the ass's colt: which must be still more egregiously stupid than the dam. Like the wild ass's colt: which is not only blockish, but stubborn and intractable; neither possesses valuable qualities by nature, nor will easily receive them by discipline.'"

In a footnote, he adds this observation:

"Our mental powers, like a chicken in the shell, or a plant in its semen, are no more than virtual and dormant, until elicited by cultivation, and ripened by experience, attention, and reflection. Civil society, dress, articulate language, with all other useful and ornamental polishings which result from domestic and political connection, are, in themselves, things purely artificial and adventitious. If so, will it not follow, that (ever since the fall) man is naturally a wild animal?"

So Toplady has no high opinion of man, he is

"What the Scripture affirms, naturally dead in trespasses and sins; and no dead man can make himself to differ from any other. Conversion is a new birth, a resurrection, a new creation. What infant ever begat himself? What inanimate carcass ever quickened and raised itself? What creature ever created itself?"

It is not easy to say how Toplady connotes the scriptural phrase "dead in trespasses and sins". One can hardly
imagine that he would give a literal interpretation to the word "dead" (despite his literalness in other places) for then he would be appealing to a corpse; and in so far as he pleads with sinners to repent, one presumes he regards them as capable of making response; and so cannot be literally dead. There is, however, no doubt as to how Toplady interprets the word "die" in the passage in Genesis 2:17; there it means physical death; i.e. the biological cessation of existence. Following in the wake of St. Paul, who apparently believed that physical death was the consequence of sin, Toplady believes that death was not for the guilty first parents only, but for all their posterity. Nevertheless, whilst he is an unwavering upholder of the Calvinist doctrine that man is wholly defiled in all faculties and parts of the soul, I do not think that he would regard depravity and death as synonymous terms. He makes no scruple to assert

"We are totally sinful and corrupt by nature; as unfit for, and as incapable of enjoying the glories of the celestial world; as a beetle is, of being elevated to the dignity and office of a first minister of state. Such is the natural condition of man, with regard to spiritual things."

but this is not the same thing as saying we are bereft of life: "dead in sin" is a phrase I feel he would have interpreted as meaning, inability to communicate with a spiritual environment, or inability to commune with God;
rather than biological death. I do not think that there can be any question that Toplady regarded physical death as the inevitable result of sin, and that had our first parents never sinned they would have been immortal; but I think it is equally certain that he was not so connoting death when he says with St. Paul, "dead in trespasses and sins;". I stress this point for Toplady's theology here is a little ambiguous; but it is a question to which I will return when I seek to offer an appreciation of his work as a whole. I will conclude this section by giving a curious comment from Toplady's "Short Essay on Original Sin";

"The doctrine of original sin is the basis of the millenium. The earth, which is disordered and put out of course, through the offence of man, will be restored to its primitive beauty, purity, and regularity, when Jesus will descend to reign in person with his saints."

As man is "wholly defiled in all faculties", it follows that he is defiled in his will. It is enslaved to evil. Yet, whilst Toplady fulminates unceasingly against the doctrine of "free will", and holds to an inexorable "Necessitarianism", he yet maintains that there

"is not the least encroachment on human freedom. The will continues free, or unforced, at the very time grace is all in all."

so that side by side with his denial of "free-will" he endeavours to maintain a doctrine of "free-agency". The will is quite incapable of any movement toward good; and

---

1 Ephesians 2:1.
2 Works Vol. 3. page 362
3 ibid page 316.
yet

"when the influence of grace is savingly exerted, conversion, as the effect, must necessarily and surely follow (since it is simply impossible, that the purpose and agency of an all-wise and all-powerful Being, should be defeated and miscarry); yet this infers no sort of violence on the human will; since all God's dealings with his rational creatures, in a way of grace, are wisely and wonderfully suited to the faculties with which he has thought proper to endue them. In regeneration, the will of man is not forced, but renewed; it is not compelled, but amended and set right; in consequence of which, it spontaneously directs its future motions to God, heaven, and things divine."

Self-determination Toplady anathematises as the very essence of atheism, and as an attribute inconsistent with the human state. It excludes the foreknowledge of God and in one respect at least is more absurd than Manichaeism, which was prepared to accept a dualism, whilst self-determination means that every individual is a god.

"Were I disposed to make the most of my argument, I might add, and very fairly too, that the old Manichaeism, was a gentle impiety, and a slender absurdity; when contrasted with the modern Arminian improvements on that system. For, which is worse? To assert the existence of two independent beings, and no more; or to assert the existence of about one hundred and fifty millions of independent beings, all living at one time, and most of them waging successful war on the designs of him that created them?"

Nevertheless, when "irresistible grace" moves the sinner's heart, he is able, despite the fact that his will is enslaved, to accept and close with the gift of God.

Works vol. 3 pages 314-5
" 6 page 96. Compare vol. 6 pages 14, 21, & 36.
Tennyson wrote

"Our wills are ours, we know not how,
Our wills are ours to make them Thine."

What Toplady would have said of this no one can know, but we know what he said to Wesley for making an observation similar in meaning. When he suggested that God respected man's moral freedom and waited for his co-operation, Toplady replied,

"Can anything be more shockingly execrable, than such a degrading and blasphemous idea of the ever blessed God? And consequently, is not the doctrine of human self determination the most daring, the most inconsistent, the most false, the most contemptible, and the most atheistical tenet, that was ever spawned by pride and ignorance in conjunction? A doctrine, which, in running away from the true necessity, coins an impossible necessity of its own inventing; and whilst it represents men as gods, sinks God far below the level of the meanest man!"

In seeking to appreciate Toplady's doctrine of the Law, it is necessary to enquire what he means by the term; and one is surprised to find that nowhere do we find a positive answer. It would appear that he regards the Mosaic Law and the Eternal Law of Right as synonymous. He refers to those weak believers who

"are apt to hover about Mount Sinai;"

but, apart from saying that the Law is not the ceremonial law, which is now repealed in that it has been superseded, there is no attempt at definition. True, he distinguishes
carefully between the Law and the Gospel; and emphasises that no man can justify himself before God by obeying the law, even if he was possessed of the ability to do so. It accepts no righteousness other than complete righteousness, so, Christ, and Christ, alone is the sinner's only refuge from its malediction. To any that trust in themselves that they are righteous, find that the law can minister death to them: for at best, they can only offer a very imperfect conformity, whilst God's holiness can be satisfied with nothing less than perfect obedience. Hence it follows, that each of human kind is a sinner from whom the law demands the penalty of death: so that all men pass their days beneath this shadow. But such is the mercy of God that He has eternally decreed that some, no more deserving than others, will be received as righteous, through the intercession and merit of Jesus Christ; who alone can vindicate the claims of the law and pay the penalty it demands.

To his congregation at St. Ann's Church, Blackfriars on April 29th 1770, Toplady says:

"Unregenerate ministers are much the same in all ages, and in every country: .... so far as matters merely spiritual are concerned, they stand nearly on a level. These are all what the Ephesian schismatics were desirous to be, teachers of the law, or legal teachers. And all unconverted people, whether their denomination be protestant or popish, desire to be hearers of the law, and are displeased when they hear anything else. We are naturally fond of that very law, which, unless the righteousness of Christ is ours, is the ministration of death,
pronounces us accursed, and binds us over the everlasting ruin. The pernicious error, against which Timothy was directed to guard his flock, was a dependence upon the law, and the works of it, for salvation. And the reason why this destructive tenet was taught and enforced by some preachers of that day, and has been taught by their successors ever since, is assigned by the apostle; who observes, that those blind guides understood neither what they said, nor whereof they affirmed: for if they had understood anything of God's inviolable holiness; of the law's inflexible rectitude, extent and spirituality; of man's total inability to fulfil it perfectly (and without perfect obedience the law cannot justify); they would at once, have ceased to be teachers of the law, and simply pointed to that Saviour alone, who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

He goes on to assert;

"Fashionable as the doctrine of legal, conditional justification is, we may say, to every individual that embraces it, There is one that condemns you, even Moses, in whom you trust, and that every law on which you rest: for its language is, He that breaketh me only in one point, is guilty of all: and, Cursed is every man that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them. Show me the man who has never offended in one point; who hath continued in all things prescribed by Jehovah's perfect law; who loves the Lord with his heart, and his fellow creatures as himself; show me the man, who, from the first to the last moment of his life, comes up to this standard: and then you will show me a man who can be justified by works of his own."

Nevertheless, the law is not just a negative thing: it has three grand lawful uses: it convinces man of his "utter sinfulness," and then leads him to Christ, "as the great and only fulfiller of righteousness". Moreover, "it stands as the great rule of our practical walk and conversation:"

Toplady is happy to be able to quote the opinion of men of like mind, particularly those who had been shining luminaries in the Church. From the thesis of Patrick Hamelton, protomartyr of the Reformation in Scotland, he quotes as follows:

"The law saith, pay thy debt. (viz. the debt of perfect obedience to God). The Gospel saith, Christ hath paid it.
The law saith, thou art a sinner; despair and thou shalt be damned. The gospel saith, thy sins are forgiven thee, be of good comfort, for thou shalt be saved.
The law saith, make amends for thy sins. The gospel saith, Christ hath made it for thee.
The law saith, the Father of heaven is angry with thee. The gospel saith, Christ hath pacified him with his blood.
The law saith, where is thy righteousness, goodness, satisfaction? The gospel saith, Christ is thy righteousness, goodness and satisfaction.
The law saith, thou art bound (over) to me, to the devil, and to hell. The Gospel saith, Christ hath delivered thee from them all."

A little earlier Toplady had made note of the testimony of learned men who had "communed and reasoned" with Hamelton, and on the strength of their testimony he declared that Hamelton suffered martyrdom for believing:

1. "Man hath no free-will."
2. "A man is only justified by faith in Christ."
3. "A man, so long as he liveth, is not without sin."
4. "He is not worthy to be called a Christian who doth not believe that he is in grace."
5. "A good man doeth good works: good works do not make a good man.
7. "Faith, hope, and charity, be so linked together, that one of them cannot be without another in one man in this life."
Toplady realises that in quoting from Hamilton (and later from Wishart) that he is digressing; but such is his anxiety to establish the truth of the doctrine he espouses, that he gladly makes use of the testimony of any who have made a good confession; even though he is "sensible that their suffrage does not strictly pertain to the argument of the present section". He continues his quotation from Hamilton's "Loci Communes" as follows:

"Whosoever believeth or thinketh to be saved by his works, denieth that Christ is his Saviour. For how is he thy Saviour, if though mightest save thyself by thy works? or whereto should he die for thee, if any works (of thine) might have saved thee?"

Further to the subject of good works Toplady quotes:

"I do not say, that we ought to do no good deeds: but I say, we should do no good works to the intent to get the inheritance of heaven, or remission of sin. For if we believe to get the inheritance of heaven through good works, then we believe not to get it through the promise of God."

In this same work Toplady refers to a saying of Latimer concerning the moral law as revealed in Scripture.

"If he (i.e. Christ) had not kept the law, the law had such power, that it would have condemned us all. For it is written: Cursed be he, who abideth not by all that is written in the law. So that the least cogitation that we have against the law of God, bringeth this curse upon our heads. So that there never was a man, nor shall be one, that could remedy himself by this law; for it is

ibid vol 1. p. 400

ibid vol 1 p. 404

ibid page 405

ibid vol 1 p. 404
Spiritual. It may not be fulfilled but by the Spirit. It requireth us to be clean from all spot of sin, from all thoughts, words and deeds. But we are carnal; and as St. Paul saith, sold under sin and wickedness: therefore, he concludes thus: By the works of the law no man can be justified. As Christ did them, they merit; for he did them perfectly, as they ought to be done. But as we do them, they condemn. And yet the lack is not in the law, but in us. The law of itself is holy and good. But we are not able to keep it: and therefore we must seek our righteousness, not in the law, but in Christ, who hath fulfilled the same, and given us freely his fulfilling."

From these quotations it is apparent that Toplady regarded the law as that which condemned, but Christ saves from the terrors of the law those whom God is pleased to give Him. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.\text{\textquoteleft} some will rise only to learn of their condemnation whilst others will receive full forgiveness and discharge because of the merit and work of Christ.\text{\textquoteright}\

The law, then, is the standard of righteousness, which can only be fulfilled in the Saviour, it is his saving work to mediate salvation to us; so that by our repentance we are justified when in faith we lay hold upon Him, and plead as our only merit His atoning work. It is to a consideration of Toplady's conception of Atonement and Justification that I now turn.

\textit{Works} vol. 3 pages 156-7

\textit{Compare Works} vol. 3 pages 143-4
By the fall, all mankind is doomed both to spiritual and physical death: but whilst the body will be re-animated as a preliminary to final judgment, the spiritual life can be renewed from day to day. The offer of grace is made to the sinner, who, convicted of sin and truly repentant, accepts Christ's saving work, and is thereby justified by faith, and has peace with God. So put, Toplady's theology would antagonise no one, and (save for his belief in the physical resurrection of the body) would find ready acceptance even today. It is when he seeks to elaborate this broad outline, and develops his conception of atonement and of justification, that he outrages the ethical sense of the modern man: for there can be no doubt that he interprets the Atonement in terms of penal satisfaction. God, whom he ordinarily exalts, is represented as one who will only forsake His displeasure on being pacified. He is, however, pacified by the penal substitution of Christ. As in his hymns, Toplady is trammelled by his conception of Levitical sin-offering. The focus of the Cross is Godward rather than manward; but this is inevitable seeing that in Toplady's theology God must be propitiated before He can welcome back to His favour His erring sons. When the prodigal returned he was received with gifts from his father - the robe, the ring and the shoes - and there is no suggestion of the "elder brother" bearing the father's "wrath and curse" before such welcome could be afforded; but according to Toplady the divine beneficence must first be

Toplad's phrase in his Hymn for Pardon of Sin.
Hymn XXXVI vol. 6 page 336
secured by the sinless Christ bearing the penalty of sinful man.

Dr. Munger, in "Symposium", has written: "The Atonement as a dogma, in all its various theories, rests upon a basis of other dogmas that are fast disappearing. Indeed, these fading dogmas created the various theories. The fall of Adam, federal headship, total depravity, and guilt of all mankind, the curse of God pronounced upon all; election to salvation or eternal destruction; these dogmas demanded and shaped the Atonement according to the way in which they were interpreted. The dominating factor was not the atonement, but some dogma of depravity, or Divine Sovereignty, or justice or sacrifice; and as these were always changing, the Atonement was refined in order to secure harmony in the system." However true or false this may be as a general statement, it is true of Toplady's teaching. His doctrine of Atonement is conditioned by his doctrine of the Sovereignty of Jehovah, rather than by the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth, who said "The Father, himself, loveth you.". In many places, but particularly in his doctrine of the Cross, Toplady reveals himself as an"Old Testament Christian".

When examining the theology of His hymns/that he was a legalist possessed of a definite Levitical emphasis. God finds a ransom for man's sin.

"It was God who provided his own justice with a lamb for the burnt offering. It was God who accepted the atonement at our Surety's hand, instead of ours."
In obedience to a Covenant made with God before all worlds, Christ restores those of the elect who were lost by the Fall of Adam. By reason of their sinful inheritance (quite apart from any overt commission) they were deserving of eternal death, but by the act of Christ, who stood in their place, and by his perfect obedience and precious bloodshedding, appeased the wrath of God. He vindicates the law, justice is satisfied, and man goes free. So Toplady preaches:

"Blessed be God, our salvation is a finished work. It neither needs nor will admit of supplement. And here, let us remember, that, when we talk of a finished salvation, we mean that complete and infallibly effectual redemption, accomplished by the propitiatory merit of Christ's own personal obedience and of Christ's own personal sufferings; both one and the other of which have that infinite perfection of atoning and of justifying efficacy, that it is utterly out of our power to add anything to the merit or validity of either. Every individual of mankind, for whom Christ obeyed, and for whom he bled, shall most certainly be saved by his righteousness and death, not one of the redeemed number excepted; seeing Christ has paid, completely paid, the debt of perfect obedience and of penal suffering: so that divine justice must become unjust, ere it be possible for a single soul to perish for what all or any of those debts which Christ took upon himself to discharge, and which he has absolutely discharged accordingly. Arminianism cannot digest this grand Bible truth. Hence, that poor, dull, blind creature, bishop Taylor tells us, somewhere, if I mistake not, that 'We are to atone for our great sins by weeping, and for our little sins by sighing'. If our sins have no other atonement that this, we shall go on weeping and wailing and gnashing our teeth, to all eternity. But thanks to divine grace, the work of atonement is not now to do. Christ has already put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself. We are acquitted from guilt, and reconciled to God, not by our own tears, but by the precious blood of Jesus Christ, as of a lamb without spot or blemish; not our own sighs, and tears, and sorrows; but the humiliation
the agony, the bloody sweat, and the bitter death, of him who did no sin, of him who was found in fashion as a man, and became obedient to death, even the death of the Cross; these, and these alone, are the propitiation for our sins."

Before another congregation Toplady asserted:

"Christ appeared unto the utter abolition of sin; so that by virtue of his perfect oblation, sin should neither be charged upon, nor eventually mentioned to those, for whom he was offered up."

Christ, as the surety of the covenant,

"bore the sins and carried the sorrows of the whole believing world; when with the names of his mystic Israel upon his heart, our great High Priest, Jesus, the Son and the Lamb of God, sustained intensively, that punishment for sin, which otherwise must have been levied extensively on sinners, to all eternity."

In his sermon "Jesus, seen of Angels" Toplady makes our Lord cry from His cross:

"It is finished: 'I have suffered enough. The types and the prophecies are accomplished. My covenant engagements are fulfilled. The debts of my people are paid. I have finished transgression; I have made an end of sin; I have wrought out and brought in an everlasting righteousness. The law is magnified. Justice is satisfied. My warfare is over. My conflicts are passed.'"

Before his brother Ministers at the annual visitation of the Arch-deaconry of Exeter, Toplady preached a sermon in which he maintained that the doctrines of the Church of England were the doctrines of Christ, and that subscription thereto should be no grievance. In this sermon he makes plain his doctrines of sin, grace and salvation. Clearly he maintains

Works. vol. 3. pages 201-2. ibid page 27.
Ibid page 76. Ibid pages 78-9
that Christ's death is a substitutionary propitiation, and that He delivers men from the thraldom of the law.

"Man being fallen, the law steps in with another demand on us, a demand superadded to the former; namely, that we suffer that penalty, which the broken covenant of works denounced against every one who continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them. From this penalty, nothing could exempt us, but the substitution of Jesus Christ to bear it in our stead. And, blessed be the riches of his grace, he, who knew no sin, was made sin, a sin-bearer and a sin-offering for us; that we may be made the righteousness of God in him. He hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, by his own blood, being made a curse for us. Hence, he averred, that his blood was shed for many, for the remission of sins; and that the son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life, a substitutionary ransom for many."

In some way, which Toplady never seeks to analyse, God regards the sufferings of Christ as a sufficient propitiation for sin. He nowhere suggests that the suffering of the Cross is the suffering of the heart of God, but leaves one with the impression that pain is, in itself, a redemptive agency. Without hesitation he brands as Socinian any who deny the imputation of Christ's suffering to us.

"Whoever denies the imputation of Christ's sufferings to us men, is a Socinian, in the essential import of the word. And whoever denies the imputation of Christ's own personal obedience, must to be consistent,

---

Works. vol. 3 page 142.
This word which Toplady here inserts is found in I Tim. 2.5., but not in Matthew 20. 28; which is the passage he is quoting. (N.B. Toplady does not insert any accents, not even the "breathings".)
deny the imputation of Christ’s own personal sufferings. You must admit the imputation of both, or you virtually disallow the imputation of either; for if it be deemed unreasonable, that God should justify sinners by a righteousness which they themselves did not perform; what will become of that doctrine, which affirms, that sinners are pardoned through a ransom which they themselves did not pay, and by a death which they themselves did not undergo?" "Expel, therefore, the imputation of Christ’s righteousness, and we are that instant, in the very gall of Socinianism: for the atonement itself stands on one and the same basis with the other."

Today, man sees in the Cross the unutterable lengths to which the Father in his love will go to bring His family back to His heart and home; and the awful cost at which He reconciles us to Himself: but nowhere does this idea find place in Toplady’s theology. Rather the outraged dignity of the Sovereign Law Giver, propitiated by the suffering of His innocent Son, which suffering is imputed as a sin offering for the elect. Toplady’s soteriology can be put in a sentence: God decreed the fall of man; and then accepts the sacrifice of His Co-eternal Son as a vindication of the law, and an atonement for the sins of the elect; imputing to them the righteousness of Christ.

Justification by imputed righteousness is, says Toplady, a doctrine which Jesus taught; and he then proceeds to define justification as

"that gracious act of God, whereby he reckons and esteems a person perfectly righteous, and finally rewards him as such."

The doctrine of Justification is one of paramount importance, but as the sinner cannot be assured of his justification.
until he is repentant, it will be necessary to note Toplady's teaching on repentance before turning to a more detailed exposition of his teaching concerning justification. Happily, that is not a difficult task, for he devotes a very fine sermon to this subject. Taking as his text "Joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth" he makes it quite clear what repentance is, what it does, and how it is secured.

He commences his sermon by saying:

"Repentance is one of those graces, without which there can be no salvation. It is an essential pre-requisite to spiritual peace on earth; and absolutely necessary as a preparative for the eternal happiness of heaven. The reason is evident: viz. because every man is a fallen being. We must therefore, by the effectual working of God's good spirit, be made sensible of our fall; or we shall never feel our need of redemption and restoration from it, through the alone covenant grace of Father, Son & Holy Ghost."

Nevertheless, Toplady hastens to point out that salvation is sure and in no way depends upon man's free-will: whilst it is true that man cannot be saved before he repents, it is equally true that his salvation is eternally decreed and assured; so it follows that his repentance is as surely decreed as his salvation. Moreover, whilst we must repent before we can be saved, that repentance is not a condition of our salvation; for that would mean we pleaded before the bar of heaven some merit of our own. It is the grace of God which prompts repentance, and apart from that grace repentance is impossible; hence it follows that the reprobate who are not recipients of this prompting grace, cannot repent; and so must perish in their
sins. God who decreed their perishing having also decreed the means to that end, namely the withholding of that grace which prompts repentance. Listen as he continues his sermon:

"Not that repentance, or faith, or any of their practical fruits, are the least respect casual, or conditional, or meritorious, of pardon, happiness, and eternal life. Every grace, and every good work, are the free gifts of God.

Therefore, when we say, that no man can be ultimately saved, without such and such qualifications; we do not mean, that those qualifications have any influence in obtaining our salvation (for inherent grace and eternal glory are already obtained, and infallibly secured to all God's elect, by the obedience and blood of Christ); but that those qualifications (as faith, repentance, and holiness of heart and life) are essential branches and indispensable evidences of this absolutely free salvation.

Inherent grace is the dawning of eternal glory; and eternal glory is the perfection of inherent grace."

When fully convicted of sin and truly repentant of it, the penitent by constraining grace turns to Christ Who receives them in a three-fold respect:

"(1) As the donation of his father, who elected them to salvation. (2) At the hand of the Holy Spirit, in effectual calling. (3) He receives their souls at the hand of angels, in the hour of death."

"There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth", and, says Toplady, this is

"Because ye (the angels) know assuredly, that every true conversion is (1) a certain proof, that the person converted is one of your own elect number: and (2) that he shall be infallibly preserved and brought to that very region of blessedness, into which ye yourselves are entered."
Penitence, then, is begotten by the grace of God indwelling, which effects a change of mind and secures regeneration. But it is important to note that repentance is not just "sorrow for sin", any more than regeneration is not just "doing better". There is a world of difference between regeneration and reformation. Toplady asks the question

"What is that repentance which induces the benevolent celestial choirs thus to rejoice over the sinner who repents?" The words μετανοεῖν and μετανοεῖνα, as they stand in the text now under consideration, seem to include something more than the word μετανοεῖνα always imports. μετανοεῖν literally and naturally signifies, an anxious and painful apprehension, arising from consciousness of preceding guilt. In this sense, an unregenerate and unreformed person may repent of having acted criminally, when he finds that his crimes are likely to be followed by consequences fatal to his interest and happiness. But the repentance here spoken of, is μετανοεῖν: i.e. a change of mind or regeneration, truly so called. That new birth and new heart, which are the gift of God, and the work of his Spirit. Where these take place, sorrow for sin, hatred of sin, war against sin, and renunciation both of sinful self and of righteous self, are the blessed and certain consequences. The inward principle of evangelical repentance, is regenerating grace, or the habit of holiness supernaturally infused by the spirit of God. The actings of evangelical repentance, or the experimental and practical ramifications of it, are those just now described. No man can spiritually repent, until he is born of God: and every man who is born of God, repents spiritually. When the Lord turns and looks upon us, in effectual calling, we are then turned, and look with mournings unto him whom our sins have pierced."
This change of heart is not to be confused with outward reformation. Concerning this Toplady is very definite: he points out that reformation is like whitewashing a house, whilst regeneration is a complete new structure. Moreover, he says:

"If you repent indeed, you will repent practically; by labouring to depart from iniquity, and by ordering your conversation aright. Though we are not saved for our holiness, yet holiness and good works are inseparable attendants on that grace of God which brings salvation. Any repentance which leaves us short of this, is counterfeit and nothing worth."

No believer is under the delusion that he has in any way merited regeneration, and becomes self-righteous in consequence. Indeed, under the gracious influence of the indwelling Spirit he abhors himself in dust and ashes. Even his new found righteousness is something to repent of. Toplady claims that

"The purest action of the holiest believer in the world, needs more or less to be repented of."

So the efficacy of repentance is clear; the sinner, convicted by grace, repents truly of his sins past, and through the innumerable benefits which the precious blood-shedding of Christ has obtained, is enabled to lead a new life, walking henceforth in God's holy ways; rejoicing that having been justified by faith, he has peace.

On the subject of Justification by Faith, Toplady has written much: and even more on the subject of justification by works. He never wearies of showing the utter futility of
trusting in one's own righteousness, or the pleading of one's
own merits. Unhappily, his philosophy is based entirely on
a rigid and exclusive interpretation of the doctrine of
election; so that salvation for some, and damnation for others
follows inexorably from his dogma of absolute predestination.
Why Omnipotence, which could justify all mankind, should not
want to do so, is a question he ignores. In one place he
does refer to the fate of the non-elect, but, as usual, when
his teaching is being assailed, he hides behind the "inscrutable
workings" of the eternal mind: and contents himself with
asserting, that whatever becomes of the non-elect is none of
his business, and that all God does will be good, simply
because God is Good. Toplady's philosophy is simple; God
is essential goodness, and his conduct cannot but be good;
the Judge of all the earth must do right: he never approaches
the subject from an ethical standpoint and enquires whether
an act, rightly deemed reprehensible in man, can be attributed
to God. Obviously:

"Nothing can be good in Him
Which evil is in me."

but that is as aspect of the case that is completely ignored.

\[\text{Compare with pages 159-160 Vol. 5.}\]
As Toplady is so prolix on the doctrine of Justification, I cannot offer all his observations on the subject. It is enough to say that in broad outline he is a true follower of Calvin. Both reject with vehemence the suggestion that man can be justified by his works. Nothing one has done or can ever do, can merit this spiritual blessing. It is the inheritance of the elect, but not for any good they may have done, nor for any of which they were deemed capable. It is purely the gift of God. It is, however, not just the gracious act of God, it is also an experience of the elect; it is both an act and a state. Moreover, those who are justified are not exactly acquitted, for acquittal presumes a verdict of not guilty, but they are delivered from any penalty. Their fine has been paid: God has accepted a ransom price in the sufferings and death of Christ. No man, them, can boast of his works in God's sight; all alike are sinners: and it would seem, from Toplady, all in equal degree. It is a fact of religious experience that the nearer a man draws to God, the further he feels himself to be away. Only the diabolical doubt the existence of the devil; the saint is only too conscious of it: and it may be, that Toplady, sensitive of the distance that separated him from God, tended to think of himself as the "chief of sinners".

To the development of the doctrine of man's total inability to turn to God apart from the constraining power of the Holy Spirit he devotes a large part of his "Works". Arminianism is a pestilential evil in that it encourages trust
in one's own merit; whereas only the work of Christ can justify. His mind on this matter is eloquently revealed by the sub-title of his sermon "Free-will and merit fairly examined" or "Men not their own Saviours". Knowing the tenacity with which Toplady held to the doctrine of "Freegrace", one is not surprised to find that the doctrine of free will is anything but "fairly examined". It is in this sermon that he makes his famous assertion;

"That not one grain of Arminianism ever attended a saint into heaven. If those of God's people, who are in the bonds of that iniquity, are not explicitly converted from it, while they live and converse among men; yet do they leave it all behind them in Jordan (i.e. in the river of death) when they go through."

As illustration of Toplady's readiness to dogmatise on this matter rather than think through the implications of his dogma I offer a quotation from another of his sermons.

"Every faithful minister is immortal until his work is done:" and it may as truly be asserted of every elect sinner, that he is immortal, until he is born again. It is impossible that any of God's people should die in their sins."

Consistency was not Toplady's strong point; for whilst he claims to appeal to reason, he is so emotionally impassioned that "pure" thought is impossible to him. In my judgment his work is not the discovery of truth, but the denial of error. When not engaged in denouncing those who differ from him, he was busy reading the Fathers of the Church, to whom he turned as though to an armoury of thought. From writers contemporary with the Apostles to scholars of his own day he is indebted for "amunition" with which to blast the bulwarks of heterodoxy. His chief work

Works vol. 3 page 169. Works vol. 3 page 112.
"The Historic Proof of the Doctrinal Calvinism of the Church of England", is a remarkably able symposium of the judgments of scholars and martyrs; but it is open to question whether Toplady does not read into their judgments his own interpretation. Many of the extracts are just as capable of an Arminian explanation as a Calvinist; though it must be admitted that the overwhelming number are quite definitely Calvinistic. This can be inferred from Wesley's reference to Toplady's "slander on the Church of England". From his "Historic Proof", or his "The Church of England vindicated from the Charge of Arminianism", down to his humblest sermon, Toplady has but one theme; the justification by faith of the elect, because God the Sovereign ruler of all hearts has so decreed it. The text which he takes for his sermon "Free-will and Merit fairly examined" may be used as the epitome of all his teaching that can be called positive: "Not unto us Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory: for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake."

Though good works cannot in any way merit justification; they are not despised: on the contrary, they are expected of everyone in whom God's converting grace is manifested. Good works are the proof of election, not the cause of it. Wesley had said of Toplady's translation of Zanchius, that the "sum of it all was that the elect shall be saved, do what they will; and the reprobate shall be damned do what they can." I have shown earlier that this raised Toplady to flaming anger, particularly as Wesley had appended Toplady's initials; and he at once proceeded to
deluge Wesley in invective in his replies "A Letter to the Revd. Mr. John Wesley" and "More Work for Mr. John Wesley". In a truly clever way he avoids the real issue—which is, Can Moral freedom and Predestination be reconciled?—and seeks to show that God who has decreed the salvation of any, has also decreed not only the means to that end, but also the fruits of that salvation. The fact that a fore-ordained salvation flatly denies all moral responsibility, and in the last analysis is a contradiction in terms, seeing that no salvation is either possible or required in the case of a non-moral being; is completely ignored by him; while he uses reams of paper to show that from an Omnipotent first cause every act of will is determined

"The elect could no more be saved, without personal holiness, than they could be saved without personal existence. And why? because God's own decree secures the means as well as the ends, and accomplishes the end by the means. The same gratuitous predestination, which ordained the existence of the elect, as men: ordained their purification, as saints: and they were ordained to both, in order to their being finally and completely saved in Jesus Christ with eternal glory. The doctrine of election is a doctrine of mere revelation."

"Consequently, it does not follow from the doctrine of absolute predestination, that 'the elect shall be saved, do what they will'. On the contrary they are chosen as much to holiness, as to heaven; and are foreordained to walk in good works, by virtue of their election from eternity, and of their conversion in time."

Toplady's works abound in passages to the same purport, but the writer will not face up to the fact that he is not only making God virtually responsible for evil, but is at the same
time reducing man to the level of a stone. This is a charge he would have denied very vigorously; but it is none the less true.

"The elect, the sprinkled, and the sanctified are made to obey the commandments of God, and to imitate Christ as pattern, at the same time that they trust in him as their propitiation. I said made to obey. Here perhaps the unblushing Mr. Wesley may ask, "Are the elect, then, mere machines?" I answer No. They are made willing to obey, in the day of God's power. And I believe, nobody ever yet heard of a willing machine."

True! no one has heard of a 'willing machine'; willingness is an endowment of personality; and if by being "made willing to obey" Toplady means compelled to obey; then personality is destroyed, for the hallmark of personality is self-determination. If man is "made willing", one presupposes he has been constrained to surrender his will; if he is coerced by any external factor then he is "made willing" by compulsion; which is a flat contradiction. As Dr. Whale has pertinently put it; "If sin were necessitated by God, it could not be sin. We cannot believe in sheer determinism. As someone has said, sheer determinism is sheer nonsense. A universe created at the fiat of such omnipotence would not be the moral universe which our moral consciousness proclaims it to be. It would make our sense of moral responsibility completely irrational. Indeed the helpless instruments of such omnipotence could not be held responsible for anything, were it good or evil. Morality would cease to have any meaning. Whatever it may be in theory, our human freedom

[Works vol. 5:369-370]
is a fact; and in spite of the paradox, irresolvable by logic, that God is the sovereign cause of all that is, and that man is free, we may not define either truth in such a way as to reduce it to absurdity." Toplady did not reckon with paradoxes. He taught the absolute supremacy of God, and the total inability of man to respond to the good unless "made willing" by the Spirit of God; with the result, he made nonsense of moral consciousness. Not even omnipotence can compel man to be saved; justification is meaningless unless accepted in faith and manifested in works; and such acceptance implies freedom to reject: a predetermined acceptance is unthinkable. Even more so is a predetermined reprobation, for that not only affronts the reason, but outrages the conscience. But, as the dogma of reprobation looms so large in Toplady's theology, it will serve as a starting point for the analysis of his

DOCTRINE OF ESCHATOLOGY.

As I mentioned in the chapter devoted to the study of the teaching of his hymns, and as one would expect, Toplady believes in heaven and hell as places rather than as states of consciousness. Heaven is a post mortem "city of refuge", whilst hell is prepared by God for the endless torment of those doomed to be damned. This latter phrase is not too strong, for it is the essence of His teaching concerning the fate of the reprobated. No matter how much he may, in clouds of verbiage, seek to hide from himself and others the terrible

consequences of his teaching, the fact remains that he clearly and uncompromisingly asserts that the non-elect are damned from the womb to an endless physical torment; simply because it pleased God to create them to that end. Toplady had no illusions as the fearfulness of his position; his heart was bigger than his creed; but such was his bondage to dogma that he could not see that his portrait of God was a blasphemous caricature of Him who took little children in His arms and blessed them, declaring that of such is the Kingdom of God. When he was asked if he would create any being to misery, he hedged, and declared "When I am God I will tell you." Nevertheless, he is outraged at the suggestion that God will or can disinherit any of his children; and states quite bluntly, that those who appear to be disinherited are not disinherited at all - they never had any title to inheritance.

"He (God) cannot be said to disinherit the reprobate, who were never heirs. And, for elect, he will never disinherit them."

So, God created some to be heirs, but others he disendowed from the very start.

"God did, from all eternity, decree to leave some of Adam's fallen posterity in their sins, and to exclude them from the participation of Christ and his benefits."

But this is not inconsistent with either justice or mercy.

"If it were not incompatible with God's infinite goodness, to pass by the whole body of fallen angels, and leave them under the guilt of their apostasy, much less can it
clash with that attribute, to pass by some fallen mankind, and resolve to leave them in their sins, and punish them for them. Nor is it inconsistent with the divine mercy and justice, to withhold saving grace from some; seeing the grace of God is not what He owes to any. It is a free gift, to those who have it; and it is not due to those who are without it; consequently, there can be no injustice, in not giving what God is not bound to bestow. 

How can it possibly be subversive of his justice, to condemn, and resolve to condemn, the non-elect for their sins; when those very sins were not atoned for by Christ, as the sins of the elect were?"

Toplady's attempt to defend this position by simple analogy is woefully weak, he asks

"Should an earthly friend make me a present of £10,000 would it not be unreasonable, ungrateful and presumptuous in me to refuse the gift, and revile the giver, only because it might not be his pleasure to confer the same favour on my next door neighbour?"

On Toplady's own showing this is no argument whatever. Firstly, he is very scathing in other parts of his works concerning those who seek to argue on the basis of a human analogy; seeing that no argument drawn from the conduct of fickle and fallible man can be applied to God. Moreover to assert that

"The value of a privilege, or of a possession, is enhanced by its scarceness."

is to regard God as a collector of fine art: indeed, he does so describe Him. Secondly, Toplady is ignoring the fact that the donor of the £10,000 may not have another such sum to give to the "next door neighbour"; whilst God is Omnipotent, and

Works vol. 5 pages 263-5. ibid page 158.

Compare Toplady's letter LVIII Works. vol. 6 pages 261-5
could deliver all mankind as easily as part. To suggest that as it is an act of grace for a man to pay the fine of a friend, and so secure his release from prison; it is an act of grace on God's part to deliver the elect; is not a valid analogy; in that God has decreed that some shall be left in the prison of sin, whilst He could have ransomed them all. So, far from being gracious, God is portrayed as arbitrary, seeing that He deliberately imprisons some, whilst He favours others.

It must not be thought, that for the reprobate there is any "second chance"; for that would be a denial of the Omnipotence and the Immutability of God. Privations and sufferings whilst on earth, may help to make mankind more spiritual; but if during one's earthly sojourn, God like

"The jeweller cuts and polishes his diamonds, to make them shine the brighter.",

or as a refiner

"Flings his gold into the furnace that it may come out the purer."

no such refining agencies are at work hereafter. The decree that blesses or damns is irrevocable. Whether it be to bliss or pain, the duration of the sentence is "for evermore".

In his sermon "God's Mindfulness of Man", Toplady gives a graphic account of the arrival of an elect soul on the other shore. As it is so eloquently revealing of his mind and heart, I will give it here, almost in toto.

"O, what a burst of joy, what a scene of glory opens to the ravished view, and beams on the
triumphant soul of a saint, in the moment of departure! The death-bed of a Christian is the anti-chamber of heaven, and the very suburbs of the New Jerusalem. When the silver cords of life loosen space—when the last pins of the earthly tabernacle are taken out——and the hovering soul is just on the wing for glory——fast as the world darkens upon his sight, fast as the world darkens upon his sight, the mortal part (2. Cor. v.4.) of his composition, subsides and falls off from the dis-imprisoned spirit; he brightens into the perfect image of God, and kindles into more than an angel of light. Jehovah visits him with smiles of everlasting love; Jesus beckons him to the regions of eternal day; the blessed spirit of God wafts him, with a gentle gale, over the stream of death. The angelic potentates deem it an honour to usher the ransomed soul, and convoy the precious freight. Dis-embodied saints, who were landed long before, throng the blissful coast, to congratulate the new-born seraph of his safe arrival. When Virgil entered the Roman theatre, the whole auditory testified their respect, by rising from their seats. When a believer lands in glory, the whole church triumphant may be supposed to welcome the new-admitted peer. He makes a public entry into the celestial city, the Jerusalem which is above. As joy is in heaven, when a sinner repents; so joy is in heaven, when a saint is taken home."

It is clear from this extract that Toplady believes that immediately after death the ransomed soul passes into the presence of God; but he also believes that the body lies in the grave, and as a preliminary to judgment, will be raised and re-united to that soul. The meaning of the phrase "resurrection of the body" occasions him no difficulty. It is the body that we tenanted on earth that shall be raised again.

"While their souls are happy in the converse of Christ and his angels, their bodies lie refining in the tomb, until the latter have slept away their dross, that both may be glorified together."
To the problems created by a doctrine of the physical resurrection of the body, Toplady gives no place. For him, there are none. The Omnipotent God will gather together every atom of the disintegrated body, rebuilding each particle, either into a temple of perfection and glory, or into a vessel of wrath.

"The souls of the regenerate, from the instant they take their flight, are admitted to the sight and fruition of his glorious godhead; and their bodies lie down in the grave, as a prince retires to his wardrobe, or as a bride withdraws to her closet, to come forth with additional beauty and lustre, by and by."  

"That same divine Spirit, the third person in the godhead, who, on earth, quickens and raises the souls of the elect from a death of sin to the life of righteousness, will be immediately concerned in re-quickening their bodies, the temples in which he dwells, to which he is incomprehensibly united even while they lie moulndering in the grave. In his book are all their members written. Every essential atom of their dust stands registered in the volume of omniscience. Every atom is numbered. Every atom is precious in his sight. Nor shall a single atom be lost. Whatever changes their bodies may undergo, by a resolution into their first principles, or even by incorporation with other beings; the constituent particles requisite to idenity, shall, when the trumpet sounds, be collected from every quarter of the globe, whither they have been scattered; or more justly speaking, treasured up: for the world is but a vast storehouse, wherein the dust of the saints is deposited.

After the body has been re-built, the soul returns to inanimate it: and then appear before God for final judgment. The elect will "inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world", whilst the non-elect will "depart into everlasting fire": for says Toplady

"The non-elect were predestinated, not only to continue in final impenitency and sin; but were
likewise, for such their sins, righteously appointed to infernal death hereafter."

The fact that predestinated sin is simply nonsense escaped Toplady, but not the criticism such a doctrine inevitably provokes; for he went out of his way to refute it in advance.

"It is frequently objected to us, that according to our view of predestination, 'God makes some persons on purpose to damn them.' But this we never advanced: nay we utterly reject it, as equally unworthy of God to do, and of a rational being to suppose. The grand principal end, proposed by the Deity to himself, in his formation of all things, and mankind in particular, was, The manifestation and display of his own glorious attributes. His ultimate scope, in the creation of the elect, is to evidence and make known, by their salvation, the unsearchable riches of his power and wisdom, mercy and love: and the creation of the non-elect, is for the display of his justice, power, sovereignty, holiness and truth. So that nothing can be more certain, than the declaration of the text we have frequently had occasion to cite, Prov. xvi. (4). "The Lord hath made all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil."

In effect, this means that God is more concerned about His glory, than His family: His cruelty to some being only the background which throws into greater relief His beneficence to others. This, Toplady admits in his very next paragraph.

"Besides the creation and the perdition of the ungodly answer another purpose (though a subordinate one), with regard to the elect themselves, who from the rejection of those, learn (1) to admire the riches of the divine love to themselves.....And such a view of the Lord's distinguishing mercy is (2) a most powerful motive to thankfulness, that, when they too might justly have been condemned with the world of the non-elect, they were marked out as heirs of the grace of life. (3) Hereby they are taught ardently to love their heavenly Father."
Although Toplady has just spoken of the "Lord's distinguishing mercy", he in the next breath asserts that God does not "show himself a respecter of persons".

"Notwithstanding God did, from all eternity, irreversibly choose out and fix upon some to be partakers of that salvation by Christ, and rejected the rest (who are therefore termed by the apostle, δολιτοι the refuse, or those that remained and were left out); acting in both, according to the good pleasure of his sovereign will: yet he did not herein act an unjust, tyrannical or cruel part; nor yet show himself a respecter of persons......It can no more be unjust in God to set apart some for communion with himself in this life and the next, and to set aside others, according to his own free pleasure; than for a potter, to make, out of the same clay, some vessels for honourable, and others for inferior uses. The Deity, being absolute Lord of all his creatures, is accountable to none, for his doings, and cannot be chargeable with injustice, for disposing of his own as he will."

Enough has been quoted to show that Toplady was soundly orthodox. Zanchius was his chief mentor, and never failing source of inspiration. It can be stated without hesitance that though the words be the words of Zanchius, the substance of them is the belief of Toplady. From what has just been written it is apparent that

**Works vol. 5 pp. 261-2**
Although the soul has, at physical death, immediate deliverance from the trammels of its clay, it is not until after Judgment Day that it, then re-united to its erst-while body, enters into its everlasting inheritance; be it good or ill. Had Toplady, in his day, heard expressed such observations as Dr. Streeter makes in his "Immortality", his orthodox soul would have been outraged; for he insisted on as literal interpretation of the Apocalypse as he did of all other parts of Holy Writ. So with a further quotation from his sermon "Jesus seen of Angels", I will, in closing this section on his Eschatological teaching, conclude my outline of his theology: and, in the next chapter, volunteer a very brief critique and appreciation of his work as a whole.

"Angels shall see him, and augment the splendour of his appearance, when he shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire. He will, as himself expresses it, come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, (Matt. xxv. 31.) The voice of the archangel shall sound, and the trump of God. One branch of their business will be, to gather together the dust of his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth, to the uttermost part of the heaven, Mark xiii. 27. By their ministry, perhaps the knot

If we affirm that we too, at once and without any interval of waiting shall take on our new celestial bodies, we affirm exactly what the Apostles taught would happen to themselves, and to every member of the Church they knew. The notion of an age-long interval between death and resurrection, is an inheritance from the letter of Jewish apocalyptic, which the actual belief of the first generations of Christians had in practice, though not in theory, already discarded. Hence although we may recognise some elements of truth in the expectation of a
of indissoluble union, between the glorified soul and the risen body of each respective believer, may be tied. They perhaps will, when Christ gives the signal, set fire to the world, and regulate that conflagration which shall issue in the new heaven (i.e. a new body of air) and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Whether angels will share in the glory of the Millennial state; or, whether that reign will be peculiar to Christ and his redeemed people only, is not I believe, clearly revealed. But this we can make no doubt of, that, when the millennium is over, and the second resurrection (the resurrection of the unjust) has taken place; when sentence shall be passed and the books closed; when the righteous are turned into hell, and the elect enter with Christ into the final enjoyment of glory; angels and saints will forever see, for ever admire, and love, worship and resemble him that sitteth on the throne."
Chapter 11

ESTIMATE OF TOPLADY'S THEOLOGY
ESTIMATE OF TOPLADY'S THEOLOGY.

Rightly to estimate Toplady's theology is not an easy task; for whilst he occupies a unique place amongst the singers of the Church he has no particular niche amongst its thinkers. To the study of theology he contributes nothing that is new; he is not a "voice", he is an "echo". Some might say he was not even that, but only a "parrot" wearisomely repeating the same phrases. In saying this I do not imply that his polemics contain nothing of worth, but the occasional glint of gold is only found after much searching amongst the dross. What of value he has to say had been said many times before and not infrequently since.

It has been said of Wesley that had he lived today he would have been in the van of theological thought; this may be true, but it would not have been true of Toplady: he was unblushingly conservative and traditional. As will be seen when the theology of the controversy is examined, Toplady and Wesley had much more in common than one would suppose, having regard to the violence with which the controversy was conducted. Unhappily Toplady blinded his eyes to Wesley's orthodoxy and saw in his teaching only a perversion of "the faith once delivered to the saints." Those who denied Predestination as taught by Calvin were, in Toplady's opinion, enemies of the truth, no matter how closely they identified
themselves with him in other ways. So it is not surprising that Toplady could not appreciate Wesley's teaching, seeing that he identified Wesley with Arminius, and Arminius with Pelagius. Yet Wesley stands in direct succession to Luther and the Reformers. As he says himself in a letter to "John Smith", "It is the faith of the Reformers that I preach." So did Toplady, but whilst Wesley taught the universality of grace, Toplady limited it to the Elect; and in so doing followed in the wake of Luther and Calvin in a way that Wesley did not.

Earlier I have hinted that it is doubtful whether Calvin would have numbered Toplady amongst his followers; though I incline to the view that Beza would have done so. Beza had hardened Calvin's teaching into Supralapsarianism, holding that even Omnipotence cannot seek that which is not lost; hence it was necessary for God to decree the fall of man. "Sin was ordained not as an end but as a means; it was here because there was something that God could not accomplish without it. That was first in the divine intention was last

"My father did not die unacquainted with the faith of the Gospel, of the primitive Christians, or of our first Reformers; the same which, by the grace of God, I preach, and which is just as new as Christianity."

Letter to "John Smith" from Dublin, March 22nd 1748. Letters of John Wesley vol. 2. page 134. 2nd Edtn.
in the divine execution. The primal purpose was the decree to save, but if man was to be saved he must first be lost. Hence the Fall was decreed as a consequence of a decreed salvation. The infralapsarians, on the other hand, connected the Fall with the permission of God instead of His foreordination. "The Divine decree takes the existence of sin for granted, deals with man as fallen, and elects or rejects him for reasons profoundly indifferent to human judgment."

Both of the rival schools have claimed that Calvin shared their opinions; but it is very questionable whether the point at issue ever arose during his lifetime. Dr. A. Mitchell Hunter is strongly of the opinion that Calvin expressed no judgment on the matter simply because the rival theories had not then been put forward. Dr. Burt Pope asserts that Calvin was a supralapsarian, and Dr. A. W. Harrison inclines to the same view, but Drs. Platt and Maldwyn Hughes doubt it. The Synod of Dort did not commit itself on this point, but presented Calvinism, if not in its extreme, yet in an unadulterated form. It is very doubtful whether the distinction twixt the two theories is as vital as their exponents think for in the last analysis both must include the Fall.

Cambridge Modern History p. 717. vol. 2.
Arminianism by F. Platt. E.R.E. vol. 1 p. 808
ibid
Compendium of Theology, vol. 2 p. 352
Arminianism p. 235
Article in E.R.E. vol. 1. p. 808
Christian Foundations, p. 166
in the eternal decree of God or else deny the fundamental Calvinist principle which conceives all that comes to pass teleologically and ascribes everything that happens to the will of God. Toplady claimed to be an infralapsarian, but his translation of, and his comments upon, Zanchius reveal him more in sympathy with the supralapsarians. He makes it quite clear that God did not only permit the Fall but actually decreed it. In his sermon on God's Mindfulness of Man he says:

"Satan neither stole nor forced his way into Paradise. He neither escaped the notice nor mastered the power of Him whose presence filleth heaven and earth. Omniscience cannot be deceived. Omnipresence cannot be eluded. Omnipotence cannot be overpowered."

In his translation of the "Doctrine of Absolute Necessity Stated and Asserted" he writes:

"That man did actually fall from the divine image and from his original happiness

\[ See \text{ Calvin and Calvinism, B.B. Warfield, pp. 363-4 } \]

\[ ^{/} \text{ "Zanchy was a sublapsarian; and so is his translator." More Work for Mr. John Wesley, vol. 5 page 377 } \]

\[ ^{/} \text{ Toplady's Works, vol. 3 page 111. } \]
is the undoubted voice of Scripture, Gen. iii. And, (4) That he fell in consequence of the divine decree (a), we prove thus: God was either willing that Adam should fall; or unwilling; or indifferent about it. If God was unwilling that Adam should transgress, how came it to pass that he did? Is man stronger, and is Satan wiser than He who made them? Surely no. Again; could not God had it so pleased Him, have hindered the tempter's access to paradise? or have created man, as he did the elect angels, with a will invariably determined to good only, and incapable of being biassed to evil? or at least have made grace and strength, with which he indued Adam, actually effectual to the resisting of solicitations to sin? None but atheists would answer these questions in the negative. Surely, if God had not willed the fall, he could, and no doubt would, have prevented it; but He did not prevent it, ergo He willed it. And if he willed it, he certainly decreed it; for the decree of God is nothing else but the seal and ratification of his will. He does nothing but what he decreed; and he decreed nothing which he did not will, and both will and decree are absolutely eternal, though the execution of both be in time."

It is obvious from this quotation that Zanchius believed the Fall of man to be decreed of God, and so, whatever Toplady may say to the contrary, Zanchius was a Supralapsarian. True! he so is not always so forthright, and is not always /careful as to his choice of terms. Nevertheless, though in places he writes of "permission" the "permission" is decreed. On this point

| The Doctrine of Absolute Predestination Vol. 5. p. 234 |

| ibid Vol. 5 page 229 |
Toplady lends added emphasis to the text of Zanchius by adding a footnote of his own.

"Then we say that the decree of predestination to life and death as respects man as fallen, we do not mean, that the fall was actually antecedent to that decree: for the decree is truly and properly eternal, as all God's immanent acts undoubtedly are; whereas the fall took place in time. What we intend, then, is only this, viz. that God, (for reasons, without doubt worthy of himself, and of which we are, by no means, in this life competent judges) having, from everlasting, peremptorily ordained to suffer Adam to fall; did likewise, from everlasting, consider the human race as fallen: and out of the whole mass of mankind, thus viewed and foreknown as impure, and obnoxious to condemnation, vouchsafed to elect some particular persons, (who collectively, make up a very great, though precisely determinate number) in and on whom he would make known the ineffable riches of his mercy."}

If it be conceded that Toplady was an infralapsarian as he claimed, it will be granted that this is curious comment. However in his "Historic Proof" he emphasises that though the Church of England system is based on infralapsarianism, it is presented with such moderation as not to preclude supralapsarianism: and rejoices that members of both schools can yet dwell together within the Calvinist fold. So long as absolute predestination is accepted Toplady will consent to almost any anomaly. He finds it easier to consent to them than to examine their content. Had he been

1 The Doctrine of Absolute Predestination Vol. 5 pages 229-230
Underlining mine.


It will be noted that Toplady gives a very limited connotation to both hypotheses.
as ready to investigate as he was to anathematise his polemics, might have diffused more light and less heat. Despite a great show of logic Toplady rides away from all the difficulties his dogmas create. Behind the smoke-screen of his cloudy verbiage he is able to avoid his antagonists whilst pretending to face them. He finds "the inscrutable purpose of God" a very convenient cliché. It might be asked "If God's purposes are so inscrutable how is it possible to dogmatise at all?" Surely agnosticism is the only logical issue of inscrutability. Now, no Christian would attempt to deny that the ways of God are far above man's or angel's thought, but on the other hand, no Christian would attempt to deny that "God has not left Himself without witnesses:" and although we cannot, as finite beings, know all, we can know something of His nature and purpose. The cardinal truth of the Incarnation is that God is always and everywhere like Jesus Christ. "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" is our Saviour's own answer to the question "What is God like?" It was He who taught us when we pray to say "Our Father". Unhappily Toplady did not always remember this fact, nor yet its implicates. For him God was sovereign will.

Now it is in the development of the doctrine of the sovereign will that Calvinists have found their acutest problems; for whether they have placed election before or after the Fall they have had to face dilemmas peculiar to each hypothesis.
Toplady, however, is not greatly concerned with dilemmas; his is a simple creed: and whilst he admits that it is not without difficulties he comforts himself with the assurance that Arminianism has a thousand-fold more. He is more concerned that the gospel of Free Grace shall be preached, than that its problems should be elucidated. Nevertheless, any critic of his teaching is obliged to concern himself with these problems, and must examine both the premises of Toplady's theology and the dogmas that follow from them.

Now, his dogma of the Eternal Decree is logical enough. Once grant the doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of God; then all that happens must be the working out of His sovereign will; and so there is offered a doctrine of Providence which leads to a determinism as rigid as any in philosophy. There is no possibility of any real freedom in man: indeed! it is seriously open to question whether there is any in God. Is He not also bound by His own decree? Toplady gives unequivocal answers to this question; and in doing so follows closely in the steps of Calvin.

"The times, i.e. the proper seasons of our birth and death, and of all that we shall do or suffer between the starting post and the goal, are determined, or marked out with certainty and exactness, by himself. This determination, or adjustment of our times, is not a modern act of God, arising e re nata, or from any present emergency of circumstances and situation of affairs: but a determination, inconceivably ancient. The times were fore-appointed, even from everlasting; for no new
determination can take place in God, without a change, i.e. without the destruction of His essence. Quaevis mutatio mors est...........If, therefore, the initial point, from whence we start; and the ultimate goal, which terminates our race; be thus divinely and unchangeably fixed: is it reasonable to suppose, that chance, or any free-will, but the free-will of Deity alone, may fabricate the intermediate links of a chain, whose two extremes are held immovably fast in the hands of God Himself? - Impossible."

On this point Calvin wrote:

"We hold that God is the dispenser and ruler of all things, that from the remotest eternity, according to his own wisdom, He decreed what He was to do, and now by his own power executes what He decreed. Hence we maintain that by His providence, not heaven and earth, and inanimate creatures only, but also the counsels and wills of men are so governed as to move exactly in the course which He has destined."

It might be noted in passing that Toplady writes of "the free-will of the Deity alone"; but this is no contradiction of his previous observation that "no new determination can take place in God without a change, i.e. without the destruction of His essence"; for Toplady is really emphasising that the only free-will in the universe was the free-will of God in formulating His decree; but it is obvious from his main teaching that God is immutable: and as He cannot alter His decree, He is bound by it. In his translation of Zanchius he observes

| Christian & Philosophical Necessity Asserted. |
| Vol. 6. pages 78-9 |
| Institutes. I. xvi.8 |
"God is essentially unchangeable in Himself. Were he otherwise he would be confessedly imperfect; since whoever changes, must change either for the better, or for the worse."

"By the purpose, or decree of God, we mean His determinate counsel, whereby he did from all eternity pre-ordain whatever he should do, or would permit to be done in time."

"We assert that the decrees of God are not only immutable as to Himself, it being inconsistent with his nature to alter in his purposes, or change his mind; but that they are immutable likewise with respect to the objects of those decrees; so that whatsoever God hath determined, concerning every individual person or thing, shall surely and infallibly be accomplished in and upon them."

Toplady's doctrine of God, then, is consistent enough as the logical unfolding of an abstract idea; but there is in his teaching no real appreciation of the cosmic problem of evil. His argument, which is purely deductive, stops short of its ultimate conclusion; namely the denial of sin. For if all that happens is the unfolding of the will of God, then sin must be included in God's will, in which case it ceases to be sin. The sole ultimate reality for Toplady is the divine will: he is a Monist as Lotze uses the term. It is this monism that links Toplady's theology with the speculative philosophy of

"There cannot be a multiplicity of independent things, but all elements...must be regarded as parts of a single and real being." Metaphysic p. 69
Spinoza. It is scarcely too much to assert that Toplady is as pure, if less conscious and consistent a pantheist as Spinoza, in whose system voluntus and intellectus are conceived as identical. Toplady's teaching tends to identify the intellect with the will, foreknowledge with foreordination. If it can be truly maintained that Calvin anticipated Spinoza in his idea of God as causa immanens, Spinoza may claim to have perfected and reduced to philosophical consistency the Calvinistic conception of Deity. He writes: "That thing will be called free which exists solely in the necessity of its own nature; and in regard to its activity is determined by itself alone. God acts out of the laws of his own nature only - as compelled by no one." Toplady, then, like Spinoza reads all things phenomenal in the light of the one substance or the alone eternal and efficient will. In his rendering of Zanchius he states:

"The will of God is so the cause of all things, as to be itself without cause; for nothing can be the cause of that which is the cause of everything."

or again:

"God's will is nothing else than God himself willing; consequently it is omnipotent and unfrustrable."

"Ea res libera dicetur, quae ex sola suae naturae necessitate existit, et a se sola ad agendum determinatur. Deus ex solis suae naturae legibus et a nemine coactus agit." Ethices pars 1, def. vii., propos. xvii.

Observations on the Divine Attributes, Works, v. 5 p. 194

ibid p. 192
Toplady's system is one where the sole efficient factor of all things - the one abiding and causal reality - is the Divine will. With reverent but uncompromising dogmatism he works out his concept in terms of Divine sovereignty, human subjection, total depravity, salvation by faith alone, and eternal predestination. The resulting theology is one which conceives the universe, all beings, and all the phenomena and accidents of being as but forms under which the eternal will is realised. Man becomes, if not a mode of the infinite substance, yet a mode or vehicle of the infinite will, and, as Dr. Fairbairn says, "the universalised Divine will is even more decisive and comprehensive pantheism, than the universalised Divine substance."
Moreover, Toplady has no quarrel with the Stoical conception of fate. Indeed, his whole system is developed with a relentless logic and a moral severity worthy of Stoicism. On this point the Revd. Luke Tyerman writes in his "Life and Times of Wesley": Toplady's style is trenchant; his doctrines are as near an approach to the doctrines of fate as held by Plato, Seneca and other heathen writers, as it is possible to conceive." Still, whilst Toplady's teaching is in large measure Stoicism baptised into Christianity; it far transcends Stoicism; for to him Will is personal whilst infinite, gracious while absolute, so real and efficient in its workings as to have made sure of all its means and all its ends. Man is placed in time to know and obey this will, it is revealed in nature, conscience and grace; and these are so related that knowledge of God and of ourselves are not two knowledges, but one and the same. In this Toplady parts company with Calvin; for Calvin strenuously maintained that his view of God and Providence had "no connexion whatever with the Stoic doctrine of fate. Indeed with the idea of fate he will have nothing whatever to do." All the same when one reads such passages as abound in book I of the Institutes it is clear that Calvin's conception of God differed little from that of Toplady's, even though he so vehemently rejects the concept of fate. Toplady can fairly be described as a theistic fatalist, and as such he regards St. Augustine.

Vol. 3 p. 55.
Calvinism by Dr. A Dakin, page 24.
This statement is borne out by Toplady's own words and by his unqualified approval of the words of others.

"The absolute immutability of God effectually secures the infallible accomplishment of His will: whence our great English Austin justly observes, that 'both the divine knowledge, and the divine will, are altogether unchangeable: since, was either one or the other to undergo any alteration, a change must fall on God himself...whatever things come to pass, they are brought to pass by the providence of God.'"

Toplady continues:

"The sentiments of this learned writer, relative to the doctrine of fate are too judicious and important, to be wholly passed over. 'We must' says he, 'beyond all doubt admit, there is such a thing as a divine fate.' By a divine fate, he means, the decree which God hath irrevocably pronounced, or spoken: for he seems to agree with those who derive the word Fatum, either a fando, or from fiat: i.e. from God's speaking or commanding things to be. Whence he adds: 'Is it not written, that in the beginning of the creation, God said, fiat lux, let there be light, and there was light? Is it not written again, he spake and it was done? Now, that divine fate is chiefly a branch of the divine will, which is the efficacious cause of all things.' This seems to have been the real sense, in which the doctrine of fate was maintained by those of the ancients who were truly wise and considerate. And in this sense, fate is a Christian doctrine, in the strictest import of the word Christian. Nay, set aside fate, in this meaning of it, and I cannot see how either natural or revealed religion can stand. St. Austin was of the very same mind. 'All that connection,' says he 'and that train of causes, where everything is what it is, are by the stoics called fate: the whole of which fate they ascribe to the will and the power of the supreme God, whom they most justly believe to foreknow all things, and to leave nothing unordained. But it is the will itself of the supreme God, which they are chiefly found to call by the name of fate; because the energy of his is unconquerably extended through all things.'"
In justice to Toplady it must be stressed that it is a Theistic fatalism that he teaches. He flatly denies the idea of an impersonal or mechanical necessity. With such conception of fatalism he will have nothing to do. In his Historic Proof of the Doctrinal Calvinism of the Church of England he quotes, with much satisfaction, from the writings of Peter Martyr.

"If....by fate, be meant, a certain power resulting from the stars, and an irresistible implication of causes, by which God is reduced within the bounds of restraint; we justly reject the word fate, in this signification of it. But if by fate, you mean a train of causes governed by the will of God; such a fate as this can by no means seem injurious to true religion, however expedient we may think it to abstain from using the word."

Observing that the wiser Stoics asserted fate in the Christian sense of the term Toplady continues his quotation from Martyr.

"There are some who dream of an iron or adamantine fatality, impressed on the stars or natural causes, unalterable by God Himself. This is erroneous; nay it is impious: it is even contrary to the judgment of the ancient sages themselves; for they plainly declare, that, by fate, they mean no more than the will and providence of the Supreme Being. Witness those verses of Cleanthes the stoic:

Father, and king of heav'n, my footsteps guide! My wish with thy decrees shall coincide. To feeble for denial or delay, I follow where thy purpose marks the way. Were I reluctant, still the chain proceeds; Fate drags th' unwilling, and the willing leads. Resign'd I stand, to suffer and to do What must be borne or done, resigned or no."

Works vol. 1 p. 491

ibid p. 492

Compare Works vol. 5 pp 166-7
In the doctrine of the Absolute Sovereignty of God we have the basis on which Calvin made his doctrine of predestination to rest; but Toplady (as already hinted) did not arrive at Predestination as the result of deduction, rather does he accept the dogma as taught by the schools, and then seeks to build ratiocinative arguments to support it. Toplady's doctrine of fate necessitates his doctrine of sovereign supremacy. Like Wesley's his theology is experiential; and this is perhaps its most worth while feature. It is from his experience of election that he commences his polemics. He rejoiced to "bless God for His electing love" and from this empirical basis he develops his doctrines of predestination, total depravity and original sin. His dominant note is the utter inability of man to do anything in the matter of his own salvation. This is solely the unaided and undeserved work of God.

In his conversation with Thomas Olivers Toplady asked him the question which had once been asked of him, and which he believed to be unanswerable.

"How was it with you, when God first laid hold on you by effectual grace? had you any hand in procuring it? Nay, would you not have resisted and baffled God's spirit if he had left you to your will?...What say you? Did you choose God or did God choose you? Did he lay hold on you or did you lay hold on him?"

When one recalls the nature of his sickness one is surprised that Toplady did not ask himself the question: "Which is
the more essential for good health, plenty of fresh air or a pair of sound lungs?" Salvation is the gift of God, but it is a gift that must be accepted by the sinner before it can become effectual. In his anxiety to uphold the majesty and glory of God, Toplady overlooks the fact that a gift is none the less a gift because the undeserving recipient stretches out his hand to receive it. His God is not one who moves in pitying love to restore His fallen child, but a king, who to enhance His own glory wills the failure of His subjects so that He might reveal Himself benignly gracious to some and unrelentingly severe to others. In this system the external call of the Gospel is an unmeaning ceremonial save as to the elect. It was this feature of Toplady's theology that so antagonised the Wesleys. They believed as surely as did he in the doctrine of original sin; but the thought that God had deliberately willed to pass by certain of His children was to them abhorrent, indeed, blasphemous. If such was the gospel of grace then God was simply a mocker. Dr. Orr is not likely to be suspected of any predilection towards Methodism, but he makes no secret

\[
\text{The Wesleys believed that "sin had not turned man into a mere vessel of wrath or of mercy, a creature who was damned because of guilt he had inherited, or saved by a grace that acted without reason or any regard to forseen faith or good works. The worst criminal had his rights, especially the right to a fair tribunal; and these rights did not cease simply because the judge was God, and the accused, or even the condemned, was man."}
\]

See "Christ in Modern Theology" p. 170
of the fact that no logical consistency will constrain man to accept a theory which outrages his ethical sense. "A doctrine of this kind, which bids us think of beings not yet conceived of as even created (therefore only as possibles) - not to say as sinful - set apart for eternal blessedness or misery, and the Fall and Redemption as simply means of effecting that purpose, is one which no plea of logical consistency will ever get the human mind to accept, and which is bound to provoke revolt against the whole system with which it is associated." It is interesting to note that in his analysis of Arminianism Dr. Orr comments: "Wesleyanism is sometimes classed with Arminianism; but it essentially differs from it in the central place it gives to the work of the spirit of God in regeneration." In support of this contention he quotes from Dorner's History of Protestant Theology: "Methodism was on the whole far more removed, as far as the saving doctrines were concerned, from Arminianism, than from the old Reformed system." This last observation has a particular significance in view of Professor Cell's attempt to prove that John Wesley was essentially Calvinist. But more will be said on this point at a later stage.

Dr. James Orr. "The Progress of Dogma" page 296

Ibid page 300

Dorner. History of Protestant Theology V. 2. page 92.
When Toplady wrote his hymn "Rock of Ages" he gave immortal expression to certain cardinal truths of the Christian Faith. "The deep sense of the sinfulness of sin and the conception of grace as utterly undeserved, are elements of Calvinism that have always been the source of its strength."

"Nothing in my hand I bring;  
Simply to thy cross I cling;  
Naked come to thee for dress,  
Helpless look to thee for grace:  
Foul I to the fountain fly,  
Wash me, Saviour, or I die"

This fact was brought home to Toplady at his conversion: he was brought nigh by the blood of Christ: he was saved by grace: and so within himself he finds as St. Paul had done, a duality - sin and grace. By nature he is a child of wrath, but by grace he is an heir of salvation. It was, when, from this personal experience that he knew his own "election": he had had a "Damascus Road" experience, and though it was less catastrophic than St. Paul's, it was, nevertheless, as radical: and so whilst his polemics are an argument in favour of an accepted theological system, they are yet founded in experience. "Free grace" was the only possible antitode to "original sin".

In his doctrine of original sin Toplady is soundly Calvinist - indeed soundly Pauline. With the origin of

| The Spirit of Methodism by Henry Bett. p. 153
| Works. Vol. 6 page 413. Hymn XXII
sin he is not particularly concerned. He is satisfied to
assert that it is part of the purpose of God. It is permitted
of God in order that His justice and mercy might be revealed.
The observation that "the best rationale of sin is to say
that it has no rationale" he would have countered by pointing
out that God is perfect wisdom and as He has at least permitted,
if not decreed, sin, it is part of the divine purpose, and,
therefore, cannot be irrational. His locus classicus is
Romans V. 12: 18-21. With these famous words as foundation
Toplady builds up his soteriology. He sums up the moral
history of the race in a series of great antitheses; Adam and
Christ; sin and righteousness; with resultant life or death.
By physical birth all men are the children of Adam and so share
in the condition of loss or evil in which the race is involved:
through grace they are become members of a new humanity and
share in the righteousness of our Saviour. Here he anticipates
one of the great tenets of the modern sociologist - namely
the organic solidarity of the race. In this he does not
follow in the wake of Calvin, for he had maintained that "We
are sinners not primarily because of the oneness of mankind,
but because God has willed that all men since Adam should be
so born." In his Institutes Calvin wrote "The cause of
contagion is neither in the substance of the flesh nor the

| A. Dakin: "Calvinism"  pages 33-4
soul, but God was pleased to ordain that those gifts which He had bestowed on the first man that man should lose as well for his descendants as for himself." On this point Dr. Newton Clarke observes: "The human nature that is passed from generation to generation always possesses within itself the elements of the old strife between the higher and the lower. It is also depraved, or "baddened", as the word simply means; that is, it is so affected by previous evil in the race as to have predispositions to the wrong. Depravity is the moral badness that has been imparted to that common stream of life out of which successive individuals are produced. It is corruption of the common stock, perpetuated through heredity and the influences of life. In consequence of this perverted strain in the transmitted humanity, children are not born either wholly good or neutral between good and evil, but with evil tendencies which grow into sin when responsible life begins. This corruption of the stock appears in various degrees, but experience finds it everywhere, and confirms the testimony of the Scriptures that all have sinned. The early appearance in personal lives of the fundamental moral evil, grasping self-will, gives evidence of the predisposition to it that dwells in the common nature." 

It would appear that Toplady seeks to embrace both points of view, for whilst he emphasises that sin is permitted

Institutes II i 7.

Outline of Christian Theology pages 243-4
of God, he also holds that its transmission is by the laws of procreation and heredity. Quoting from the writings of St. Augustine he says:

"Those things, which, seemingly, thwart the divine will, are, nevertheless, agreeable to it; for, if God did not permit them, they could not be done: and whatever God permits, he permits freely and willingly. He does nothing, neither suffers anything to be done, against his own will. And Luther observes, that 'God permitted Adam to fall into sin, because he willed that he should so fall.'"

Whilst in his "Short Essay on Original Sin" he comments as follows:

"We cannot but observe, in the common and daily course of things, that children very frequently inherit the diseases, the defects, the poverty, and the losses of their parents. And if this be not unjust in the dispensations of providence (for if it were unjust, God would certainly order matters otherwise); why should it be deemed inequitable, that moral as well as natural evil, that the cause as well as the effects, should be transmitted by a sad, but uninterrupted succession from father to son."

The natural depravation of mankind is a fact which we have proofs of, every hour, and which stares us in the face, let us look which way we will.

"So terrible a calamity as the universal infection of our whole species, is and must have been the consequence of some grand primary transgression. Such a capital punishment would never have been inflicted on the human race, by the God of infinite justice, but for some adequate, preceding offence. It is undeniably certain, that we who are now living, are in actual possession of an evil nature; which
nature we brought with us into the world; it is not of our own acquiring, but was 'Cast and mingled with our very frame: Grew with our growth, and strengthened with our strength.'

By this means Toplady embraces the teaching of Calvin concerning "permission", whilst recognising that the transmission of "original sin" is by physical processes. Yet he holds that mankind is guilty of Adam's sin by imputation; that Adam's transgression was placed to man's account.

"We were therefore in a state of severe moral punishment, as soon as we began to be. And yet, it was impossible for us to have sinned in our own persons, antecedently to our actual existence. .......Now, the judgment of God is always according to truth. He would not deem us guilty, unless we were so. And guilty of our first parent's offence we cannot be, but in a way of imputation."

Now, when St. Paul says "And so death passed upon all men, for that all sinned", does he mean, as Toplady does, that all sinned in Adam, or that all sinned in their own persons? The best exegesis decides that the two positions must be united.

Man is responsible for he sins of his own initiative; yet his sin is due to tendencies transmitted from the first man. Here St. Paul distinguishes twixt racial sin and personal acts of transgression - twixt sinfulness and sin. He holds that the first does not involve guilt or culpability, and for it no man will be condemned: the second is "offence" or "transgression", and as such incurs penalty. Toplady, however, holds that penalty is incurred in Adam's sin; that the babe that lives

Essay on Original Sin: Vol.3 page 355
Ibid page 355
but a few hours is involved in the general ruin: and as they, as babes, were obviously not capable of committing actual sin; it follows that they sinned representatively and implicitly in Adam. Else they would not be entitled to that death which is the wages of sin. Here Toplady thinks of death as physical, whereas it must have meant much more than that to St. Paul. I have already referred to Toplady's ambiguity on the subject of death and its relation to sin. He believed that immortality was to have been man's natural inheritance, but through the primal fall, death has passed upon all men. Yet, in places he seems to suggest that the word death has a meaning other than the biological cessation of existence. He implies that death is the destruction of the image of God within the soul. Because of one man's disobedience mankind has

"lost the perfection of God's image, that ἔδωκεν υἱός and ὄμοιωσι τῷ θεῷ or divine nature and likeness to God, as Plato calls it; and sunk into what the same philosopher styles ἑξ ζωσὶ a state ungodlike and undivine."

Now, this is not the same as physical death, for here Toplady gives to the phrase "image of God" an ethical and spiritual interpretation.

"This phrase, the image of God, is to be understood chiefly in a spiritual, and entirely in a figurative sense. It does not refer to the beauty, and to the erect
It is apparent that such texts as "The soul that sinneth it shall die." (Ezekiel 18: 4 & 20) and "To be carnally minded is death". (Romans 8: 6.), cannot be given a purely physical connotation. Even regeneration does not prevent death; saints and sinners alike have to die. Although St. Paul believed Genesis 3 to be literal history, and that physical death was the penal consequence of sin, it is certain that he gave to his familiar and comprehensive sentence "The wages of sin is death" a much wider application than the merely biological. His whole gospel is expressed in the words: "Wherefore He saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." (Ephes. 5.14.) Where there is the possibility of response to such appeal, there is not literal death. There is in every man, as man, the capacity for appreciating, responding to, and acting upon, truth and goodness. Without that, there could be no real moral responsibility. On this point I think Toplady would have agreed. Conservative and literal minded though he was.

T. H. Martley

"Physiology writes on the portals of life, Debumur morti nos nostraque, with a profounder meaning than the Roman poet attached to the melancholy line. Under what guise it takes refuge, whether fungus or oak, worm or man, the living protoplasm not only ultimately dies, and is resolved into its mineral and lifeless constituents, but is always dying, and, strange as the paradox may sound, could not live unless it died."
he appealed to his hearers, and so one presumes he believed in the possibility of response on their part. His congregations were not composed of "corpses" or stones. The point at issue can scarcely be put with truer succinctness than in the words of Dr. Stevens: "The subject was regarded by St. Paul from quite a different standpoint from that of physical science. Practically, the religious motive of Paul's doctrine was that the sting of death is sin. It is sin which makes death terrible. Redemption robs it of its terrors. Theoretically, indeed, Paul held something more than this. But what was more than this, was incidental to his thoughts in consequence of his Jewish training, and was not essential to his view of religion." To this, Toplady would have given a reserved and qualified assent, for such is his bondage to creational orthodoxy that he definitely teaches that "imputed sin" is culpable. Like many others Toplady regards "original sin" as synonymous with "hereditary depravity". He ignores the fact that sin, to be sin, must be personal. Hereditary influences for both good and ill are the common inheritance of all men, but a tendency towards evil no more makes a man sinful than good tendencies make him holy. The voluntary action of a man's own personality, however limited, is always essential to the moral character of any action or condition. The fact that all find it easier to do wrong than to do right, only bears testimony to the fact that all our faculties are in some measure depraved; but that is a vastly different thing from saying "we are

"The Theology of the New Testament" page 352
guilty by imputation. Of such a theory Sir Oliver Lodge might well say that it is a figment so impossible that only a monk could possibly have invented it. Sin is wilful; solicitations only become sin when yielded to. Distinction must be drawn between sin and sinfulness; or between overt acts and, what is often called, the matter of sin. Dr. Tennant makes this plea in his book "The Concept of Sin" and urges that the word sin should only be used of voluntary transgressions, and protests that much confusion is brought into theological discussion by the two-fold usage of the term. Unhappily there is too long a history behind both usages for Dr. Tennant's wish to be granted. As Du Bose points out "The so-called sin of nature only becomes properly ours, and in fact only becomes properly sin, when we through the weakness of our nature have yielded a personal obedience to it and have transgressed the law." Yet, introspection convinces one that there is a principle or power entering into and reigning in human life and history. By natural birth man is a potential centre of sin, but no one can be held responsible for his inheritance. I may in some sense be held responsible for the sins of my children, but they are not indictable for mine. As Dr. Fairbairn writes: "While the common sin underlies and precedes all individual transgressions, yet in itself it is not transgression or offence - i.e., it does not involve culpability or guilt. It may

even, while it stands alone, entail privation or loss, but not the penalties which follow upon personal blame. It denotes at once a privative and potential state; as privative it is a state without merit and without demerit - i.e., all the qualities proper to a personal action are absent, and so there is nothing upon which final moral judgment can be based; and as potential it is a centre or seat of the energies, all still latent, stored by the past into the new organism, and awaiting only the fit conditions to develop into activity.

But this means that the nature does not conform to an absolute standard; it is not ideal or normal, but has slumbering energies that may wake into actual transgressions. The defective compass will not speak truly, the watch that is wrong goes wrong, and so neither can be trusted; and we condemn not merely the single act, but the whole machine. And so God must judge natures as well as acts. The nature where there is no positive good and much potential evil has too little of the divine in it to be accepted and approved just as it stands. It has so come through the race as to participate in the evil of the race; and this participation has its sign and seal in the sufferings and the tendencies common to all. But whilst all men suffer from these defects of nature yet for them no man is condemned; from them everyone needs to be saved, but on their account alone no one will be lost. The infant, whether baptised or unbaptised, will not perish."
This last observation would have found no acceptance with Toplady. Unhesitatingly he asserted that

"Whosoever is brought to the baptismal font is brought thither as a sinner. And the whole ceremony is a solemn recognition of human guilt." He maintained that the babe is not "wholly innocent of actual sin or inborn sinfulness" (as Dr. Tennant suggests,) but is guilty of imputed sin, and that because God so decreed. Nevertheless Toplady does not believe in the reprobation of infants. All who die in their infancy are undoubtedly saved eternally, for to deny the salvation of infants is to deny the testimony of Jesus: "It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish."

In his Introduction to the Doctrinal Calvinism of the Church of England/ writes:

"In my remarks on Dr. Nowell, I testified my firm belief, that the souls of all departed infants are with God in glory; that in the degree of predestination to life, God hath included all whom he intended to take away in infancy; and that the decree of reprobation has nothing to do with them."

Also in a footnote in his chapter headed "The Judgment of our English Reformers" he comments:

"No objection can hence arise, against the salvation of such as die in infancy (all of whom are undoubtedly saved)."

Apparently Toplady had no sympathy with the assertion that "There are infants of a span long in hell". Every infant was tainted by damnosa hereditas, but in the moment of physical dissolution it was cleansed and made fit for everlasting glory.

Sermon: Jesus Seen of Angels. Works vol.3 p. 68
The Child and Religion, pages 154-184
Works, vol. 1. p. 207 / ibid p. 462
It is just here, however, that a difficulty arises; for as we have seen, Toplady believed as did St. Augustine that before God "none is free from sin, not even the infant which has lived but a day upon the earth." Clearly he teaches that the need for infant baptism is proof of inherited depravity. Yet equally clearly he asserts that all who die in infancy are numbered amongst the elect; and that their early death is evidence of their election. Two questions at once present themselves. (1) Did Toplady believe in Baptismal Regeneration? and (2) Did he believe that unbaptised infants are amongst the elect? The first question is not easily answered, there is not data enough to warrant a categorical assertion. On the whole I incline to the opinion that he did believe in baptismal regeneration. He held that "washing it seems to carry with the idea of previous defilement": and from this it follows that those who are baptised in infancy are cleansed from the defilement of "imputed sin"; but if they should die before the day of moral responsibility has dawned, they are free from sin, and enter into the privileges of the elect. What then of the unbaptised? Unwashed, they must be held to be yet defiled. Do they perish? Toplady says quite distinctly ALL are undoubtedly saved. Does he mean ALL, or all the baptised? Again no dogmatic statement is possible; although in the light of his main teaching I think it safe to say that Toplady believed the unbaptised to be lost; if there were any such. He would, I suggest, have said that as

Confessions Bk. 1. ch. 7.
Sermon: Jesus seen of Angels, Works, vol. 3 p.68
God had decreed their salvation and their death in infancy, He had also decreed their being brought to baptism. The means equally with the end being contained in the decree. If it he held that Toplady included even the unbaptised infants amongst the elect, he could only sustain his case by holding that God accomplishes in the moment of death a cleansing similar to that accomplished by baptism. It is very probable that his heart was larger than his creed; and although he could contemplate without much distress the reprobation of the adult, his heart recoiled from the horrible thought that such a fate could be predestined for the babe; especially as Jesus had declared "of such is the Kingdom of Heaven". Unhappily there has not been wanting the theologian who, in the name of logic, could attribute to God conduct that would have been regarded as "criminal" in man. For the vindication of "justice" he was prepared to condemn the innocent to infernal death. From a thraldom so monstrous theology has happily emancipated itself: but, as is so often the case, the pendulum has swung too far. An over-emphasis on the Fatherhood of God has produced a sentimentalis that is a caricature of the Divine love. Benevolence has deteriorated to "softness", and God is portrayed as an easy going and indulgent father. The fatherhood of God is a fact, His tender love is revealed in the story of the Prodigal son, but this does not mean that sin is not also a fact; indeed it is in the light of God's love that we see how unutterable and terrible a fact it is.
The darkest shadows are cast by the brightest light. Ritschl rightly protested against the doctrine of "original sin" as it had been taught in traditional theology, and claimed that "what is clear in St. Paul's presentation of the subject is rather the fact that he says not a word about the transmission and the inheritance of bias by natural generation." He held that "The notion of Original sin weakens the sense of responsibility, makes education unthinkable, and is incompatible with the recognition of distinct degrees of evil in individuals.

But the fact of inherited depravity remains, and has received new authority - if any new authority was needed - from modern psychoanalysis, which maintains that within both man and the race there dwells that "something" which the theologians call sin; and that sin has an hereditary aspect. True, the psychoanalyst lays greater emphasis on environment than he does upon heredity; but Freud in his development of his theory of the life and death instincts defines the "Unconscious" in way that recalls Calvin's words concerning human nature. "The corruption of our nature is always operative; and constantly teeming with

Justification and Reconciliation. Page 345
Ibid page 348

"The whole tendency, then, of modern investigation is to minimise the exaggerated importance previously accorded to the hereditary, and to emphasise the importance of environmental as the important factor in the determination of character.....The theory of "original sin" has lost its prominence in the pages of theological writings, and it is time it took its flight from medical literature."

Hadfield: "Psychology & Morals" p. 10-11
unholy fruits: like a heated furnace which is perpetually blazing out; or like an inexhaustible spring of water, which is forever bubbling up and sending forth its rills."

It is true that certain followers of Freud deny the fact of sin; and think they have explained the greatest irrationality in the universe when they have substituted for the language of theology a terminology of their own. But even if it is true that sin is a "complex" or a "neurosis" as they suggest, the fact remains that the "neurosis" has to be cured, or the "complex" resolved. It is part of the technique of the psycho-analysts' to encourage introspection; and none know better than they that "sin" lies at the root of most nervous disorder.

New names may be given to old facts, but they do not explain those facts, much less do they explain them away. As Prof. Julius Kaftan observed when writing on Ritschl's idea of the possibility of sinless development: "The question is not at all whether something is or is not possible. Rather the question is, "what is the actual fact?" And the actual fact is a tyranny of sin over the natural will. One may believe himself capable of explaining this or not - the fact is indubitable. Sin rules over us by nature. It is not we who have sin, but it is sin that has us. From Adam, the first man by his disobedience, sin is the essence of natural humanity."

Calvin's Institutes l. iv.c.15

Whilst Toplady makes no secret of the fact that he believes all mankind to be totally depraved, and rejects as inconceivable

"That any who calls himself a Christian can dare to term the human mind a sheet of white paper",

he, nevertheless, is not very clear as to the "seat of sin". He refers to the heart as being desperately wicked, and to the fact that St. Paul confessed that in his flesh dwelt no good thing. He further observed that our inward parts are very wicked, that we are shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin, that enmity to God and holiness are moulded into our very frame and texture. From this it is apparent that he found sin to be resident in man's heart, his flesh, and his frame and texture; and whilst he in a general way speaks of our fallen nature, he never gives a definite answer to the question "Where is the seat of sin?" St. Paul answered it categorically by saying "In my flesh dwelleth no good thing.", but even in the case of St. Paul one is obliged to ask what does he mean by 'his flesh'? Is the implication that the "flesh" is in itself an evil thing? It will be recalled that at no time did St. Paul say that the flesh was sinful. It may become the vehicle of sin, or the scene of sin's manifestation; but that is very different from asserting that matter is inherently evil. Toplady had no difficulty

Essay on Original Sin: Vol. 3 page 345
with the "origin of sin"; for he rejoices that by the
gracious providence of God he had been born into a country

"Where the Scriptures of inspiration
kindly hold the lamp to benighted
reason."

and so he is able to say that

"St. Paul, within the compass of two
or three lines, comprises more, than
all the numberless uninspired volumes
which had been written on the subject.
By one man, sin entered into the world,
and death by sin."

Now, orthodoxy has maintained that before his fall the first
man was sinless although he possessed a fleshly body; so the
secret of the fall must be discovered in a deflection of
the will. Admittedly, the term "will" is not without its
difficulties, but it is more akin to the term "heart" than
it is to the more physically understood term "flesh";
inasmuch as "heart" usually connotes the seat of the emotions
as well as the organ so vital to man's physical existence.
Yet, "heart" and "will" are by no means synonymous terms.
"The Flesh" as used by St. Paul is not free from ambiguity,
for in many passages in his writings ἰδίας means but little
more than the material body; but when the term is used in a
moral sense it means that man's intellectual and emotional
nature is perverted by sin and enslaved. If the "Flesh"
had meant for St. Paul only the material covering of the
men
skeleton it would have been well to commend to rid themselves
of it by ascetic flagellations; but this very course he

Essay on Original Sin. Vol. 3 page 349
Ibid page 349
rejects as "not any value against the indulgence of the flesh." So obviously "The Flesh" bears a meaning other than the physical. It becomes a truly vivid description of the whole of human nature as morally corrupt.

On this point Toplady is in complete agreement, and whilst his language is no less ambiguous than St. Paul's his meaning is clear enough. Temptation and the bad example of others are not the cause of "spiritual and moral leprosy"; "They are but the occasions of stirring up and calling forth the latent corruptions within." The Flesh is the seat of the passions, which, though innocent in themselves, may easily become incitements to sin; and as daily experience proves, the flesh easily becomes the instrument and organ of sin. The sinful imagination equally with sinful acts is included in the term "flesh". The nature of man is sin-bound, and by reason of this fact both mind and body are sin infected; and not only infected but dominated. In the language of Sabatier: "The relation of sin to the flesh is not purely immanent, but also transcendent. It is not that the physical law of the flesh constitutes sin, but, on the contrary, the law of sin has become and continues to be the law of the flesh."

Colossians 2.23.
Whilst the origin of sin is to man a mystery and the seat of sin is the "flesh", Toplady never gives a working definition of the nature of sin. Wesley defined it as "a voluntary transgression of a known law." Toplady would, on the whole, have agreed with this definition; although he tends to emphasise the negative character of sin. True, he does not deny the positive element, but his main emphasis is on "imputed sin", "original sin", and sin as 

He states in his "Christian and Philosophical Necessity Asserted" that

"Evil, whether physical or moral, does not, upon a narrow inspection, appear to have so much of positivity in it, as it is probable those ancients (the oriental nations) supposed."

In the same tract he continued:

"I conclude, in the first place: that sin, strictly considered, has more of negation in it, than of positivity; else it could not have been properly definable by merely negative term. But secondly, I infer, that unless sin had something of positivity in it, the illegality of it could not be said to be commissable."

The "origin of sin" is only a mystery to man because he is not acquainted with the marvels of the Divine mind. To the very pertinent question "Why did God permit the fall and permit the fall according to his decree?" Toplady answers: "For reasons, the whole of which he has not thought proper to communicate. He giveth not account to any of his matters. Job xxxiii. 13. And this is too good an answer to so daring a question." "Christian & Philosophical Necessity Asserted", Works, vol.6 page 87.

"A Plain account of Christian Perfection", page 53
"Christian & Philosophical Necessity Asserted", v. 6 p. 91
ibid page 92
This emphasis of Toplady, however, is misleading.

Sin is not just the missing of the mark, for ἀμαρτία presupposes two things, (1) that man knows the mark, and (2) that he is possessed of the ability to hit it. Both of which assumptions can be questioned. Moreover, one may miss the mark by faulty aim, or by never taking aim. Bad marksmanship is not the only cause of failure: failure to try can have positive results. The sins of omission can be as far reaching in their consequences as those of commission. It is true that for many sin is the misdirection of instinctive energy, but even that does not make sin purely negative. Thieving and gambling are the misdirection of the instinct of acquisition, but the thief and the gambler are positive evils. Dirt may be defined as "matter in the wrong place", but sin is much more than native energy misdirected. Such words as motive, purpose, character, spring at once to the mind of the ethicist and theologian. Moreover, there is the question of "unconscious sin": and whilst I feel that Toplady would have rejected the idea as surely as did Wesley, and as does Dr. Tennant; the idea is not the flat contradiction in terms that Dr. Tennant suggests: for as Dr. Newton Flew points out: "Our worst sins are often those of which we are unconscious." Dr. Orchard is even more definite: "Sin without the sense of sin is still sin, and, indeed, deeper sin just because we are unconscious of it." This point, however, will be reviewed later when Wesley's doctrine of perfect love is being considered.

The Idea of Perfection, page 333.
Modern Theories of Sin, page 3.
It is interesting to note that whilst Toplady in his "Essay on Original Sin" follows in the Pauline tradition, he does not touch upon a point of which St. Paul makes much. He is content to assert that Adam is the cause of sin and teaches, by implication, that each man "is the Adam of his own soul". He does not, however, refer to what might be called "The Pauline Personification of Sin" as an objective power set over against man. St. Paul conceived of a kingdom of evil. To the Church at Ephesus he wrote: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." He conceived of sin as intelligent and terribly purposeful. It was a power that enslaved, destroyed, and deceived: a power that worked on man from without. On this point Dr. Harold Dodd has some weighty comment. In his book "The Meaning of Paul for To-day" he writes: "How sin came into human nature is a question which Paul does not answer very satisfactorily. He sometimes traces it to an historic transgression of a human ancestor in the remote past. This was the common account given in contemporary Judaism. But in other passages he suggests a different origin. In the background of his world stand the

\[\text{Apocalypse of Baruch 54.19.}\]

\[\text{Ephesians 6.12.}\]
"world-rulers" or "elemental spirits." They have some special relation to the material world, and it does not appear that in relation to it they are necessarily evil. But if man becomes subject to them, then he is fallen to a state of unnatural slavery. The process appears to be after this fashion: the reason of man, being a spark of the divine, knew God and read His law written within the heart; but instead of worshipping God and doing his will, it stooped to adore material forms, and thereby fell under the dominion of the elemental powers. The elevation of the material to the place of God led to the perversion of man's naturally right instincts. Reason itself became "reprobate" and the whole life of mankind was thrown into disorder. If the transmitted sin of Adam is the characteristicly Jewish doctrine, the theory of elemental spirits starts rather from Greek ideas. Neither can satisfy us though each has hints of truth: on the one hand, the solidarity of humanity and the incalculable effects of individual transgression; on the other, the peril of exalting the physical and material to a dominance which is not in accord with man's real nature. What might have been the relations of flesh and spirit had not sin intervened is a question on which Paul does not speculate."
On turning to Toplady's doctrine of Salvation three factors are clearly seen. The death of Christ is a sacrifice: it is a reconciliation of man to God and God to man; it secures for man a judicial acquittal by pronouncement of imputed righteousness. Toplady seems to give a comprehensive glance over the countless altars of Judaism and sees in the death of Jesus the fulfilment of the ancient sacrifices. Implicit in his teaching is the suggestion that the Levitical not merely anticipates the sacrifice of Calvary but is in some measure its explanation. This, I suggest, would not have found acceptance with St. Paul, who would have argued the contrary, and have found in the Cross the antitypal sin-offering in which the Levitical cultus found explanation. Unquestionably Toplady's conception of sacrifice is a blood offering on the part of the innocent, through the merits of which the guilty are absolved. His evangelicalism tends to regard the Old Testament system as the criterion by which the sacrifice of Jesus can be judged & valued. He regards the death of our Lord as the offering "of richer blood" than that of "bulls and goats"; nevertheless, he sees in the Cross the consummation of the Levitical order rather than its supersession. Watts nearer to the heart of the matter than does Toplady.

"Not all the blood of beasts On Jewish altars slain Can give the guilty conscience peace Or wash away the stain. But Christ, the heavenly Lamb Takes all our sins away! The Offering of nobler name, And richer blood, than they."
The Cross is unique, and its meaning beyond human ken. Well might Charles Wesley say:

"Tis mystery all! The Immortal dies:
Who can explore His strange design?
In vain the first-born seraph tries
To sound the depths of love divine."

In very truth "The foolishness of God is wiser than men." I

As pointed out in the study of his hymns Toplady's main emphasis is on the vicarious suffering of Jesus. But nowhere does he attempt to show how the suffering of Jesus effects Salvation. Unwearingly does he teach that Christ in His death and passion takes away the sins of the elect, but nowhere does he seek to offer any rationale of the Atonement. It is, therefore, not possible to offer any analysis of his conception of vicarious suffering, for he does not supply the data from which one could do so. There can be no doubt that his main point is that Jesus by His sacrifice secures a change of attitude on the part of God: but, as I have already noted, this argument is destructive of Toplady's primary thesis - the eternal decree. So much in love is he with current theological verbiage that he never faces up to the difficulties concealed therein. One does not need to be a cynic to assert that Toplady's God bears more likeness to a capricious Despot than to the Father of All as revealed in the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth. Moreover the idea of the innocent Son buying off the guilty is doubly immoral. A man who would let his brother pay is - in Oliver Lodge's phrase - "a cur"; whilst a God who would accept such payment

| I Corinthians 1.25.
by the innocent - to say nothing of demanding it - is cast in the mould of a devil. Dr. Whale rightly evaluates the outlook of those men who try to think their way through the web of verbal intricacies that some theologians delight to weave. He writes: "But this language about the victim who is sacrificed perplexes and often alienates modern men, not so much because the language of blood-sacrifice is necessarily archaic, and inevitably repulsive to the modern imagination, but because all 'objective' theories of the Atonement seem to use it in support of a doctrine of penal substitution which, on the face of it, is immoral and therefore insupportable. It outrages the moral sense. We are much moved when listening to the choir high on Magdalen Tower at dawn on May morning, but we are shocked to discover that the boys have been singing:

*Actus in crucem, factus es\nIrato Deo victima.*

Because the 'objective' theories represent Christ's death as necessary, not only to man but to God; and because Western legal soteriology has used the word "Satisfaction" to affirm the holiness of God's love and the eternal moral realities which are implicit in his forgiveness, modern men protest that such Oriental a word makes God out to be a capricious/Sultan, a cruel tyrant who arbitrarily demands the suffering and death of an innocent Victim, that the guilty may be spared his avenging anger."

Dr. J. S. Whale, "Christian Doctrine" pages 92-3
In parenthesis I feel I ought to say that although I have referred to Sir Oliver Lodge's use of the word 'cur' as found in the passage which reads "never either consciously or unconsciously will any one but a cur ask for the punishment of sin to fall on someone else, nor rejoice if told that it already has so fallen"; and believe that he expresses the opinion of the high idealized moralist, the statement is lamentably misleading. Only an irreclaimable obscurantist would teach the moral impossibility of the punishment of human sin falling upon Christ. There can be no punishment where there is no guilt. But the suffering caused by wrong doing may be borne for another, if there be sufficient love to make possible such substitution. The fact that sinners never asked for Calvary, and no divine decree compelled it, renders the voluntariness of the Cross all the more emphatic. Even a "cur" cannot deny or lessen the wonderfulness of such self-sacrifice. Even a "cur" cannot deny that in some cases such substitution is his only chance: and if it be the actual fact, then the "cur" is not asked to "rejoice" over it, any more than Darnay rejoiced over the self-sacrifice of Sydney Carton. But though he does not rejoice in the suffering he may be thrilled forever with the solemn and tender appreciation of what has been done for him. And that appreciation may save him unto the uttermost.

Man and the Universe. page 220

Charles Dickens's "Tale of two Cities".
Now! those who have had a theological training know that Lodge's presentation of the Atonement is a caricature; but, unhappily, it is this caricature that the 18th century theologians strove to present. In too many cases they dogmatized with the Fathers instead of returning to the New Testament. The words of Dr. John Baillie concerning the Westminster Assembly have a peculiar aptness to Toplady and his fellow theologians. They "were too intellectualistic in their interpretation of the Christian faith, too much in love with credal orthodoxy, too ready to understand revelation as consisting in communicated information."

Toplady's theory of the Atonement seems to be a mixture of English Jurisprudence and Semitic psychology; he blends the atmosphere of the Levitical altar with that of a court of law. His overemphasis on such words as "Ransom", "Penalty", and "Expiation" produced that caricature of the divine love to which reference has just been made. That these terms have a cherished place in theology no one will presume to deny, but they have been re-interpreted so as to reveal the suffering in the heart of God. All the monstrosities taught concerning an angry God propitiated by sacrifice would have been avoided if a correct evaluation had been accorded not only St. Paul's theory of the atonement, but his doctrine of the Incarnation. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." Toplady left unexplored vast tracts of
Christian thought and practice. He centred religion upon a few vital truths. Predestination, the unworthiness of man, the all-sufficient sacrifice of Christ form the kernel of his teaching. He magnified the Atonement at the expense of the Incarnation; and accordingly left almost out of sight the whole conception of the Church as a Divine Society - the repository and guardian of the sacramental life. The crux of his theology is a limited atonement. Wesley and his brother preachers were just as guilty in presenting at times a conception of God that owed more to the idea of the Great Assize than to the story of the Prodigal Son; but they never faltered in their proclamation of Salvation for all. This preaching of the universality of grace, together with the doctrine of entire sanctification antagonised Toplady very deeply; so dipping his pen in vitriol he laboured to prove that

"The God of truth did not intend
The thing His words declare;
He offers grace to all,
Which most can not embrace,
Mocked with an ineffectual call
And insufficient grace."

It is to the theology of the controversy that I will turn after briefly stating the theology that inspired the Evangelical Revival; the theology of John Wesley.
BOOK IV

Chapters 12 - 15.

THE THEOLOGY OF JOHN WESLEY.

His Niche
Chapter 12.

The Theology of John Wesley.

"Outcasts of men, to you I call, 
Harlots, and publicans, and thieves! 
He spreads his arms to embrace you all; 
Sinners alone His grace receives: 
No need of Him the righteous have; 
He came the lost to seek and save.

Come, O my guilty brethren, come, 
Groaning beneath your load of sin! 
His bleeding heart shall make you room, 
His open side shall take you in; 
He calls you now, invites you home: 
Come, O my guilty brethren, come!

"The Wesleys' Conversion Hymn. 
Whitsuntide, 1738." 
Charles Wesley.

It is a curious, but significant, fact that whilst it is frequently asserted that John Wesley was no theologian various schools of thought have claimed him as an exponent of their own peculiar tenets. Dr. G.C. Cell, Professor of Historical Theology in Boston University, has proved - at least to his own satisfaction - that Wesley was a Calvinist: whilst Professor H.A. Hodges of Reading, claims that "Methodism breaks with Protestant principles and adopts the Catholic ideal." So Wesley, who was not regarded as a theologian, and who, according to Matthew Arnold, possessed only a third rate intellect combines in his teaching theologies...

H.A. Hodges. "A neglected page in Anglican Theology" May Issue of "Theology", page 105. It should be noted that Prof. Hodges is writing about Wesley's doctrine of Perfection when he makes this observation; nevertheless, he in other ways identifies Wesley with the Catholic rather than the Protestant tradition.
that have for generations been deemed antithetical. For my own part I reject the claims made by both of these scholars, though I am not unmindful of the erudition by which they seek to uphold their respective positions. Dr. Cell's "Rediscovery of John Wesley" is a particularly stimulating and illuminating study. Nevertheless, I maintain that his paradoxical attempt to prove Wesley a Calvinist is just as unsound as Prof. Hodges's assertion that Methodism adopts the Catholic ideal. True! in his emphasis upon Christian Perfection Wesley returns to that truth of Catholic theology that the Reformers had tended to overlay; but that is a vastly different thing from the assertion that he "broke with Protestant principles". Wesley taught a well balanced theology, in which was blended Puritanism, Calvinism, Arminianism, and Protestantism, though in such a way as to prevent the extravagances of any unseating the equilibrium of the whole. If Wesley was not a systematic theologian in the sense in which the term is applied to Augustine, Aquinas, Calvin, or Schleiermacher, the fact remains that he was, under God, the author and sustainer of the greatest theological revolution since the days of the Reformers: and that, not by treating "of the Gospel in the recondite language of learning and burying it in scholarly folios" but by preaching to the "outcasts of men" in a language they could understand. This does not mean that he was only a popular pulpiteer unacquainted with

Introduction to Harnack's "What is Christianity?"
the learning of his own and preceding ages. On the contrary, he was a diligent and tireless student who has bequeathed to the world a treasury of religious learning. Dr. Cell's tribute to Wesley's scholarship is not in any way an overstatement. He writes: "Wesley accepted at the outset his inevitable responsibility for both the doctrinal guidance and the pastoral oversight of the Evangelical Movement. The credentials for his extensive discipline in the historic Christian faith and his solid work in doctrinal guidance are impressive. Although he preached on the average eight hundred sermons annually, his itinerant ministry exacted of him a relatively small stock of new sermons, so that he had far more time for constructive work than the average local pastor of our time. He conducted more than one seminar on Christian doctrine for his preachers. The enormous extent of his life-long reading and writing bears witness to his free time as well as to his colossal industry. Plus extensive general reading, he mastered on the average one solid book in divinity monthly. He knew ten languages and made good use of them. His published works as author, editor, translator, pass the four hundred mark. His own distinctive writings fill upwards of twenty five massive volumes. He records the fact that he examined minutely every word of the Greek text of the New Testament. He made an independent translation of the New Testament, the true merit and importance of which have never been explored and appreciated. He mastered the literature of mysticism, reading the principal mystics in the originals.
His discipline in historical theology was extensive. He read widely in the Patristics and in the masters of Protestant theology, especially Luther, Calvin, Arminius, Episcopius, and the Anglican divines. The religious writers of his own age, in particular the deists, did not escape his careful attention. These few references will not begin to give a full account of the range, variety and vigour of his intellectual interests; but they indicate the fact that he foraged very widely in the fields of Christian thought. Incidentally he made short shrift with preachers who despised intellectual industry. This is a twentieth century scholar's judgment of the Wesley Toplady contemptuously dismissed as a "puny tadpole in divinity".

Wesley's theology is the unfolding of experience against the back-ground of the teaching of the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. In an age of sterile humanism it sounded a clarion call, and by testing all teaching in the laboratory of experience Wesley laid the foundation of Christian doctrine more surely than even the Reformers. They had placed an infallible book in the place of an infallible Church, but Wesley made religious experience his ultimate authority, and in so doing unconsciously anticipated the constructive work of Schleiermacher in the next century.
Now it is obvious that before one can understand and appreciate an experientially based theology something must be known of the experience upon which it is based. Wesley's theology is the unfolding and interpretation of a profound religious experience; but the experience itself finds explanation in his peculiar psychology. Hence, rightly to estimate Wesley's teaching it is necessary to know what Wesley was, and how he came to be what he was. Like all others he was part of all that he had known. Throughout a long and eventful life multitudinous stimuli beat upon him; yet the terrifying experience of his childhood, the perplexities of his adolescence, the fiery trials of his youth, the domestic dispeace of his later life, and the unremitting persecution that he endured throughout the greater part of his days, produced so stalwart and saintly a character, that he could say, as the shadows deepened around him, "the best of all is, God is with us."

Born at Epworth Rectory in 1703 the fifteenth child of Samuel and Susanna Wesley, he died at his home in City Road, London on March the 2nd 1791, after being the origin, centre, and driving force of a revival which brought more people from sloth, ignorance and sin, than any since the days of the Apostles. Dr. Henry Bett has, with absolute justice, described John Wesley as the "Apostle of England" and goes on to say
"Perhaps he is the only man of the modern world whose spiritual history deserves, alike for its innate interest and for its importance in the life of the Church, to be named beside that of Luther, of St. Augustine, and of St. Paul himself."

It is customary to date the birth of the Evangelical Revival from the night of Wesley's "heart-warming" in 1738; and even if it be granted that Wesley experienced an inward change during his days at Oxford, it cannot be gainsaid that the event of Aldersgate Street makes a profound and distinct cleavage in Wesley's religious life. That this was so is clear from oft repeated entries in his Journal. Frequently one finds such phrases as "thirty years ago" and "forty years ago"; and when the date is examined it is clear that Wesley had two systems of chronology - his birth and his re-birth. True! when the impressive record of his self-discipline, charitable service, and self-effacing devotion is examined, it is hard to avoid the conclusion of Canon Overton "If John Wesley was not a Christian in Georgia God help millions of those who profess and call themselves Christians." Writing in the same strain Dr. Sudden observes "It is a misuse of language to say that Wesley during his years of earnest devotion at Oxford and whilst ministering in Georgia, was not a Christian." Yet, Wesley repeatedly says of himself that he was not. He distinguishes
betwixt the "faith of a servant" and the "faith of a son". After May 24th Wesley who had been "a devout pharisee became an evangelical Christian. A man who had the form of godliness received its power. A zealous servant of God......became a Son. A man who had failed to save himself by his works and discipline trusted in Christ alone to save him. A man who had doubts and fears about his own salvation received an inward experience which warmed his heart."  

When one remembers the stock from whence Wesley sprung, one is not surprised to note his inflexibility of purpose and indomitable zeal. One great grandfather and both grandfathers lost their livings in 1662: and though his father and mother adhered to the Anglican Church both possessed that true independence of spirit that made them worthy progenitors of a still more worthy son. The Rector of Epworth was a much finer type of man than most of his fellow clergymen, and though he did not show any marked evangelical fervour, he, nevertheless, had a strong and fervent piety. His wife, Susanna, was one of England's noblest women, and to her wisdom, goodness and love John Wesley owed more than he knew.

Doubtless one of the most vivid memories of his childhood would be his rescue from the burning Rectory. Instead of becoming the focus point of a neurosis - as it easily could have done - he regarded it as a special providence; and in later years dedicated all his powers to God that he might "pluck brands from the burning". His school days are marked by a simple piety. He read his Bible regularly, and said his prayers morning and night. At the age of 17 he entered Oxford, where he must have seen much to demoralise; and it says much for the robustness of his character that he was not tainted by the profligacy that abounded around him. It was only when his father suggested that he should take Holy Orders that he evinced signs of awakening, with resultant deepening of his spiritual life. Upon his being ordained deacon on September 19th 1725 he worked as his father's curate in the tiny village of Wooste where he found nothing to encourage him and much to depress. On his return to Oxford in 1729 he at once became leader of the little band of religious associates that his brother Charles had gathered around him. It was of this band of earnest students that the name of "Methodist" was first used - and then as a taunt. His journey to Georgia brought him into contact with the Moravians, and this proved to be a momentous and far reaching event in his search for God. Conversing with these, particularly with Spangenberg, he became more and more conscious of the inadequacy of his spiritual experience. To searching personal questions he could only give general and evasive answers; so that when he did later return home he was still searching
for a refuge from sin and self. In his Journal he writes on
February 1st 1738: "This, then, have I learnt in the ends of the
earth, - that I 'am fallen short of the glory of God'; that
my whole heart is 'altogether corrupt and abominable'; and
consequently my whole life (seeing it cannot be that an 'evil
tree' should 'bring forth good fruit'): that, 'alienated' as I
am from the life of God, I am 'a child of wrath', an heir of hell:
that my own works, my own sufferings, my own righteousness, are
so far from reconciling me to an offended God, so far from making
any atonement for the least of those sins, which 'are more in
number than the hairs of my head', that the most specious of
them need an atonement themselves, or they cannot abide His
righteous judgment: that 'having the sentence of death' in my
heart, and having nothing in or of myself to plead, I have no hope,
but that of being justified freely, 'through the redemption that
is in Jesus'; I have no hope, but that if I seek I shall find
Christ, and 'be found in Him, not having my own righteousness,
but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness
which is of God by faith.'

If it be said that I have faith (for many such things
have I heard, from many miserable comforters), I answer, So have
the devils - a sort of faith; but they are still strangers to
the covenant of promise. So the apostles had even at Cana in
Galilee, when Jesus first 'manifested forth His glory'; even
then they, in a sort, 'believed on Him'; but they had not then
'the faith that overcometh the world'. The faith I want is
'a sure trust and confidence in God, that, through the merits
of Christ my sins are forgiven, and I reconciled to the favour of God.' I want that faith which St. Paul commends to all the world, especially in his Epistle to the Romans: that faith which enables every one that hath it to cry out, 'I live not; but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.' I want that faith which none can have without knowing that he hath it (though many imagine they have it, who have it not); for whosoever hath it, is 'freed from sin' the whole 'body of sin is destroyed' in him: he is freed from fear, 'having peace with God through Christ, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God.' And he is freed from doubt, 'having the love of God shed abroad in his heart, through the Holy Ghost which is given unto him'; which 'Spirit itself beareth witness with his spirit that he is a child of God.'

Of Wesley's experience of this time Dr. Bett, with characteristic insight, writes: "It would perhaps not be far from the truth to say of Wesley in these years that he was doing all he knew for Christ, but that he did not know what Christ had done for him. He was absolutely sincere, and absolutely determined. As far as his will was concerned he was probably as wholly consecrated to the service of

God as it was possible for him to be at the time. But he did not yet understand the wonderful privilege of the redeemed soul through trust in Christ. He had not the assurance of pardon, and the vivid sense of Christ's love as a personal possession. Nor did he realise, except in foretastes, the peace that passes understanding, the joy unspeakable, the love that casts out fear. In his own adaptation of the apostolic words, he had the faith of a servant but not the faith of a son."

Six days later Wesley makes the following entry in his Journal. "Tues.7. (A day much to be remembered.) At the house of Mr. Weinantz, a Dutch merchant. I met Peter Böhler, Schulius, Richter, and Wensel Neisser, just then landed from Germany. Finding they had no acquaintance in England, I offered to procure them a lodging, and did so near Mr. Hutton's, where I then was. And from this time I did not willingly lose any opportunity of conversing with them, while I stayed in London." And thus Wesley met one who was destined vitally to influence both his religious experience and theology: for it was on the subject of Assurance that Böhler spoke. Thus was the ground prepared for the all important hour of a "quarter before nine" May 24th 1738. In that hour John Wesley was changed - as was also the history of England.

"The Spirit of Methodism" page 19.

In a brief résumé of Wesley's life it is not possible to enter into a discussion whether or not this "change" was his "conversion". I cannot avoid the conclusion that much that has been written on this point is simply word spinning. Wesley had a spiritual awakening in 1725, but this event is not comparable with the heart warming of 1738. The former would have resulted in a devoted parish minister or University tutor but it required that fervour of zeal which springs from "the pure flame of love" to send Wesley forth on that pilgrimage which is without equal since those days of the Apostles who turned the world upside down. I will leave the purist to adopt whatever term suits him best: whether it be conversion or evangelical conversion. The fact remains - and it is only the fact that counts - that Wesley was changed; his heart was warmed, and that burning heart set a multitude of others ablaze. In the heart of his now regenerate son God kindled a flame of sacred love, and for the next fifty three years it burned with inextinguishable blaze.

The theology of Methodism, then, is the theology of the warmed heart. It is a practical theology, rooted and grounded in experience. Charles Wesley sang:

"Plenteous He is in truth and grace;
He wills that all the fallen race
Should turn, repent, and live;
His pardoning grace for all is free;
Transgression, sin, iniquity,
He freely doth forgive."

It is small wonder that outcast and unchurched multitudes, many of whom had believed that for them no salvation was possible or
had ever been intended, should turn and drink in the healing sound of a gospel that made but one demand - and that

"The sole return Thy love requires
Is that we ask for more."

The theology of John Wesley became lyrical in the hands of his brother Charles. It was not only preached, it was sung. From lip to lips the joyful tidings spread:

"He breaks the power of cancelled sin,
He sets the prisoner free;
His blood can make the foulest clean,
His blood availed for me."

Colliers, with their coal-blackened faces washed with the tears of repentance, sang of

"Love divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heaven, to earth come down."

In thus founding his theology upon experience Wesley was building better than he knew; and he was also in harmony with the critical and experimental spirit of his age. Hitherto dogma, though occasionally modified in some particular, had gone, in the main, largely unchallenged; appeal had generally been made either to the Church or to Scripture. Now, both Church and Scripture receive a new authority, in that both are found to rest ultimately in religious experience. The Bible is the record of God's revelation to men, whilst the Church was the fellowship of those who enjoyed that spiritual experience of which the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New Methodist Hymn Book, 383.</th>
<th>ibid 1.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ibid 431.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
New Testament is the record. I am well aware that there are those who would bridle at this conception of the Church. They would be swift to point out that the Church is the body of Christ; that it is "the bride of the Lamb". To which I would reply that I have never doubted the divine origin, authority and function of the Church. But whilst I have never hesitated to claim for myself the name of "High Churchman", I have no sympathy with the sacerdotalism that often attends such a claim. A high conception of the Church is the only sure counter-blast to that high ecclesiasticism that so often masquerades in the name of high churchmanship. I share the attitude of John Wesley which was frankly pragmatic. The sole business of the Church is to save souls. All else must be subordinate to that end. Occasionally ministers discuss the old cliché "No salvation apart from the Church" and spend time and energy that could be put to better use. It is apparent that the phrase is either true or false according as one defines the word "Church". There is no salvation apart from the grace of God: no believer doubts this. But is the Church the only vehicle of the grace of God? The Church existed before the bishop; and it is still the guardian and repository of revealed truth. If the Church is that body of men and women who have found God in Jesus Christ, who have experienced in themselves that Christ is able to save unto the uttermost; then the Church is indeed founded upon a rock, and apart from the Church there can be no salvation. But if by the Church
is meant an institution bolstered by an ecclesiastical hierarchy, claiming the right to dispense or withhold grace as it pleases, then the claim of no salvation apart from the Church is false. Modern Anglo-Catholics sometimes claim that Wesley was a High Churchman; he was, but not in the way that they imply. His attitude to Rome and his concept of the Catholic Church are clearly set out in his letter to the 'London Chronicle' in reply to a tract entitled "A Caveat against the Methodists", which was, as he was quick to point out, a caveat against the Protestants. He writes: "The Church of Rome in its present form was not founded by Christ Himself." All the doctrines and practices wherein she differs from us were not instituted by Christ; they were unknown to the ancient Church of Christ; they are unscriptural, novel corruptions: neither is that Church 'propagated throughout the world'. Therefore, if either antiquity or universality be essential thereto, the Church of Rome cannot be the true Church of Christ.'" His concept of Catholicity is as follows: "The whole body of men, endued with faith, working by love, dispersed over the whole earth, in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. And this Church is 'ever one'. In all ages and nations it is the one body of Christ. It is 'ever holy'; for no unholy man can possibly be a member of it. It is 'ever orthodox'; so is every holy man in all things necessary to salvation; 'secured against error' in things essential 'by the perpetual presence of Christ; and ever directed by the Spirit of Truth' in the truth that is after godliness. This Church has 'a perpetual
succession of pastors and teachers divinely appointed and
divinely assisted. And there has never been wanting in the
Reformed Churches such a succession of pastors and teachers,
men both divinely appointed and divinely assisted; for they
convert sinners to God - a work none can do unless God Himself
doth appoint them thereto and assist them therein.

Wesley was a true son of the Reformation, but he was
also truly catholic in his inheritance and outlook. Much more
so was he than many today who vaunt their catholicism and yet
are ready to unchurch all who follow not with them. Wesley's
sermon entitled "Catholic Spirit" completely ignores all
questions of exegesis, but is, nevertheless, one of the
greatest he ever preached; and is a true index of his catholic
spirit. To him catholicism was not the slavish repetition
of formulae and observance of rituals, but was a question
of temper. In the Preface to volume 26 of the Christian
Library he writes: "The same spirit works the same work of
grace in men upright in heart, of whatever denomination. These,
how widely soever they differ in opinion, all agree in one
mind, one temper. How far distant soever they are from each
other, with regard to the circumstances of Worship, they all
meet in the substance of true Worship, the Faith that worketh
by love." Commenting upon this passage in an acutely
prescient Article contributed to "Northern Catholicism",
Principal Newton Flew observes: "Methodists regard this

Letters Std Edn. Vol. 4. pages 137-8
attitude as the expression of the true Catholic Temper which Wesley enjoined upon them, and it is in this sense that they understand the word Catholic. It is a return through the saints of all Christian communions to that creative power described and offered in the New Testament, which is the secret of the saints." Wesley, then was truly Catholic in the best sense of that much misused word. It was the faith of the Creeds that Wesley taught, but a faith purged from the accretions of Rome by the cleansing fire of Luther and Calvin. Whilst he respected both dogma and tradition he did not allow either to hinder his soul-saving mission. His attitude to dogma was 'clinical'. He applied to theology "Scientific Method", which is the systematising of knowledge adduced by experience; and in this he followed in the wake of Descartes and Bacon; and made straight the path of Schleiermacher.

This appeal to experience has sometimes led to a charge of "subjectivism". It is not so long ago that I heard a theological professor say that "the weakness of Methodist theology was that it laid its emphasis on subjectivism and lost sight of the objectivity of God's saving work." At the time I protested that such had never been the teaching of any Methodist of my acquaintance. No Church was more

"Methodism & The Catholic Tradition" Article contributed by Dr. Newton Flew to "Northern Catholicism". p. 521.
loyal than the old Wesleyan Church to the doctrine of the divine causality of salvation. It taught that Christ and Christ alone saves. But it is also taught that the sinner when saved by grace knew he was saved. The subjective element in Wesleyan theology was the doctrine of Assurance. "Christ alone is Saviour,"true, gloriously true; and the heart of the regenerate Methodist beats a glad accord because he knows it is true. It was this certainty that caused Wesley to alter Watts' hymn "Not all the blood of beasts." Watts had written:

"My soul looks back to see
The burden Thou didst bear
When hanging on the accursed tree
And hopes her guilt was there."

Wesley changed the word "hopes" to "knows". "And knows her guilt was there." If this "subjectivism" is the Methodists' shame, then he does well to glory in it. The Wesleys left no one in doubt as to their conviction that the benefits of Christ's saving work were for everyone that believeth, but they also preached untiringly the doctrine of Assurance. Intellectual assent to a dogma is one thing, but the experience of forgiveness is another. The hymns of Charles Wesley unite the objective and subjective elements in the divine forgiveness in a truly wonderful manner.

Now, no one will deny that subjectivism has dangers in it; it can lead to extravagances and abuses. But to leave the impression that Wesley encouraged such individualism is false. The band meeting and the class meeting were ideal
means of checking excesses and of verifying the experience of individuals by appeal to the group. Professor Troeltsch lays mistaken stress on the subjective element in early Methodism when he defines it "as the revivification of orthodox Christianity in an accentuated individualist form."

It is true that stress was laid upon the individual experience of grace, but as Professor Dimond points out in his "Psychology of the Methodist Revival" it was tested and weighed by Wesley himself: who encouraged certain of his preachers to write their biographies so that he might the better understand the working of the divine Spirit within them, and assess their spiritual inheritance and contribution.

This does not mean that Methodism teaches "some new thing", it is not a "freak religion". Apart from the doctrine of "prevenient grace" it adds nothing to catholic theology but a new emphasis. Whilst Wesley could "chop logic" with the best of them, his theology was not primarily abstract and metaphysical, but was concerned with the fact of redemption. The centre and circumference of his teaching

These biographies were published as "Lives of Early Methodist Preachers.

"Methodist doctrine is the direct result of collective deliberation, based upon testimony and discussion in the Societies, tested and thought out by the leaders and by Wesley himself." Psychology of Methodist Revival, p. 214
was the redeeming love of God in Christ, by which salvation was offered to "every fallen soul of man." All else is subject to this basic truth of the Gospel. This does not mean that he was unmindful of the other doctrines of the Church; he was as soundly grounded in the faith as any of his critics, whether they be those of his own generation or of today.

In the "Presbyterian Guardian" Professor P. Woolley writes: "Have you ever wondered why there are so few vigorous defenders of Evangelical Faith left in the ranks of the organised followers of John Wesley?" and proceeds to give the reason for this lack. In parenthesis one might observe that there are very many who have not "wondered" simply because the question is without foundation. Professor Woolley asserts that "Wesley emphasised experience and feeling to the detriment of sound Biblical doctrine." and goes on to observe: "Experience is very important, and feeling has its proper place, but neither of them will last if they are not founded on solid Biblical doctrine. Wesley's influence resulted in minimising doctrine, and the present rejection of Evangelical truths in a tremendous area of Methodism is the result." With pleasure Professor Woolley quotes from Umphrey Lee's "John Wesley and Modern Religion" where he finds the astounding statement: "Certainly.....the Methodist Revival had prepared millions to minimise orthodoxy, and to rely on inner experience

Quoted from "Peace & Truth" Apl-June 1938
rather than on syllogisms." These assertions I flatly deny.
Wesley's works can still be seen and read of all men. He was a Bible theologian. He founded and tested experience upon the word of God. If doctrine can not be brought to the bar of experience on what ground can its validity be established? Logic alone is not enough. Intellectual assent to an article of the Creed cannot secure salvation. St. James's observation is guidance enough on that score. "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe and tremble" But neither their belief nor their trembling can save them. It is one thing to declare to the penitent the forgiveness of his sins, it is quite another for the penitent to know he is forgiven. And can he be forgiven if he does not know it? When a man feels himself tormented with a moral dualism such as St. Paul experienced; and then through the grace of Christ knows the joy of deliverance from the power and guilt of sin, he asserts with the assurance of the once blind beggar, "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see." As Dr. Frederic Platt never wearied of telling his students: "When a man can say, in the depths of his heart, concerning the deep things of God, I know, that, for him, is the end of controversy?"

When Professor Woolley wonders why "there are so few vigorous defenders of evangelical faith left in "ethidism" one can only conclude that he has never read the works of men like

"John Wesley and Modern Religion" page 302
James 19th verse of chapter 2.
John ch. 9, verse 25
Scott Lidgett, Henry Bett, Newton Flew, Vincent Taylor, Ryder Smith, Frederic Platt, William Lofthouse, and Maldwyn Hughes; not to mention Methodism's premier theologian William Burt Pope. So recent a work as Dr. Cell's "Rediscovery of John Wesley" should have convinced him that "one heart was faithful yet". When some of the modern scholars are surely grounded in the things that belong to their peace as was John Wesley, the travelling Church

"Like Moses' bush, will mount the higher And flourish unconsumed in fire."

Bernard Lord Manning has some caustic words to direct to those theologians "who have been rash enough" to question Wesley's orthodoxy. Writing on the doctrine of the Incarnation he stresses Wesley's soundness in the faith; and concludes by saying: "Let them (the modern theologians) master the doctrine of the communication of attributes as Wesley mastered it, and fears for his orthodoxy will gave place to fears for their own."

I quote again from my old mentor: "Three years later........ Wesley demanded that the dispute should be put 'upon the issue which I desired, namely Scripture and experience'. More than forty years later he associates Scripture and experience in

\[ The \ Hymns \ of \ Wesley \ & \ Watts, \ page \ 28. \]

N.B. Mr. Manning is here referring to Charles Wesley, but his observation is equally as true of his brother John, who referred to his hymn book as "a little body of experimental and practical divinity."
exactly the same way. He writes 'Experience is sufficient to confirm a doctrine which is grounded on Scripture: though many fancy they experience what they do not, this is no prejudice to real experience'. Wesley never dreamt, of course, of pitting the Word of God and the experience of believers one against the other; he believed that they must agree, if the experience was genuine, and if the Scripture was rightly understood. The appeal to experience was in that day a novel method, but there was no novel result in doctrine. As a matter of fact, the Methodists have always been, and are today, steadily orthodox as a community. The great religious facts and the great theological doctrines were unchallenged, but Wesley and the early Methodists, without in the least doubting the real inspiration of the Scriptures or the corporate authority of the Church, looked to the facts of religious experience rather than to a Scriptural or an ecclesiastical warrant for the final proof of spiritual realities."

There is, then, no question about the "orthodoxy" of Wesley; and it is simply untrue to say that his "influence resulted in minimising doctrine". His loyalty to Scripture is manifest throughout all his writings. In a letter to Thomas Whitehead (?) concerning the differences twixt Methodism and Quakerism he maintains that

"The Scriptures are the touchstone whereby Christians examine all, real or supposed, revelations. In all cases they appeal 'to the law and to the testimony,' and try every spirit thereby.".

1 Spirit of Methodism page 135
Letter Feb. 10th 1748. Vol. 2. page 117
Wesley's doctrine is based on the teaching of the Bible and ratified in an appeal to corporate experience. I stress the word corporate for as I have already pointed out individual extravagances and idiosyncrasies were not encouraged. It is true that he was not always consistent, but his inconsistencies were, for the more part, the result of development. Wesley was a practical rather than an academic theologian; his teaching was the outworking of his passion for souls. He literally lived out the sentiment of his birthday hymn as written by his younger brother.

"In a rapture of joy
My life I employ
The God of my life to proclaim:
Tis worth living for, this,
To administer bliss
And salvation in Jesus's name.

My remnant of days
I spend in His praise,
Who died the whole world to redeem:
Be they many or few,
My days are His due,
And they all are devoted to Him."

In seeking to outline Wesley's theology I will indicate his agreement (or otherwise) with the theology of Toplady, and will seek to show that in the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith they were much more in accord than their controversial writings would lead one to suppose. The theology underlying the controversy will be examined in the last chapters.

Chapter 13

WESLEY'S DOCTRINES OF MAN AND GRACE
Wesley's doctrine of man is identical with that of Toplady. Both give a literal interpretation to the opening chapters of Genesis, and both regard St. Paul's disquisition on sin as final and authoritative. Man was created in the image and likeness of God. Which phrase Wesley interprets as follows. Man became the "political image" of God as the governor of all material things, but he was also made to bear the "moral image", which is "righteousness and true holiness". No conception of primitive man being innocent is entertained. Prior to his fall is both holy and immortal, but loses both qualities by reason of his sin. Holiness, then, but not immutability was one of his primary endowments.

"In the image of God was man made; holy as He that created him is holy; merciful as the Author of all is merciful; perfect as his Father in heaven is perfect. As is love, so man dwelling in love, dwelt in God and God in him. God made him to be an image of his own eternity, an incorruptible picture of the God of glory. He was accordingly pure, as is pure, from every spot of sin. He knew not evil in any kind or degree, but was inwardly and outwardly sinless and undefiled. He loved the Lord his God with all his heart, and with all his mind, and soul and strength."

But this holy being was not just an automaton, for an automaton could not be holy, he was possessed of alternative moral choice.

"He was created able to stand yet liable to fall."

This, to Wesley, was the Scriptural doctrine of man; and he has no hesitancy in preaching it, nor rebuking those who presume

to deny it. In a letter dated November 28th 1774 he vigorously refutes an 'infidel' for trying to propagate new theories. He rallies to the support of Wilton "because he had shown that detail (i.e. the Fall story) in all its parts to be not only simple, plain and comprehensible, but consistent with the highest reason, and altogether worthy of God."

At no time does Wesley put his doctrine of experience over against the Scriptures; but wherever he finds a Scriptural truth he verifies it by an appeal to experience. So it is not difficult for him, when he looks either around him or within, to realise that man is indeed "fallen". And fallen man must be restored. Thus Wesley's doctrine of man becomes the basis of his soteriology. The soul that is dead in trespasses and sins must be quickened, it must be born again. In his sermon on the New Birth Wesley supplies answers to the three main questions that he asks. "Why must we be born again? How must this regeneration be accomplished? Therefore, and to what end, is it necessary that we should be regenerate?". Man filled with righteousness and true holiness becomes separated from God by reason of his disobedience and thus dies spiritually. Spiritually and not

physically. (This it should be noted marks an advance upon Wesley's previous thought. In his earlier sermon on Justification by Faith he had taught, as did Toplady, that physical death was the consequence of Adam's sin; and that if he had not sinned he would have been immortal.

"For the moment he tasted that fruit, he died. His soul died, was separated from God; separated from whom the soul has no more life than the body has when separate from the soul. His body, likewise, became corruptible and mortal; so that death then took hold on this also."

Now, with truer insight, he denies his previous teaching by pointing out that

"If it be said, 'Nay, but that threatening, 'In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die,' refers to temporal death, and to that alone, to the death of the body only', the answer is plain; to affirm this is flatly and palpably to make God a liar; to aver that the God of truth positively affirmed a thing contrary to truth. For it is evident that Adam did not die in this sense, 'in the day that he ate thereof'. He lived, in the sense opposite to this death, above nine hundred years after. So that this cannot possibly be understood of the death of the body, without impeaching the veracity of God. It must therefore be understood of spiritual death, the loss of the life and image of God."

This spiritual death becomes the inheritance of all who spring from Adam's loins. So, seeing that all are born with a corrupt nature it becomes imperative that they be re-born of the Spirit. The manner of the re-birth is far beyond human power to ascertain. It is as mysterious and
as undeniable as the operation of the wind. Yet, whilst Wesley recognises the difficulties confronting those who would try to offer a rationale of the new birth, he makes good use of the physical analogy. Prior to birth the embryo has no sense avenue. It neither hears, feels, nor sees. It possesses no intercourse with the outer world. A thick veil lies over the senses until actual birth is accomplished; but at birth the babe immediately makes response to its material environment. So also is it with him who is spiritually reborn. Immediately there is response to the things of the spirit, which previously had been indiscernible. Yet this "other world" is one in which we live and move but do not discern until the new-birth has taken place. But once regeneration is accomplished the new born soul is able to respond to the spiritual world into which he has come. His spiritual faculties are both used and blessed in the using. He has a new vision, the centre of which is not "self" but God. So to the question "what is the nature of the new birth?" Wesley replies:

"In a word, it is that change whereby the earthly, sensual, devilish mind is turned into the mind which was in Christ Jesus. This is the nature of the new birth: 'so is every one that is born of the Spirit.'"

To the third question Wesley propounded to his hearers he supplies three brief answers. It is necessary to holiness

N.B. Sermon 15. "The Great Privilege of Those that are Born of God. (Vol. 1. pages 228 - 322 Sugden's Edition.)

to salvation and to happiness.

"Wherefore, to what end, is it necessary that we should be born again? It is very easily discerned, that this is necessary, first in order to holiness....Now this holiness can have no existence till we are renewed in the image of our mind. It cannot commence in the soul till that change is wrought....But without holiness no man shall see the Lord, shall see the face of God in glory. Of consequence, the new birth is absolutely necessary to salvation....."Except he be born again, none can be happy even in this world. For it is not possible, in the nature of things that a man should be happy who is not holy... All those general sources of sin - pride, self-will, and idolatry - are, in the same proportion as they prevail, general sources of misery. Therefore as long as these reign in any soul, happiness has no place there. But they must reign until the bent of our nature is changed, that is, until we are born again; consequently the new birth is absolutely necessary to happiness in this world, as well as in the world to come."

By reason of the Fall man is sinful; the sinful nature of our first parents becomes the inheritance of their progeny. This is Wesley's conception of "original sin": it is the infecting of the primeval stock. In a letter to Samuel Sparrow he, in parenthesis, defines original sin as "the proneness to evil which is found in every child of man". He regarded it as one of the three grand doctrines of the Christian faith. To him it was a "humbling" doctrine. The tempers and manners of lords, gentlemen, clergymen, to
say nothing of the toiling classes were such evidence of original sin that "no man in his senses" could "deny it"."

So for Wesley original sin was no mere theory of the schools that the ordinary man could put on one side, but was a fact, stark and terrible. His preaching of original sin stands out in marked contrast to the "humanistic" drivel that poured from many pulpits. By some preachers and writers man was painted in such glowing colours that sin was only a fiction, and so no salvation was necessary. Well might Wesley exclaim:

"How many laboured panegyrics do we now read and hear on the dignity of human nature! One eminent preacher, in one of his sermons, preached and printed a few years ago, does not scruple to affirm, first, that men in general (if not every individual) are very wise; secondly, that men in general are very virtuous; and thirdly, that they are very happy. And I do not know that any one has been so hardy as to controvert the assertion.

Nevertheless, whilst Wesley thus justly protests against a "religion not more than human", he gives (as did Toplady) too lurid a picture of man's fallen state. The first part of his treatise on "Original Sin" (which was published as a reply to Dr. John Taylor of Norwich, A presbyterian Minister with pronounced leanings to Socinianism) so catalogues the sins of mankind and so carefully abstains from mentioning any human virtue that the finished picture is too terrible to be real. "How utterly misleading......is a description of the moral condition of the old Greek and Roman world which has

Letters St. Edn. vol. 5:327.
Sermon 123, 2. (Quoted from Sugden)
not a word to say of the legislation of Lycurgus, the philosophy of Socrates, and Plato, the teaching of the great Tragedians, the heroism of Leonidas, the honour of Regulus, the ethics of Cato and Marcus Antoninus and Epictetus, or the patriotism of Brutus! The whole thing gives us the impression of an advocate, who piles up and exaggerates everything that can be said for his side of the case, and ignores all the facts that are against him."

As Wesley based his doctrine of redemption upon the doctrine of original sin; and as he was fighting a pseudo-philosophy of life that was accepted by many as theology, it is not surprising that he tended to overdo his own case. Believing that a denial of original sin was a denial of "the whole frame of scriptural Christianity" he pressed home the dogma of total depravity, the evidences of which abounded on every side. Moreover, it is in the development of his doctrine of original sin that he discovers the distinctive tenet of Methodist theology - the doctrine of "Prevenient Grace".

This doctrine was advanced as a link twixt the dogmas of Total Depravity, and salvation "as the entire work of God".

---

| Dr. Staden's Introduction to Sermon on "original sin" Vol. 2. page 209 |
| Journal Standard Edition Vol. 3 page 374 |
If man be held to be totally depraved, i.e. "utterly indisposed and disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil". - then it would be of no more use to offer him salvation than to give "first aid" to an already dead man. Wesley clearly realised this, and at the cost of consistency, firmly held to the Calvinian dogma that man had no part in his own salvation (save that of accepting it) whilst teaching that no man was so completely evil that he could not apperceive the good, even though he could not unaided achieve it. Despite the "Fall" every man had "what is vulgarly called" Natural Conscience. His sermon on Original Sin was in parts as extreme as anything Toplady ever said on the subject, but its teaching is qualified in his sermon "Working out our own Salvation".

"For allowing that the souls of men are dead in sin by nature, this excuses none, seeing there is no man that is in a state of mere nature; there is no man, unless he has quenched the Spirit, that is wholly void of the grace of God. No man living is wholly destitute of what is vulgarly called natural conscience. But this is not natural; it is more properly called preventing grace. Every man has a greater or less measure of this which waiteth not for the call of man."

Commenting on this passage the late Dr. Maldwyn Hughes observes: "If grace is present antecedently to the first movements of thought and will, then it does not make for clarity of thought to assert that man is by nature totally depraved, and that in him dwells no good thing."
This constitutes a real difficulty for Wesleyan theology; for although the humanistic interpretation that the 18th Century divines had put upon the teaching of Arminius, is flatly denied, and man is declared to have no share in his salvation; yet Wesley is obliged to modify his teaching in the interest of truth as evidenced by introspection and experience. In his "Predestination calmly considered" he says:

"Natural free-will, in the present state of mankind, I do not understand; I only assert that there is a measure of free will supernaturally restored to every man, together with that supernatural light which 'enlightens every man that cometh into the world'.... We cannot allow that man can only resist, and not in anywise 'work together with God'; or that God is so the whole worker of our salvation, as to exclude man's working at all. This I dare not say."

Obviously in saying this Wesley has moved away somewhat from his assertion made in his sermon "Salvation by Faith"; which assertion is made again and again throughout his writings, though the verbiage may not always be the same.

"Of yourselves cometh neither your faith nor your salvation. The faith through which you are saved as well as the salvation which "e of His own good pleasure, His mere favour, annexes thereto." are the free, unmerited gifts of God.

The problem confronting Wesley was the reconciling of the dogma of Total Depravity and man's ability to "love the highest when he sees it". A totally depraved being could not make response to the call of God; and so Wesley realised

Sermon. Sugden's Edn., Vol. 1. page 47
that whilst every part of man is in some measure depraved, and so the total man is depraved, he is not as depraved as he could be.

The main purpose of prevenient grace is to allow and assist man to exercise his (otherwise) depraved faculties, that he may in some measure, at least, live as an immortal spirit created by God; and that he may avail himself of that further grace that is necessary to salvation. Nevertheless, this does not imply merit on man's part, for even "the meanest one's natural faculties cannot be exerted without the assistance of God. From this it will be seen that the most important function of prevenient grace is to confer on man's will the property of freedom to choose the good. By nature the will is so corrupted in Adam that it is "free only to evil".

"We are inclined to evil, antecedently to our own choice." By the influence of prevenient grace, however, freedom is "supernaturally restored" to every man. Without this gift man would indeed be by nature determined toward evil. But God's love has not seen fit so to condemn man.

M.B. Letter to "John Smith" June 1746. Vol. 2. p. 71. "I believe firmly..... that all our natural faculties are God's gift, nor can the meanest be exerted without the assistance of His Spirit."

"Remarks on Mr. Hill's review" Vol. A. p. 392, P.XVI
"Original Sin" Vol. IX page 275, Wesley's Works.
"Predestination Calmly considered, Works X p. 230
Prevenient grace, then, is the supernatural restoration of moral freedom. But the question may be asked "By what means is God able to restore this freedom?" If man lost it in Adam, how comes it that he now possesses it once again? The answer is, that he possesses it in Christ. Prevenient grace is distinctively a Christian grace: although Wesley sometimes speaks of it as the Holy Spirit. Yet, his primary teaching is that it is the grace whereby the meritorious life and death of Christ are made efficacious before He ever appeared in the flesh. The fall of man is negatived by the fact that "the Lamb of God was slain before the foundation of the world"; and thus by the righteousness of Christ the guilt and death transmitted to all in Adam are in a degree cancelled. In a letter to James Hervy concerning his "Theron and Aspasio", Wesley intimates his agreement with an observation therein contained:

"The death of Christ procured the pardon and acceptance of believers even before We came in the flesh" (page 74). Yea, and ever since. In this we all agree. And why should we contend for anything more?"

This means that the benefits of Christ's atonement have been efficacious before the Incarnation; and all men are actually (in some degree) and potentially made alive, for "every degree of grace is a degree of life".


" Nov. 21. 1776 " 6 " 239 " " 
Hence, it will be observed that Wesley's theory of prevenient grace is based on the Christian Revelation; i.e. that freedom is a gift of prevenient grace made available by Jesus Christ. His doctrine of human freedom is thus not only religious as distinguished from being merely philosophical; it is definitely Christian as being distinguished from being merely religious. Furthermore his doctrine of freedom is essentially soteriological in contradistinction from the simply theological; in that it appears to be mainly designed in order to allow man to co-operate with subsequent communications of grace for salvation. One can detect in many of Wesley's references to prevenient grace a desire to conceive of man as not only able but constrained by God's love to accept salvation. By means of this grace man has not only the opportunity to respond to further overtures of the divine love; but also a definite responsibility if he fails to do so. This sense of responsibility is the embryo of conscience. Indeed, some, but not with Wesley's approval, erroneously connoted prevenient grace as "natural conscience". The implication that in addition to the five physical senses with which man is endowed, he possesses "moral sense", also natural to him. But this is a kind of atheism for it "leaves God" out of "the scheme of virtue". On the contrary the capacity for knowing right and

| See Wesley's Works Vol. 7. "On Conscience" p. 188-9 |
wrong, as well as the desire to perform right and shun wrong is properly

".........a branch of that supernatural gift of God which we usually style preventing grace."

It is intimated in the New Testament in St. John's words concerning the true light. Everyone has some measure of this true light; all Mahometans, all pagans, yea the vilest of savages.

Wesley is here teaching that prevenient grace first delineates the general lines of good and evil; it secondly provides man with an inward monitor in the form of conscience, which approves or disapproves his conduct. Hence he defines conscience as follows:

"First it is a witness - testifying what we have done, in thought, word or action. Secondly: it is a judge - passing sentence on what we have done, that it is good or evil. And thirdly, it in some sort executes the sentence, by occasioning a degree of complacency in him that does well, and a degree of uneasiness in him that does evil."

A further function of prevenient grace is the identifying of itself with the operations of convicting grace. In this sense it indeed "the peculiar work of the Holy Spirit."

---

John 1. 9. (See notes on New Testament)
See sermons on "Working out your own Salvation" 85 and "Heavenly Treasure in earthly Vessels" Sermon 124.
"No man living is entirely destitute of what is vulgarly called natural conscience. But this is not natural; it is more properly called preventing grace. Every man has a greater or less measure of this, which waiteth not for the call of man." Sermon 85, iii.4.
Works. Vol. 7. page 188
I have elaborated this doctrine because of the prominent place it takes in the theology of the controversy. Moreover, it occupies a unique position in the history of doctrine, in that it is the mean between Pelagianism and Augustinianism. The former claims for every soul a natural sanctity by which, quite unaided by any external grace, it can turn to God: whilst the latter stresses the divine origin and gift of salvation manifested in an irresistible grace which is the privilege of the elect. By the doctrine of prevenient grace Wesley is able to proclaim the depravity of man in opposition to Pelagius; and also to oppose the Augustinian dogma of predestination, by asserting that grace is given to everyman; whereby he can lay hold of salvation if he will. Thus it upholds the divine causality of all that appertains to redemption, whilst maintaining the principle of individual self determination.

Wesley’s doctrine of man can be summed up in a sentence:

"I the chief of sinners am; But Jesus died for me."

Physically and morally tainted by the Fall, yet not totally blind to the beauties of the spiritual, man is able by an unmerited gift of grace to lay hold on Christ; and in His name claim acceptance with God. Yet this grace constrains, it does not compel, it may be lost, and it can be regained. The primary and final factor in salvation is the gift of God’s grace. "By grace are ye saved through faith"; and both the grace and the faith are the gift of God. This is a truth
that fired the heart of Wesley and winged the pen of his brother Charles. Toplady might preach "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory; for thy mercy and thy truth's sake." But no utterance of his ever attributed to God all the glory of man's salvation more surely than did the hymns of Charles Wesley. One could open the Methodist Hymn-book at random to evidence this truth.

"Omnipotent Redeemer, our ransomed souls adore Thee,
What e'er is done Thy work we own,
And give Thee all the glory." (251)

Moreover this salvation is for all.

"Its streams the whole creation reach,
So plenteous is the store;
Enough for all, enough for each,
Enough for evermore." (49)

Nevertheless grace may be lost:

"Ah Lord with trembling I confess,
A gracious soul may fall from grace;
The salt may lose its seasoning power
And never, never find it more." (480)

But although there is always the possibility of "falling from grace" it need not be absolute; and when the penitent turns his eye in faith to His Saviour, then he finds:

"A pardon written with his blood,
The favour and the peace of God." (325)

and when he is

"To real holiness restored"

he can in deep humility and gratitude declare,

"Pardoned for all that I have done,
My mouth as in the dust I hide,
And glory give to God alone,
Such is the efficacy of the

"O'erwhelming power of saving grace". (325)

The use of the words "o'erwhelming power" prompts the enquiry "Is this overwhelming grace a constraining or a compelling power?" Is it irresistible? As the question is fundamental to the controversy I must content myself at this point by saying, it is a grace which constrains the sinner to surrender his will and identify himself with the saving purpose of God. But whether or not this surrender will be made, only the agent can decide; and therefore, the grace cannot be irresistible. This point, however, will be examined in greater detail later on.

As the subject of grace is basic in the theology of Wesley, it will not be inappropriate at this juncture to give a passing glance at his teaching concerning the Means of Grace. On a Sermon bearing this title he says:

"By 'means of grace' I understand outward signs, words, or actions, ordained of God, and appointed for this end, to be the ordinary channels whereby He might convey to men, preventing, justifying, or sanctifying grace."

He continues:

"The chief of these means are prayer, whether in secret or with the great congregation; searching the Scriptures (which implies hearing, reading, and meditating thereon); and receiving the Lord's supper, eating bread and drinking wine in remembrance of Him; and these we believe to be ordained of God, as the ordinary channels of conveying His grace to the souls of men."

Sermon XII Standard Sermons (Sugden's Edn.) P. 242

Ibid
In his teaching concerning the Means of Grace Wesley is seeking to avoid two opposing types of error. 
1...Trusting in the means rather than in the grace; and 
2...Denying that any means are necessary to grace. 
Thus he rebukes both the formalist and the "Quietist". In rebuking the formalist he is repudiating the idea of value in the mere form of worship. The "channel" is not the "grace". The ceremony of worship is of value only if it brings the worshipper into touch with the Most High. Nothing in the ritual of religion can atone for sin: prayer and communion may annihilate the distance that separates the sinner from his Saviour, but it is Christ alone that saves. He is the sole giver of salvation, but it is through prayer and fellowship that His saving grace is mediated. In short, the "Means of Grace" are not an end in themselves; and are not to be "trusted in" as such; nevertheless they are the divinely appointed ordinances whereby grace can come.

On the other hand the "Quietists" denied all value to the "Means of Grace"; and urged their members to stand still and behold the glory of God. They over emphasised the divine causality of salvation and preached a doctrine of pure passivity. By doing so they were in danger of overthrowing the whole edifice of sacramental worship. In a letter to Benjamin Ingham Wesley states (perhaps a little exaggeratedly) the tenets of Philip Henry Molther; and shews how they are very far from those

mentioned in Mr. Ingham's letter which read: "First as to salvation: The thing meant hereby is that man cannot attain to salvation by his own wisdom, strength, righteousness, goodness, merits or works; that therefore, when he applies to God for it, he is to cast away all dependence upon everything of his own, and, trusting only to the mercy of God through the merits of Christ, in true poverty of spirit to resign himself up to the will of God, and thus quietly wait for His Salvation." Well might Wesley observe concerning this:

"I have nothing to object to this stillness." Yet, he hurries to point out that this is not the "Stillness" or "Quietism" of the Moravians. According to Wesley they held that 'to be still' was to refuse to observe the means of grace.

"Not to go to Church.
Not to Communicate;
Not to fast;
Not to use so much private prayer;
Not to read the Scriptures;
Not to do temporal good; and
Not to attempt to do spiritual good."

One might ask the question: "If all means of grace are to be rejected, by what means can grace be received?" That there is some truth in "Quietism" is not to be gainsaid, but Wesley was too acute not to realise its peril. "Waiting for God" could easily become moral and spiritual indolence; and whilst Wesley firmly held that no work of man was meritorious, he realised that if no moral or spiritual effort was made

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter. Vol. 2. page 80.</th>
<th>ibid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ibid p. 81.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
declension was inevitable. That "Quietism" was not just a fad of a few neurotics is evidenced by the fact that Charles Wesley, himself, was ensnared by it. His brother John comments concerning his announcement that he did not intend to preach again:

"'The Philistines are upon thee, Samson.'
But the Lord is not departed from thee.'
He shall strengthen thee yet again, and thou shalt be 'avenged for the loss of thy eyes!"

Happily Charles Wesley's "stillness" last only three weeks; and thanks to the Countess Huntingdon he was rescued from its fascination. He, however, retained the true spirit of Quietism, which he expresses in his magnificent hymn "Open, Lord, my inward ear."

"Open, Lord, my inward ear,
And bid my heart rejoice;
Bid my quiet spirit hear
Thy comfortable voice;
Never in the whirlwind found,
Or where earthquakes rock the place,
Still and silent is the sound,
The whisper of thy grace.

From the world of sin, and noise,
And hurry I withdraw;
For the small and inward voice
I wait with humble awe;
Silent am I now and still,
Dare not in Thy presence move;
To my waiting soul reveal
The secret of Thy love."

It is this sane emphasis that has been the invaluable contribution of the Friends (both the medieval Friends of God and the present day Quakers) to the piety of the Catholic Church.

| Journal Standard Edition Vol. 2 page 418 |
| Methodist Hymn Book (1933 edn.) 465 |
Unlike the "Friends", however, Wesley laid strong emphasis on the value of sacramental worship. Not only did he avail himself of prayer and meditation, but throughout the whole of his adult life he regularly attended the Lord's Table. In a sermon entitled "The Duty of Constant Communion" he exhorted his hearers to be diligent in their attendance at this means of grace. He rejects the term "frequent communion", it must be 'constant'. The sole standard of duty in this matter is opportunity. With uncompromising dogmatism he asserts:

"No man can have any pretence to Christian piety who does not receive it, not once a month, but as often as he can."

In his next observation he surpasses even some of the modern Anglo-Catholics:

"He that, when he may obey the commandment if he will, does not, will have no place in the kingdom of heaven."

If it be asked "Did Wesley practise what he preached?" the answer is an unhesitating "Yes he did." As the Revd. T.H. Barrett remarks in his Article "The Place of the Lord's Supper in Early Methodism", "We may state with reasonable confidence that throughout his apostolic life, Wesley approached the table of the Lord once in about every five days. This is how he fulfilled his own doctrine on the Duty of Constant Communion."
Vitally relevant to Wesley's doctrine of grace is his opposition to Deism. Although there are several references to the Deists and their philosophy in Wesley's letters and Journal he, for the more part, did not engage with them in public controversy. He showed a more excellent way by appealing to the evidence of the grace in the lives of his converts. The crucial issue was the denial by the Deists of the need of the supernatural revelation of God's grace in Jesus Christ. For Revelation is the centre about which cluster the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. To deny the Incarnation and the Atonement as possessing supernatural, cosmic meaning, prevents one from believing that God Himself has entered into a personal covenant with man to redeem him from sin, and make him holy. Deism asks one to reject the miraculous promise that God immanently and redemptively loves man through Jesus Christ, and counters with the suggestion that God is either so removed from man as to be personally indifferent to man's fate, or that man is so good as not to need redemption. Once the need and meaning of the supernatural revelation of God's grace are relinquished, the correlative doctrines of Christianity are vitiated. Because Revelation has direct reference to man as sinful, Deism's denial of Revelation does away with the orthodox doctrine of the depravity of man, deprecates his sinfulness, and magnifies his natural capacities - especially his reason. The denial of the redemptive nature of Christ's
revelation must result in an optimistic view of man, or in a conception of God as sublimely indifferent to the needs of man. God remains transcendent, partially retired from the world. The agent of His immanent grace - the Holy Spirit - is similarly withdrawn. The person of Christ is reduced to a perfection of humanity which differs from man only in degree. His atonement is deprived of its objective meaning, and the significance of our Lord’s life and death consists in the influence he exerts as a moral example. This in turn vitiates the experience of justification, regeneration, and sanctification. Religion, therefore, becomes an activity of man rather than that of God. Particularly is this true of the human reason; by which the Deists allege that man can penetrate the invisible world and arrive at a genuine knowledge of God; and on this basis build a rationalist system of ethics. This dispenses with what Christianity holds to be the organ of religious knowledge, the condition of salvation, and the foundation of holiness. In brief, it dispenses with faith. Therefore, the preaching of salvation by faith becomes both unnecessary and meaningless: but it is not necessary to go on, for the error of Deism can be put in a sentence. By denying Revelation it cuts the nerve of grace; and Christianity is transformed from a testament of redemptive love into a pattern of virtue. Wesley saw this clearly and in his letters he strove to guard his followers from the

2 Jan. 4, 1749
pernicious influence of the doctrine that he abhorred.

As mentioned earlier, it is especially significant that Wesley did not counter attack Deism in the conventional fashion of the 18th century apologists. Where other Christian thinkers tilted reason against reason Wesley preached the gospel of universal redemption. His success lay in the realisation that if the gospel of redeeming love was faithfully proclaimed, and not fashionably argued, the reality of religious experience, and the evidence of saved souls could crush the most polished arguments of his opponents. Indeed: he inclined to think that perhaps God had purposely suffered the Deist attack to come to pass in order that Christians might come to understand that the strongest evidence of Christianity's truth lay not in rationalistic apologetic, what he called "traditional" or "external" evidence, but in "internal evidence" - the testimony of the soul's immediate experience.

Dr. H.B. Workman puts the matter with admirable succinctness in his introductory chapter to "A New History of Methodism". He writes: "Wesley destroyed Deism, not by his pen, but by his deeds. The Deist had appealed to logic; Wesley, leaving the more logical issues to Butler and Berkeley, appealed to the heart. In place of a frozen theology he gave us a living experience, in which God was not hidden, neither far off, but very nigh. God, said the Deist is unrelated. Wesley taught once more the great Pauline truth - relation 'in Jesus Christ,'
the redeemed soul conscious of its sonship to the Father through the Holy Spirit. Prayer, said the Deist, is illogical and absurd; God is not a man that He should change. Wesley's answer was to teach men how to pray, and so to pray that whether God was changed or not their relations to God were forever changed. There is nothing mysterious, the Deist claimed, in Christianity. Wesley brought men face to face with the mystery of the Cross. Miracles, the Deist added, are impossible, a manifest contradiction. Wesley appealed to experience itself, and adduced the supreme miracle of life, the break in all continuity exemplified in every conversion of a sinner into a saint, that right-about-face of all the forces of a depraved character the explanation of which is beyond the ken of any merely natural system of ethics."

Wesley's belief in the universality of grace is beyond question. Even Dr. Cell, in his attempt to prove Wesley a Calvinist, cannot escape this fact. He minimises its significance, but does not attempt to deny it. The Hymn

"O for a trumpet voice
On all the world to call!
To bid their hearts rejoice
In Him who died for all!
For all my Lord was crucified;
For all, for all my Saviour died."

was the Wesley's war-cry; and though Toplady, the brothers

The Place of Methodism in the Life & Thought of the Christian Church, page 12

Hill, and their fellow Calvinists fulminated at this denial of the Eternal Decree, Wesley continued to "Give the pure word of general grace". To him, anything that savoured of the Calvinian doctrine of predestination was repugnant. He held, that it was a denial of the love of God, and as it precluded all possibility of human cooperation with God and left multitudes without hope, he protested in the name of the ethical consciousness of mankind. Untiringly he preached the love divine; unhesitatingly he declared:

"Lord I believe, were sinners more
Than sands upon the ocean shore,
Thou hast for all a ransom paid,
For all a full atonement made."

And, as in his teaching generally, he based his claim on the fact of experience. If it was in the mind of God to pass by any, surely it would have been him. In touching humility he can repeat his brother's words

"Thy sovereign grace extends to all extends,
Immense and unconfined;
From age to age it never ends;
It reaches all mankind.

Throughout the world its breadth is known,
Wide as infinity;
So wide it never passed by one
Or it had passed by me."

Professor Cell, in his denial of the Arminianism of Wesley, writes: "It may then be that the formula "Methodism is Arminianism on fire", if intended as an objective description
of the content of Wesley's preaching, of its regnant doctrinal ideas, is much more felicitous in its phrasing than accurate as to the facts. For the Arminianism never has been, never was for John Wesley, Francis Asbury, and their colleagues, is not now, and never will be the source of fire." But, surely, this is to say too much. There is "fire" enough in the verses just quoted. If Wesley was not consumed with a fire for God because of his belief in salvation for all and unto the uttermost, he most certainly was not fired by any zeal that believers in Predestination might possess. In a letter to the "Editor of Lloyd's Evening Post", he defends his sermon preached on the death of Mr. Whitefield, and in this defence he refers briefly, but tellingly, to Predestination. Referring to Mr. Romané's strictures in the "Gospel Magazine" he comments:

"After asserting this, can Mr. Romané ever take the name of Catholic love into his mouth? Is not this the very opposite of it? The height and depth of bigotry? Does this spirit do honour to his opinion? Can we conceive anything more horrid? Is it not enough to make a person of humanity shudder? Yea, to make his blood run cold? I will not here enter into the merits of the case; I need not. It has been done to my hands. The whole doctrine of predestination is thoroughly discussed in those three tracts lately printed - An Answer to the Eleven Letters commonly ascribed to Mr. Hervey, Arguments against general Redemption Considered, and An Answer to Elisha Coles. Till these are
seriously and solidly refuted, I have no more to say on that head. But this I must aver, that the excluding all from salvation who do not believe the Horrible Decree is a most shocking insult on all mankind, on common sense, and common humanity."

It is clear enough from this and many other remarks in his Journal and Letters that the only 'fire' predestination kindled in the breast of John Wesley was the fire of anger, and the fiery determination to combat with all the energy of which he was capable that Calvinism which he declared to be "the bane of true religion" and "the very antidote of Methodism". 

Despite the brilliance of Dr. Cell's revaluation of Wesley's theological position, his book leaves the reader with the impression of paradoxical onesidedness. He tends to minimise all the facts that weigh against him; and does violence to the term Arminianism, if it be used with any respect for historical and theological meaning. He writes: "It admits of full proof that the religious energy of Wesley's message lay in its unity with the faith of the first Reformers and not in any deviation from them." In broad outline this statement is true. The strength of Wesley lay in his teaching of the Calvinian doctrine of Total Depravity and man's utter inability to contribute anything towards his own
salvation, which, as emphasised by Luther, was the gift of God mediated through faith in His grace. This was the faith of the Reformers, but it was also the faith of the Primitive Church as taught by the Apostles. Moreover when did Arminius ever preach anything to the contrary? If the strength of Wesley's message lay in its unity with the faith of the first Reformers, there can be no denying that the appeal of his message lay in his deviation from the Calvinist dogma of the decrees. Wesley preached the death of Christ as "a sufficient Atonement for the sins of the whole world."

To ignore this fact vitiates any evaluation of Wesleyan theology. Of course much depends on what is meant by the term "Arminian". Dr. Cell frequently uses it in the sense in which it was misused by the 18th century generally. The main theme of the ninth and tenth chapters of his book is that the Wesleyan revival revealed a conflict between Arminius's and Wesley's rediscovery of Calvin's and Luther's religion of grace. Now, there can be no gainsaying that Wesley was in revolt against two things, the spiritual sterility of the Church of England, and religion in general, and the humanistic conception of salvation as being achieved through a search for holiness to be found in the Pietists of his time. But, it must be emphasised that Dr. Cell is attempting to say too much when he contends that Wesley was not really an Arminian, if the term is used with any respect for its historical and theological content. It must always be remembered that
whilst Arminius and Wesley disagree with Calvin on the issue of the Divine Decrees, they are fully aware of the validity and centrality of the major part of his message. It is, therefore, somewhat difficult to appreciate what new presentation Dr. Cell seeks to make in his constant emphasis on this. For all notable writers on Wesley, of whatever shade of opinion and of whatever period, from Piette, the Roman Catholic, to the staunch dissenter Rigg; from Southey to such moderns as Lavers and Lunn, have at least agreed here. So to say, as Dr. Cell does, that Wesley's reaction against Calvinism is negligible as compared with his reaction against Arminianism is to do violence to the terms, notwithstanding his occasional qualification of Arminianism to mean for him the barren religion of the Church of England. It was similarly connoted by Toplady, but never by Wesley. For him, Arminianism meant a doctrine of general atonement; or, negatively, a protest against absolute predestination. The errors usually charged upon Arminianism; and which were attributed by Toplady to Wesley are:

- Denial of Original Sin
- Denial of Justification by Faith
- Denial of Irresistible Grace
- Denial of Absolute Predestination
- The affirmation that believers might fall from grace.

The first two are, obviously, falsely charged.

As will be seen in the next chapters the differences between Toplady and Wesley centred entirely around the doctrine of grace. Was salvation for all or only for the elect? Could the grace of God save unto the uttermost, or was Christ
only a partial Saviour? To this latter question return will be made when Wesley's doctrine of "Perfect Love" is being considered. For the moment it is necessary to look again at his emphasis on the universality of grace. In these days when "modern" writers like to grovel, and are content to know nothing of Wesley but his love affairs, it is good that Dr. Cell should enter the field with a book that brings one back to the central facts of sin and salvation; even though he does not do justice to the content of historical Arminianism. The sinfulness of sin; the dynamic of grace are fundamental in the theology of both Calvin and Wesley. But it is surely paradoxical to minimise the differences between then, and then claim Wesley as a Calvinist. By the same process of reasoning one could prove Calvin to be a Wesleyan, or even an Arminian. If it be urged that the only difference between Calvin and Wesley is that which concerns the dogma of the decrees, the answer must be, and what a difference it is! As Dr. Rattenbury remarks in his book "The Conversion of the Wesleys", "the little more, and how much it is". Carlyle once observed that the Christian Church was split on an iota; but what a difference that iota makes. Nothing less than an acceptance or denial of the Godhead of Christ. Much can be contained in little - especially in Theology. Throughout his ministry Wesley stubbornly refused to countenance predestination. Dr. Cell
is misrepresenting Wesley's attitude when he suggests the contrary. It is true that he had more in common with Calvinism than is generally recognised; but no good purpose can be served by seeking to belittle Wesley's opposition to Election, and especially its corollary, Reprobation. When Dr. Cell states that Wesley in later life modified his earlier opposition to predestination, and referred to himself as a 'bigot', he is reading his own interpretation into Wesley's words, as an unprejudiced study of them will reveal. Wesley, in this letter, is seeking to show that the elevation of 'opinions' into fundamental issues, is bigotry. His opponent (John Newton) was contesting the doctrine of Perfect Love, and Wesley is pointing out that the doctrine is not, as Newton had suggested, "subversive of the very foundations of Christian experience" any more than was his concept of Predestination. This last:

He says of DT: "Many hold it at whose feet I desire to be found in the day of the Lord Jesus. If, then, I oppose this with my whole strength," I am a mere bigot still. I leave YOU in your calm and retired moments to make the application." Which was, that the "opposing with all one's strength" the doctrine of Perfection was bigotry. This is the meaning of the letter, rather than the interpretation of Dr. Cell. On the subject of the decrees Wesley never changed his mind. From as early as 1725 to as late as 1788 Wesley had but one attitude to them - and that, unrelenting opposition. Albeit there were long periods when circumstances did not
press him to set aside his distaste for controversial writing, and oppose these tenets with sermon and tract. As already noted Wesley left the refutation of Predestination to Sellon and Olivers. It was this fact that incensed Toplady so terribly. Yet when an opinion was solicited, Wesley did not hesitate to give one. Nevertheless, whilst Wesley offered no place to predestinarianism in his teaching he yet counselled his preachers against attacking it in their public utterances. He felt that it would do more harm than good. Still, it was to him a "detestable doctrine". In a letter to "John Smith" he makes his position crystal clear and with unambiguous brevity. "What have I to do with predestination? Absolutely nothing." Whilst this was his opinion in 1745 it must not be thought that the years wrought any change of mind, for as late as 1788, less than three years before he died, he wrote to Lady Maxwell begging her calmly to consider:

"Would it be right for me to propagate a doctrine which I believe to be false? particularly if it were not only false but dangerous to the souls of men, frequently hindering their growth in grace, stopping their pursuit of holiness. And is it right in you to do this? You believe the doctrine of Absolute Predestination is false. Is it, then, right for you to propagate this doctrine in any kind or degree, particularly as it is not only false but a very dangerous doctrine,

"We are not to fight against notions but sins. Least of all should I advise you to open your lips against Predestination. It would do more mischief than you are aware of. Keep to our one point - present inward salvation by faith, by the divine evidence of sins forgiven." Letter Nov. 1747. Vol. 2. page 110

as we have seen a thousand times? Does it not hinder the work of God in the soul, feed all evil and weaken all good tempers, turn many quite out of the way of life and drive them back to perdition? Is not Calvinism the very antidote of Methodism, the most deadly and successful enemy which it ever had?"

It is imperative that one should note the ground of Wesley’s rejection of Predestination. He believed it to be Unscriptural, contrary to all sense of justice, and conducive to antinomianism. This latter danger seems to haunt him; for as he says:

"I dread every approach to antinomianism. I have seen the fruit of it over the three kingdoms."

Whether Wesley was as truly balanced in his judgment of antinomianism as he was of other things might be an open question. Observation should have convinced him that antinomianism was not the inevitable result of believing in predestination. There must have been many of his acquaintance (indeed: he admits there were) whose belief in predestinarianism manifested itself in a very vigorous moral character. Yet it cannot be denied that such belief/attendant with moral laxity. After all, if one’s salvation is assured why take thought for tomorrow? That antinomianism did not follow inevitably upon belief in the decrees only serves to show that "life is larger than logic". Concerning this point Principal Curtis observes: "From the Wesleys to William Booth, Wesleyan teachers have "abhorred" the Calvinistic

---

Letter Sep. 30th 1788. Vol. 8 page 95
Letter May 23rd 1768. Vol. 6. page 91
doctrine of the divine decrees as subversive of Divine justice and love, and of human freedom, responsibility, activity and hope, though as intensely practical and empiric thinkers, it might have occurred to them as a paradox, on that view, that Whitefield and countless other preachers and teachers in the orthodox Calvinistic succession had never been conscious of any such pernicious results of their views. But if Methodism be guilty of exaggeration and misrepresentation in its conception of the signification and the implications of the Calvinistic doctrine, as when it makes it teach that God passed over or damned the "rest of mankind" irrespective of their sin, its motive is of the highest, its purpose is intensely practical, and its own phenomenal success has vindicated it."

Now, this does not mean that Wesley "abhorred" everything associated with Calvin. Dr. Cell builds a very strong case for Wesley's Calvinian emphasis: its only weakness is that he does not give sufficient value to the evidence that weighs against him. If, as he observes, Wesley is not the man to run away from basic Gospel truth because Calvin taught it, he, on the other hand was not the man blindly to accept an opinion simply because Calvin had held it. Toplady was a faint and discordant echo of Calvin, but not so Wesley. If he was not a "creative genius", he was, in the very best sense of that much misused word, an "eclectic".

See Rediscovery of John Wesley page 249
By the time Wesley appeared to combat the evils of his age, and lead the Church to grand evangelical adventure, Arminianism had lost its first historical content, and had deteriorated until it was almost a synonym for Semi-Pelagianism or Socinianism. Yet this is a corruption of the teaching of Arminius himself. One might almost say that Wesley is a follower of Arminius because of his affinity with Calvin. As will be clear when Wesley's soteriology is examined in further detail, the effectiveness of his theology of redemption is due to the remarkable manner in which he preserves in a kind of theological equilibrium certain truths of historic Christian thought. The most significant thing about any synthesis is the point of view that governs the construction. In Wesley's case the pivot of his teaching was the reality of sin and man's need of God-given grace. On the point of Adamic corruption and salvation by grace alone he is one with Calvin; but equally so is he one with Arminius; for unadulterated Arminianism is a via media. It is a check on extreme Calvinism in the name of human responsibility; yet it is in fundamental sympathy with Protestant truth. Wesley uses Arminianism so as to mediate between the Sovereignty of Grace and the necessity of human responsibility in salvation. Its precise place in Wesley's theology is mainly defined by experience. To sum up Wesley's doctrine of grace and to anticipate his teaching of salvation one might say that his key idea is "Holiness". From this spring alike his doctrines of justification, regeneration, adoption, witness of the Spirit, sanctification,
and perfection, - all of which are the work of grace alone - and his hostility to predestination. This latter springs from his belief that predestination injures the Christian apprehension that redemptive love controls all God's relations with man. This, one feels, is even more important to Wesley predestinarian doctrine than the correlative conviction that it is conducive to antinomianism. Pregnant with this danger though it be. Indeed! Wesley's dread of antinomianism, is born of a concern to be faithful to the Holiness of God.

Wesley was firmly grounded in the theology of the past, but he was not simply an academic theologian, he was a seer. In summing up his teaching concerning man and grace it will be seen that he was as loyal to Reformed truth as was John Calvin; but in his denial of a limited Atonement there is heard the voice not of the scholastic and the metaphysician, but of one who had "nothing to do but to save souls;" and who boldly confessed "I look upon all the world as my parish". | To the free grace of God he ascribes all good. He denies all natural free will, and all power antecedent to grace. He allows no merit to man, even for what he does by the grace of God. Truly on this point he comes to "the very edge of Calvinism", indeed, "as it were within a hair's breadth".

| See Journal Vol. 2 page 218 |

june 11th 1739
Chapter 14

WESLEY'S DOCTRINE OF SIN
It is clear, then, that the doctrines of Man and Grace as taught by Wesley are the doctrines of the master-minds of the Christian faith. Without exception they share his conviction that man's plight is pathetic, and, apart from grace, irremediable. By them all man is regarded as the subject of redemption. The epitome of Wesley's teaching is the text of the first of his standard sermons - By grace are ye saved through faith. So it is now necessary to answer three questions:

1...From what is man saved?
2...By what is man saved?
3...Unto what is man saved?

The first question necessitates an analysis of Wesley's doctrine of sin; the second question an analysis of the process of salvation; and the third demands an analysis of his concept of Christian Perfection.

DOCTRINE OF SIN.

In a large measure this doctrine has been anticipated in what has been said of Wesley's doctrine of man and his need of grace. It will not, therefore be necessary to refer again to the doctrine of original sin, except to say that none of the attempts lately made to accommodate the prevailing humanism by denying Wesley's doctrine of original sin are possessed of foundation. Wesley's theology of sin - though not without its own peculiar difficulties - can never come to terms with humanism. As Dr. Cell remarks: "The Wesleyan picture of man as the subject of redemption is very black. It could not be blacker. Of course, the blackness has no meaning but in the
light of the Christian consciousness of salvation by faith and
of the unbounded efficacy of God's entire work of grace for us
in Christ, in us by the Holy Spirit. Now Wesley taught from
first to last, and with all energy, the doctrine of original sin
and total depravity. And he pushed this doctrine to the limit.
He did not temporize and tone it down. He did not qualify it.
He did not evade it. He did not shrink back from its unmitigated
offense to natural reason, nor yield an inch to the humanist
principles of the Enlightenment. He taught the doctrine of sin
harshly. He not only assumed the possibility; he also asserted
the fact of our being damned souls.*1

This, certainly, is a dark picture, and many will
pause to ask whether it is not too dark. Wesley, himself, seems
to feel that it is, for, as already noted, he sought by his teach­
ing of prevenient grace to account for the fact the divine Light
illuminates every man that cometh into the world. That no part of
man is free from taint, and that "self" and pride invade one's
holiest moments are facts that but little introspection will
establish. Yet Wesley's doctrine of sin has difficulties that
are peculiarly its own. When his doctrine of Perfect Love is
under review it will be seen that an inadequate analysis of sin
underlies many of the problems that he seeks to solve. As to
the fact of sin he has no doubt whatever, but his conception of
it as a "burden", a "stain", a "cancer" or as a "foreign body"
is, to say the least, defective. Nevertheless, whilst Wesley

*1 The Rediscovery of John Wesley, page 274
Nevertheless, whilst Wesley is faced in his doctrine of Perfect Love with problems that could not arise if he were completely Calvinist, he is not alone in his defective conception of sin; for even today we find certain of the psychologists falling into the same error. Dr. Hadfield, possibly through his early theological training, thinks of "complexes" as things to be eradicated: and, in my judgment, makes a completely false use of the analogy of shrapnel. A complex is not something the surgeon can extract, it is part of the personality: and if the complex should become morbid then an understanding of the psychology that has produced it becomes imperative. It is a misnomer to speak of the "eradication" of the complex; it is split up, and dissolved rather than uprooted. Psychoanalysis seeks to cure by removing those repressing forces which impede the flow of psychic energy, that the emotions now liberated may be harnessed for the upbuilding of a sound and healthy mental and moral life. It is true that the psychoanalysts do not speak of the eradication of the instincts - these are freed that they may be enjoyed - but in some cases there is a tendency to regard the morbid and anti-social expression of instinct as something that can be cut out in much the same way as the surgeon removes an appendix. Dr. Newton Flew, in his book "The Idea of Perfection" comments that "Wesley tends to speak of sin as a quantum, or hypostasis; as a substance which might be expelled, or rooted out, or as an external burden which might be taken away." He continues: "But sin
is not a mere thing. From a mere bundle on the back however burdensome a man may be delivered in an instant. How can he be delivered in an instant from that which he himself is? The man himself must be changed; and we are changed by the companionship of the Indwelling Spirit of God. It is singular that the sweeping condemnation of human nature into which Augustine, and Wesley after him, had fallen, actually tends to ignore the real strength and subtlety of moral evil as it appears in self-will. It is because sin is the depravation of faculties and instincts which are in themselves good, that sin is so hard to fight. And there is a constant tendency in any theory which goes back to Augustinianism to identify sin too exclusively with concupiscence. While it is therefore possible, and even likely, that a complete emancipation from certain lower and easily recognisable kinds of sin will be gained by any one who has entered into a new and transforming experience of God, it is not so likely that the subtler sins of Pharisaism will be once and forever uprooted in that same spiritual crisis.

I have long shared the opinion of Bernard Lord Manning that "Most men and women merely disgust us when they talk about their souls and their secret experiences;" but if I may intrude upon the examiners of this essay a purely personal note, I would say that Dr. Flew accurately delineates my own experience. In my early thirties my general health necessitated my consulting a medical psychologist and under his treatment

\[ The \text{ Idea of Perfection, pages 335-336.} \]
\[ The \text{ Hymns of Wesley & Watts, page 28.} \]
I received many salutary shocks. Very soon I was made to realise that my worst sins were not those that would have secured for me ecclesiastical censure; and also that my so thought virtues might not appear so noble in God's sight as they did in my own. In short my sins of pride were more effective in closing to me "the path of peace" than were my sins of passion. I had wanted to enter the "narrow gate" without first enduring that discipline that makes entrance possible. To say, as many do, that the gate is open and all who will have to only to walk in, is a false and dangerous over simplification. The crucifixion of one's desire to justify oneself is by no means easy; indeed! I believe it to be for most the supreme work of grace.

"Nothing in my hand I bring, 
Simply to Thy cross I cling"

is a truth one can sing about much more easily than embrace. To be brought to the point of such utter self-abnegation that one just accepts the proffered hand, is an experience that has to be known to be understood. Horatius Bonar sings:

"No, not despairingly
Come I to Thee;
No, not distrustingly
Bend I the knee:" but it is self-despair and self-distrust that impel the penitent to

"Groan the sinner's only plea:
God be merciful to me!"

and when humbled to very dust by reason of one's own impotence to pray:

"O remember me for good, 
Passing through the mortal vale; 
Show me the atoning blood, 
When my strength and spirit fail: 
Give my gasping soul to see 
Jesus crucified for me!"
Like many more who confess belief in salvation by faith alone, I tried by ascetic discipline to mortify the deeds of the body that I might present it "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God". I wanted to cut certain things out of my life. Frequently I found myself using such figures as "sloughing off the old skin", "lifting the burden" or "excising the cancer". It was only in the later stages that I turned to the idea of "rebirth" and "cleansing". It is often suggested that psychoanalysis is a menace to the Christian faith, but the statement is almost invariably made by those who know but little of the subject as a therapeutic agency. Without sharing the devotion of those who would elevate the "New Psychology" to the dignity of religion, I must yet confess that I found through it both liberty and peace. And why not? Surely God can use His own laws. To explain an experience psychologically does not explain it away. Facts are not vitiated because they are understood. When a soul finds peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ it can do no other than testify. This was the philosophy of the Evangelical Revival:

"What we have felt and seen,
With confidence we tell;
And publish to the sons of men
The signs infallible."

Some there are who know an "instantaneous" change, but there are others who only enter the kingdom through much tribulation. The danger is that each thinks that the other should enter by his way. The outstanding memories of my student days were the Class Meeting led by Dr. Henry Bett. His summing-up of the testimonies of the men, and his offering of his own, was always a benediction. Unwearingly he stressed two dangers:
the being changed but never progressing and remembering no crisis, and therefore thinking that there could have been none. The first type know the day and the hour, the experience is as a nail fastened in a sure place; but like the nail it tends to be a fixture. The others remember only the gracious influences of their home life, and testify that they cannot remember a time when they did not love God and want to serve Him; but because they have no "Damascus Road" experience of which to speak, they are troubled as to the "genuineness" of their inheritance. To these Dr. Bett stressed the Wesleyan doctrine of "Assurance", whilst to the former he urged the need to "grow in grace".

I would maintain that whatever be the "natural cause" of a soul's turning to God, it is, nevertheless, the work of the Holy Spirit. A terrifying dream may drive a man to seek a doctor's or minister's aid; but if that "aid" convinces him of his dire need of a Saviour, and becomes to him the means of his "being born again"; then I care not by what label the process may be denominated, his regeneration is the work of God. There are twelve gates to the New Jerusalem, and it is only bigotry to stereotype the means of grace. Our Lord, Himself, had stern words to say to those who would have "forbade" all who followed not with them. It is sometimes said that "Psychoanalysis" is dangerous; it is: But why should any assume that the travail of regeneration should be less painful or dangerous than that of physical birth. There has never been a time when the "new" was not looked upon with
suspicion by the traditionally minded. Nevertheless it is imperative that it be remembered that "time makes ancient good uncouth". Moreover it serves but little purpose to keep on pointing out the "failures" of the new. No philosophy or institution can be rightly judged on what it fails to do. By such a criterion the Church would stand condemned.

Charles Wesley wrote:

"Show me, as my soul can bear
The depth of inbred sin:
All my unbelief declare
The pride that lurks within."

and I unhesitatingly maintain that all means of self-revelation should be welcomed by those whose business it is to save souls.

Dr. Flew's emphasis, then, is not only pertinent but vital. The sins of money-loving, gluttony and sex are less insidious than the more respectable ones of pride, snobbery, and uncharitable speaking. As Professor Eric Waterhouse puts it: "One cannot resist the inference that our standards of wrong-doing are often artificial. A certain class of sin excludes a man from religious fellowship, whilst another class, less coarse perhaps but worse morally, is overlooked." The Pharisee is further from the kingdom of God than the harlot. This fact our Lord made crystal clear. Sin, then, cannot be limited to "voluntary transgression" as Dr. Tennant suggests: for although there is no denying the difficulties the dual use of the word

What is Salvation? page 150. N.B. The whole chapter from which this quotation is taken is well deserving of study.
"sin" creates for the doctrine of Christian Perfection, I am sure Dr. Flew goes to the very heart of the matter when he says: "The narrower sense is not even desirable." With true psychological insight he continues: "Our worst sins are often those of which we are unconscious. The stress on the consciousness and deliberate intention of the agent is the most formidable defect in Wesley's doctrine of the ideal. If only those transgressions are overcome are recognised to be transgressions by the agent, the degree of sanctification attained by him will depend on his previous moral development, on his own insight into motive, and on his knowledge of himself. And \( \gamma \nu \iota \theta \iota \varepsilon \alpha \lambda \mu \tau \omicron \omicron \omicron \nu \) is an infinitely difficult ideal. Many otherwise good people are unconscious of their own selfishness. The quarrelsome man genuinely thinks that every one is unreasonable but himself. The revengeful man believes that he is animated only by a proper self-respect. 'Moral evil', says Martineau, 'is the only thing in the creation of which it is decreed that the more we are familiar with it, the less we know of it......The blindness which is induced by all deliberate injury to our moral nature, and which thickens its film as the habit grows, is one of the most appalling expressions of the justice of God.' Such blindness may affect a whole community, accustomed to a moral evil which no conscience has ever challenged.

These considerations which hold good even of the commoner

By "dual use" I mean the use of the word "sin" to mean either deliberate transgression or sin-biassed disposition. The narrower meaning is that of action.
vices, the more flagrant sins, are true of the subtler and more deadly sins of the spirit. Pride in all its forms, vanity, egotism, spiritual complacency, a self-centred religion, the Pharisaism which is goodness, and yet is false goodness - all these forms of moral evil are most likely whose to appear in those lives are disciplined and virtuous."

It would be incredible if it were not demonstrable that sin can so often, and so easily, parade itself as virtue. Indeed! even repentance can be but the mask of egoism.

There will not be wanting those who will share the mind of Dr. Tennant and interrogate much of this. They will question whether the word "sin" can rightly be applied to an "unconscious disposition". They will hold that sin is the conscious and deliberate identification of oneself with what one knows to be wrong; that it is an act of personality, the essence of which is moral responsibility. They will ask "How can any be responsible for something of which they are not even conscious?" Now such questions are not without cogency, but it must be remembered that no one can sin unless he (or she) be possessed of sinful tendencies. There must be something within to which evil can make appeal. Is not this "something" "sin that dwelleth in me"? "Yes!" it will be replied, "but no man is responsible for the sinfulness of his disposition. That all inherit a bias towards evil is only too painfully evident; but it is only for actions of a free moral agent that any can be held accountable either to God or to society."

The Idea of Perfection, page 333.
Yet this is not satisfactory, for it is by no means a settled point that "unconscious sin" is the "contradiction in terms" Dr. Tennant suggests. Prima facie it would appear to be only common sense to maintain that "sin must connote only transgressions of a moral law by a moral agent" for "sins are volitions, and only volitions can be sins! But introspection and observation does not bear this out. Sinful nature finds expression in conduct that is not motivated. This no one can deny, but Dr. Tennant might reply that such "expression" might be baneful, but in so far as it was not motivated, it was not sin. In his book "The Substance of Faith", the late Dr. Oliver Lodge writes: "Sin is the deliberate, and wilful act of a free agent, who sees the better and chooses the worse, and thereby acts injuriously to himself and others." From this it follows that no sins can ever be committed in ignorance. Men may make mistakes, and costly ones, in ignorance, but no man can ever do wrong unless he knows that he is doing it. So return is made to the Socratic axiom "Virtue is knowledge". It is apparent to all that much harm is done and sorrow caused that is not intended. Who can deny that more harm is done for want of thought, than from want of heart? But is not this want of thought, sin? To say that most people are careless rather than deliberately vicious, does not, in my judgment, affect the issue: carelessness is a sin. Moreover, carelessness is not simply negative,
in that it is the positive act of not taking care. Even in law ignorance cannot be pleaded as excuse. So the argument that sin can only be ascribed to conscious and intended conduct is not so valid as it at first sight appears. But "the man in the street" will vigorously protest against being held responsible for conduct he does not motivate. In derision he may ask if he is to be blamed for his dreams. These, he may point out, are in a sense his own creation, they are the language of his unguarded or uncensored mind. The "evil desires" of his dream world are beyond his control, and in so far as he does not consciously desire them, he calls them "unconscious", and claims that it is nonsense to apply moral judgment to unconscious activity. Yet, as introspection proves, much conduct that passes as virtue is but the camouflage of sin. That this is so, is borne out by the distress of those upon whom full illumination has come. The difficulty of convincing those who plead that "unconscious sin" is self-contradictory, is due to the fact that self knowledge, as Dr. Flew observes, is "an infinitely difficult ideal". One of the problems and disappointments of the psycho-physician is the number of patients who from one cause or another stop short of self realisation. Dr. Howe writes "of the patient's flight from an intolerable threat of recovery". Knowledge of one's self can be very

Motives and Mechanisms of the Mind, p. 246.
This book is a remarkably stimulating work and should be read by all who seek to understand those conflicts that rend the soul.
humbling; and the travail by which it is secured scares many of those who need it most. Dr. Sangster in his recently published book "The Path to Perfection" turns his attention to this subject in his analysis of Wesley's "Idea of sin", but, whilst he does not rule out the concept of unconscious sin, leans to Wesley's view - which is also Dr. Tennant's - that sin should be only used, conscious activity, whether it be of desire or conduct. He gives full place to the fact that "'the heart is deceitful above all things" and 'desperately sick', and that there is no man with a modicum of ability at introspection but has marvelled at the artful stratagems and rationalisations of his own mind. He sees that sin ensnares him in subtle ways. He notices how selfishness can masquerade on the stage of his own mind as generosity, or sacrifice, or service." Yet, having made these observations he steers away from the conception of "unconscious sin" by commenting, "it is clear that the students of sin had not really focussed their problem while they held to the ill-defined terms "conscious" and "unconscious" and neglected the wide area which lay between".

The crux of the problem is in the definition of unconscious. This is by no means an easy task, for whether or not the unconscious is a valid hypothesis is much disputed, some eminent psychologists rejecting the idea altogether. In attempting to arrive at a working definition it will be well to distinguish between "conscious", "sub-
consciousness" and "unconscious". Consciousness, being an ultimate, is indefinable. But, being immediate experience, we all know what it is. "Whatever we are when we are awake" says Prof. G.T. Ladd, "as contrasted with what we are when we fall into a profound and dreamless sleep, that it is to be conscious." Psychologists have compared consciousness to a field of vision, in which there is a small region referred to as the focus-point. It is a very limited area that may be clearly seen without any movement of the eyes, and outside of which everything is more or less blurred. Now, on this analogy, those mental impressions which are clear are in the focus of consciousness. They are referred to as "conscious". But there are other impressions, which though not in the focus of consciousness, form part of our mental experience at any given moment. These are "sub-conscious", they are only brought into consciousness by an act of attention. This term is also applied to sensations of which one is unaware singly, but which are experienced in the mass. In standing on the sea shore, I do not hear the individual waves, but I hear the roar of the sea. The individual sensations are sub-conscious. By certain psychologists (Professor Thouless amongst others) "sub-conscious" is often used as the equivalent of "unconscious". This is a mistaken and misleading usage. It is essential for clear thinking on the subject of sin to distinguish clearly between these two terms, and also between the "sub-conscious" and the "pre-conscious". Here again Dr. Thouless tends to identify the two, although there is a
a marked difference. Baudouin in "Suggestion and Auto-
Suggestion" explains the pre-conscious as "a region of the
mind containing memory traces which can be aroused only by
exceptionally strong stimuli, or by special effort." It is
between
the transitional region/sub-conscious and the unconscious,
and contains not-conscious mental processes which can be
brought into the field of consciousness. This must not be
confused with the "unconscious", which is the region of the
inaccessible, containing repressed wishes, and desires that
rise up into consciousness only in disguise.

The term "the unconscious" is really a technical
one, in fact it could be called "copyright". Its meaning
is very different from that of common parlance. Usually
when one speaks of being "unconscious" he means insensible.
The state produced by a heavy blow on the head, or the
resultant of an anaesthetic. Yet, digestion is normally
an unconscious process, and none of us are really conscious
of our dispositions, nor yet of our knowledge when it is
not being thought, nor of our memories when they are not
being recalled. But, it is not to any of these that we
refer when we speak of "unconscious sin". The agent is not
insensible, he knows what he is doing, but very probably does
not know the primary motive that prompts his doing it. His
conduct may have all the semblance of virtue, and yet be
immoral. He may be guilty of "unconscious sin", and the
fact that he does not know that it is sin, only makes his
condition the more deplorable.
If it be replied that "unconscious sin" destroys moral responsibility by reducing man to an automaton blindly impelled by the dictates of his "unconscious"; I can only say that experience does not bear this out. Without self-knowledge and self-acceptance self-control becomes a difficult ideal, but it is not an impossible one. Repression can become a bulwark of morality. But with the dawning of true self knowledge there comes power, in that it delivers one from the crippling bondage of self-righteousness. Moreover freedom in this respect is productive of two closely allied virtues: less readiness to judge others, and a greater readiness to judge charitably should judgment prove inevitable. There is truth as well as charity in the French proverb "Tout comprendre, c'est tout pardonner." The individual who has learnt the difficulty of evaluating his own motives does not readily sit in judgment of the conduct of others, when, in the very nature of things, he cannot be acquainted with their mental processes. Further he has already learnt that in trumpeting abroad his judgments he is revealing his own secret weaknesses. Not only in my own experience, but in that of many others who have asked my help, I have learnt that nothing antagonises us so much in others as to see in them our own unconscious faults. When our wrath, like David's is "greatly kindled against the man", it requires no Nathan to show to us the reason. It is not only Christian charity, it is worldly wisdom to "Judge not, that we be not judged". And so by experience rather than by academic theory I find

| See II Samuel 12. 5-7 & cp. with Hadfield Psychology and Morals, p. 35. |
myself in entire agreement with Dr. Flew's statement: "Our worst sins are often those of which we are unconscious. The stress on the consciousness and deliberate intention of the agent is the most formidable defect in Wesley's doctrine of the ideal."

In justice to Wesley it must be said that he used the thought forms of his own age, and if neither he nor Toplady got far beneath the surface of things, they at least knew that there was something terribly wrong with human nature, and laboured to convince man of his peril and point him to his Saviour. Further it must be credited to Wesley that whatever defect his definition of sin may have, it at least possessed the virtue of clarity. It was a very workable hypothesis. Moreover, it must not be thought that because Wesley stressed "transgression" he conceived of sin only in terms of overt action; for whilst sin was always volitional, he so connoted "action" as to include acts of thought and desire. Sinful imaginations were sinful acts. Wesley knew both human nature and the New Testament too well to miss the inwardness of sin. He had never heard of the endo-psychic principle but he was well aware of its phenomena.

The Idea of Perfection, page 333

See Matthew 5: 21-30

"We still speak as though temptation came from without whereas no temptation would have the slightest effect were it not that it appealed to some desire within us, which normally we suppress. We are not tempted by the world, the flesh and the devil, but by ourselves."

There are yet two main points of Wesley's doctrine of sin to be noted: and these are his teaching concerning "Sin in Believers", and the "Origin of Sin". As the former constitutes one of his difficulties for his doctrine of "Perfect Love", I will return to it at a later stage. For the present it is enough to say that "original sin" and "total depravity" are the foundation on which he builds; and for him sin is the violation in thought and deed of the known law of God. Unlike Toplady, Wesley is concerned with the origin of sin. Toplady was satisfied that Romans 5.12., contained more wisdom than all the ancient philosophies put together. As already noted, he is satisfied to account for the origin of sin, by saying that it was decreed of God before all time; and that it came into the world by man, who although morally perfect - rather than morally innocent - was able to succumb to the allurements of a literal Eden. Wesley believed as surely as did Toplady in the literal garden; and thought of man, not as becoming, but already "made perfect". Attainment was not a goal, for Adam was already the finished paradigm of the divine perfection. He was, according to Wesley's sermon on Justification by Faith, holy, merciful, pure, perfect, even as was God.

"By the free, unmerited love of God, he was holy and happy: he knew, loved, enjoyed God, which is, in substance, life everlasting. And in this life of love he was to continue forever, if he continued to obey God in all things; but if he disobeyed Him in any, he was to forfeit all. 'In that day', said God, 'thou shalt surely die.' Man did disobey God."

See page 256  I See page 307

Standard Sermons (Sugden's edn.) pages 116-7
This disobedience resulted in moral and spiritual death. Thus by a literal interpretation of an ancient legend, Wesley is able to account for the bias towards evil which is the inheritance of all mankind. Along truly traditional lines and by uncritical use of his materials he is able to adduce a gospel of salvation by faith from the narratives of early Babylonian and Hebraic science. It is apparent today, as the result of scientific advancement in general, and the findings of anthropology and ethnology in particular, that no such "Golden Age" as implied by the legend of the "Garden of Eden", ever existed. Man is what he is by reason of an age-long struggle with his brutish inheritance. Very slowly has he "moved upward, working out the beast". The "Garden story" is a poetic, yet sublime, description of man's emergence as a moral being: able at last to wed the utilitarian and the aesthetic; and to recognise that those powers that linked him to the dust, could, and should, be subordinated to that greater power that bespoke his reception of the "breath of life". It is, however, not necessary to be able to rationalise the problem of evil before offering to mankind the sovereign specific for every ill of the spirit. The Gospel is "the power of God unto salvation", and its effectiveness is in no way dependent upon, nor vitiated by an ignorance of, the metaphysic of evil. "It is not necessary to solve the universe, explain all creation, or give a metaphysic of the existence of evil before we can learn to put our trust in God, experience saving faith in Jesus Christ and enjoy the blessings of salvation. There is a very large element in Wesley's doctrine
of sin that instead of being, as he supposed, essential to
the gospel, has as little foundation and warrant in the higher
ranges of Hebrew and Christian thinking as it has in the work
of modern science." Nevertheless, it is at least a tribute
to Wesley's intellectual industry that he did not brush aside
the difficulties the fact of evil creates for Christian Theism.
Whilst, like our Lord, he preached salvation from sin, rather
than philosophised concerning its origin, he yet faces squarely
"The Cosmic Problem of Evil". As early as 1729 Wesley came to
grips with this subject on reading the work of Archbishop King,
"De Origine Mali"; and as late as 1751 he resolved to refute
the Pelagianism of Dr. Taylor, embodied in his treatise on
"Original Sin". In the form of a dilemma - God is either not
Omnipotent or He is not good - John Stuart Mill reduced the
three questions of Epicurus. If it be said that God is either
unable or unwilling to prevent evil, it must be replied that
Mill's dilemma offers a false antithesis. God could have
prevented sin by simply abstaining from creative activity. Had
He never created man there could have been no possibility of
sin; but equally so, could there have been no possibility of
love. God, who is love, created in the knowledge that a being
who could not sin could not love; but foreknowing the sin of
His creature, He redeemed him before creation. Today, children
are born into a world that lieth in the evil one, but equally
so are they born into a world that is love redeemed. The Lamb

| Cell. The Rediscovery of John Wesley, page 289 |
of God was slain before the foundation of the world. The possibility of sin was the risk God had to take in the creation of a morally free agent. To speak (as does Dr. R.J. Campbell) of "an experiment without risk of failure" is to be guilty of self-contradiction. It is the nature of experiment that it contains the risk of failure. Albeit many recognise this truth in every sphere save that of religion. Further, if divine foreknowledge saw that there would be failure it also saw that there would be remedy, and that out of the failure with the remedy, there would issue, as there has issued, moral good which would have been impossible from a world of creatures incapable of sin. As to the accompanying mystery of moral evil, with its consequences of suffering, none are able to judge the whole case. For as was said by Lotze towards the end of his great work "Microcosmus": "No one has here found the thought which would save us from difficulty, and I, too, know it not." Yet, the only way in which sin could be absolutely prevented, would be by the creation of non-moral beings. In which case goodness too would be prevented. There can be no guarantee, short of absolute compulsion, that any modification of circumstances would prevent sin. And the compulsion of a free being is unthinkable. But "such a view it may be said" to quote Professor J. Ward, "lets contingency into the very heart of things. It is true. I not only admit it, but would contend that any other word would be meaningless. For contingency is not that of chance but that of freedom. Were we the creatures of a blind mechanical necessity" - and we should have to be
if circumstances could be so modified as to prevent sin - "there can be no talk of ideal standards of thought or of conduct: no meaning, no reason at all."

Wesley clearly realised this, and whilst his chief concern was to preach rather than to rebut heresy, he was not so "puny" a "tadpole in divinity" as to be in ignorance of the problems that had confronted the ages. Vigorously he rejected predestinationism, dualism, and pantheism as a solution; and even more vigorously did he proclaim the gospel of a full and free salvation "to every one that believeth."

His bondage, however, to a literal interpretation of Scripture resulted in a theology that was not completely free from Rabbinic dogmatism. In the light of his training and environment St. Paul is remarkably untrammeled by Rabbinicism; yet he is not entirely free: and it is the Hebraic residuum that influences his conception of the Fall: a conception that has for centuries kept theology in bondage. Wesley inherited the Pauline tradition and reverently, but uncritically, he made the Fall story the basis of his doctrine of sin. In brief, Wesley's teaching concerning sin, original sin and total depravity, is the teaching of the XXXIX Articles, the Westminster Confession of Faith; the teaching of Luther, Calvin, Arminius, Augustine, and of St. Paul. How wide of the mark, then, were very many of the

Naturalism & Agnosticism, vol.2; page 280
An Old Fox Tarred and Feathered, Toplady's Works, vol.5 page 442.
brickbats hurled at Wesley by Toplady, Hill, and their fellow-Calvinists. To assert, as they did with language more becoming to barges than theologians, that Wesley denied Original sin, the depravity of man, and justification by faith alone, is the veriest nonsense: and throws into bold relief the tragic fact that such can be the blindness of truly good men that they can "satiate, without restraint, the exquisite rancour of theological hatred." The falsity of their charges is evidenced by the plain words of Wesley's doctrines as found in his polemical treatises and in his letters. With regard to the denial of original sin and of Justification by Faith, Wesley says:

"Not guilty. They are entirely false. No man that ever lived, not John Calvin himself, ever asserted either original sin, or justification by faith, in more strong, more clear and express terms, than Arminius has done. These two points therefore, are to be set out of the question: In this respect, there is not a hair's breadth difference between Mr. Wesley and Mr. Whitefield."

In his letters too, Wesley flatly contradicts the heresies of which he is accused. To John Newton he wrote:

"I think on Justification just as I have done any time these seven and twenty years, and just as Mr. Calvin does. In this respect I do not differ from him a hair's breadth."

---

Vol. X of Wesley's Works. Entitled "Treatises".
"What is an Arminian?" Vol. X page 359
Wesley's doctrine of sin is clear enough. However defective his definition may be, there is no questioning his accent on the reality of sin. It is from sin that man needs to be saved; and by God-given faith he can be saved, and unto the uttermost. At no time does Wesley stop short of this conclusion. A partial salvation means a partial Saviour. Firmly did he maintain — as against Toplady — that perfection was the end of man's spiritual quest on earth; and that it was not to be thought of only as a post mortem state. So Wesley preached salvation from sin, immediate justification by faith in Christ, and perfect love to mark the sanctified. But before turning to examine the doctrine of Christian Perfection it is necessary to give, at least, a passing glance at the doctrines of Justification, Regeneration and Adoption: and by doing so supply an answer to the second question, "By what is man saved?"

I have already emphasised that Wesley was unquestionably loyal to the Luther-Calvin emphasis on justification by faith. Much written against him by Toplady and others charging him with justification by works is simply ludicrous. With Wesley's published and oft repeated utterances before them, it is almost incredible that intelligent men could so misread his witness. His anxiety to safe-guard his converts from the perils of antinomianism led him to stress "works worthy of repentance" and demanded that the convert should evidence his repentance by his works; but at no time does he admit the merit of works, or suggest that they have any saving power. It is true that in his emphasis on inward holiness Wesley reveals a definite
affinity with Roman Catholic piety; nevertheless, nowhere is there any suggestion of works of supererogation, or even meritorious works. Wesley's concern for holiness is inseparably joined with the Reformation truth that salvation is by grace through faith; yet he unhesitatingly affirms that faith must issue in works. Wesley was in the best sense of the word "Catholic". He embraced what was best in the Catholic tradition and wedded it to the Reformed Faith. He is at one with Calvin in his emphasis on the promise and power of grace; and he is equally at one with Thomas A'Kempis, and with all who have made holiness the quest of life. Indeed! I would maintain that it is just here that the eclectic genius of Wesley is best seen. The divine causality of all that appertains to salvation is the bed-rock of Wesley's teaching; nevertheless, he was too acute not to realise the perils attendant upon preaching justification by faith alone, and always insisted that justification must be accompanied by the new birth, and followed by progressive sanctification. Faith must issue in works: imputed righteousness must be manifested in inherent righteousness. All his insistence that man experience the "vast inward change" of regeneration, that there ensue an unceasing struggle against sin in sanctification, supports this point: and at the same time provides a sufficient answer to such as S. Baring Gould, who would accuse Wesley's theology of moral shallowness. This wedding of two vital truths is not the least contribution the Evangelical Revival made to Christian

See "The Evangelical Revival" pp. 54, 105, 113, 131.
thought. "Historically Wesley had almost the same epochal relations to the doctrinal emphasis upon holiness that Luther had to the doctrinal emphasis upon justification by faith, or that Athanasius had to the doctrinal emphasis upon the Deity of our Lord."

Holiness is Wesley's key idea. The inexhaustible and unmerited grace of God must issue in holiness. His emphasis on the depravity and inability of man is as strong as that of Toplady, and shows how vital his apprehension of God's holiness is. Moreover his insistence on the promise and power of God's free grace to make man perfect reveals a profounder recognition of God's love than does the teaching of Toplady, who although he preached a sovereign grace, would not allow that it could accomplish a sovereign work. The positive affirmation of the Holy Love of God underlies all Wesley's teaching. His doctrines are riveted to it. Thus the doctrine of man asserts that God creates a human soul out of love; the doctrine of the Trinity is governed by the conviction that three Persons communicate love to man; the doctrine of God affirms that love "obligates" the other divine attributes, including God's will. The Incarnation and the Atonement witness to the manner in which God has so redeemingly loved the world. The Holy Spirit, makes known this love which, as grace, achieves the entire work of salvation; justification is an experience in which divine justice is reconciled by divine love; adoption and the witness of the Spirit are distinctive marks of God's favour; sanctification

is an experience in which the constraint of divine love impels the believer to conquer sin and cultivate the disposition and practice of love; and finally, Christian Perfection represents the heights of salvation to which divine love can raise man.

It is not, however, enough to write that Wesley's doctrines are founded on his intuition of the love of God only in the sense that the entire work of salvation is accomplished by grace alone: it must be further pointed out, that Wesley's apprehension of a certain quality of that love, namely that with which it confronts man with the promise of a perfect salvation. It gives him the assurance that it is able to achieve this promise. When considered as grace, divine love does not only horizontally extend through and sustain salvation, it adds a further dimension, the soaring promise of perfection. Thus in his intuition that, as grace, divine love communicates the promise of God to make men perfect, I would maintain, that Wesley evinces a profounder fidelity to the Christian conception of salvation than does Toplady. Toplady believed grace to be irresistible, but Wesley believed it to be omnipotent. Toplady had emphasised God's love in terms of sovereignty, but Wesley preferred paternity to regality, and taught God's Sovereignty in terms of love, which was free to all, and free in all. Wesley's God is Father of all. He is King of all, but His Sovereignty is manifest in the Holy Love that constrained Him to give "His only begotten Son" as "a full, perfect, sufficient sacrifice, and oblation for the sins of the whole world."
It was Wesley's conception of the holiness of God that impelled his rejection of Toplady's doctrine of Predestination; and whilst both preached salvation by faith alone, Wesley was more alive to the perils of this doctrine than was Toplady: who, although he railed against Methodism as being but "varnished antinomianism," did not seem to appreciate that this was the besetting peril of those who believed their salvation to be infallibly accomplished by virtue of the eternal decree. Belief in Election has produced a very vigorous type of character: antinomianism is by no means the inevitable consequence of such belief. But that it permits of the possibility is too patent to be denied. Wesley was well aware of this danger to his own societies, even though predestination was not preached. If all is of grace, then works do not matter. This conclusion may be logical, but it is unquestionably unethical; and Wesley (essentially pragmatical) demanded that sanctification be the proof of justification. The idea that good works possessed "merit" or were a "condition" of salvation he rejected as Romish.

"The doctrine of Justification and Salvation by Faith are grievously abused by many Methodists. We must guard as many as we can." Letter to John Fletcher, August 18, 1775. Letters, Vol. 6, p. 175.

Compare this with the strong denunciation of the "cant" word called "Gospel sermon" contained in a striking letter to Miss Mary Bishop. Letters: Vol. 6, pages 326-7
Yet, unhesitatingly he affirmed that those who continued in sin were not justified, and that even the grace of justification necessitated good works in order to its full enjoyment. To Mrs. Pawson of Edinburgh he writes:

"I thank you for the clear and circumstantial account you have given me of the manner wherein God wrought upon your soul. As He wrought the work both of justification and sanctification so distinctly you have the less temptation to cast away your confidence. But you cannot keep it unless you are zealous of good works. Be fruitful, therefore, in every good work, and God shall see very soon His whole image."

This raises two questions: (1) If good works are to evidence one's justification, what of good works before justification; and (2) Is salvation in any way conditioned by man's conduct? This first question reveals Wesley as the victim of his own logic. At the outset of his ministry he denied the possibility of any good works before justifying grace had become efficacious through the agent's belief in Christ; but later, when confronted by the fact that unregenerate people did do good works, he changed his mind. Quotations from his own writings will make clear the maturing of his thought on this subject. In his sermon on Justification by Faith he declares:

"If it be objected, 'Nay, but a man, before he is justified, may feed the hungry, or clothe the naked; and these are good works,' the answer is easy: He may do these, even before he is justified; and these are, in one sense, 'good works' they are 'good and profitable to men.' But it does not follow, that they are, strictly speaking, good in themselves, or good in the sight of God. All truly good works (to use the words of our Church) follow after justification; and they are
therefore good and 'acceptable to God in Christ,' because they spring out of a true and living faith.' By a parity of reason, all works done before justification are not good, in the Christian sense, forasmuch as they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ (though (often) from some kind of faith in God they may spring); 'yea rather, for that they are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not' (how strange soever it may appear to some) 'but they have the nature of sin.'"

Wesley seeks to prove this by a syllogism which runs thus:

"No works are good which are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done: But no works done before justification are done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done: Therefore, no works done before justification are good."

The first premise Wesley holds to be self evident, and the second "equally plain and undeniable"; but does seem to recognise that he is really begging the whole question in his second premise. On what authority does he say that "no works done before justification are done as God has willed and commanded them to be done"? He maintains"that all our works should be done in charity (ἐν ἀγάπῃ) in love, in that love to God which produces love to all mankind." But it is surely not the right of any to say that no man can do anything in love prior to his conversion. Moreover, Wesley's exegesis here is very questionable; he greatly strains the Pauline commendation to the quarrelsome Corinthians; "Let all that you do be done in love." (I Cor. xvi. 14) The text will not bear the meaning he seeks to put upon it. With maturer thought he is led to see that the man whom he described as an "Almost Christian" was much more imbued with the spirit of Christ

Sermon 5. pages 123-4. (Sugden's edn.) ¶ &¥ ibid.
than many who were ready to announce the purity of their creed, and yet belie it by the impurity of their lives. In the "Minutes", Friday August 2nd, 1745, it is recorded:

"Q.7. Have we duly considered the case of Cornelius? Was he not in the favour of God, when his 'prayers and alms came up for a memorial before God'? i.e., before he believed in Christ? A. It does seem that he was in some degree. But we speak not of those who have not heard the gospel. Q.8. But were those works of his splendid sins? A. No; nor were they done without the grace of Christ. Q.9. How, then, can we maintain that all works done before we have a sense of the pardoning love of God are sin? And as such, an abomination to Him? A. The works of him who has heard the gospel and does not believe are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done. And yet we know not how to say that they are an abomination to the Lord in him who fear- eth God, and from that principle does the best he can."

Here Wesley's common sense rescues him from the thraldom of an a priori theological concept that was not borne out in experience. Not - let it be said again - that Wesley recognises any merit in man's work as a justifying agency; the best any can do is the least he ought to do; and that best, even though it reach the heights of rectitude, has no atoning efficacy for past sins. Unwaveringly he held to that truth of which Toplady so sweetly sang:

"Not the labours of my hands
Can fulfil Thy law's demands:
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears for ever flow,
All for sin could not atone:
Thou must save, and Thou alone."

Is there, then, no value whatever in the labours of my hands, or in my flowing tears? The answer is both Yes! and No! My tears cannot wash away my sins, nor the labours of my hands undo a single consequence of either my passion or my pride; but both can evidence the sincerity of my repentance: and
repentance is the only condition of salvation that God requires of me. "But" it may be asked, "does this not deny the doctrine that salvation is the gift of God, and that it is unconditionally offered?" To suggest that God makes His gift depend on a certain attitude of the recipient, savours of salvation by works, even though that work be only the work of repentance. Toplady denied any condition. According to him, repentance was not an act of man; it was the working of the Holy Spirit within man so as to give effect to a predestined grace. This, however, reduces man to an automaton; and, as such, he cannot repent. *Metavoma* cannot be ascribed to a machine. By grace I am convicted of sin, and by that grace I am brought to see my utter helplessness; but when I am truly sorry and stretch out my hand to receive "the gift of God", it does not cease to be an undeserved gift; nor does it cease to be the movement of a free moral agent. In the Minutes of 1770 Wesley records:

that man is saved "not by the merit of works, but by works as a condition."

and goes on to suggest that the controversy of the century was in large measure due to loose terminology. Dr. Burt Pope has given lucid expression to Wesley's doctrine in his Compendium of Theology. He prefaces his section on "Repentance and Faith" by saying: "As the conditions of that salvation which is the personal possession of the common heritage, Repentance towards God and Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ are always united in the New Testament. They cannot be separated, as repentance implies pre-existing faith, and faith implies pre-existing repentance. But they differ in this, that faith is the instru-
ment as well as the condition of individual acceptance; and, as such, springs out of and follows repentance. Both are produced by the preliminary grace of the Holy Spirit, but not perfected without the concurrence of the will of man. Though both are only introductory to the state of grace, properly so called, faith in its saving exercise is the transition point where the state of conviction passes into the life of Christ.

If it be urged that salvation is not effected in time, but in eternity; and that God has forgiven us before we sin, let alone before we repent; it must be replied that salvation is an experience of man as well as the gift of God. All that God could do to save man was done when "The Lamb of God was slain before the foundation of the world"; but not even God can save from the poison of sin those who refuse the antidote of grace. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" asks the Apostle. There is only one answer. We can not escape. Even Omnipotence cannot save an unrepentant soul - for nothing can be got into a closed heart. It may, of course, be questioned whether any heart is completely closed. Many will rejoice with Adelaide Anne Proctor,

"That in the darkest spot of earth
Some love is found."

God

It may well be that the grace of will win its widening way until "in the name of Jesus every knee shall bow". The old theology

that ended the probation of man with the grave, preached
either a decreed salvation (i.e. a compelled salvation, which
is a contradiction in terms) or suggested that God's grace was
terminated at death; and that it lay within the will of the
mortal to resist the eternal will. Obviously if God can be
resisted eternally He is not supreme. He has created a will
stronger than His own - a manifest impossibility. So one
is constrained to believe either in a deliverance only of the
elect (with all its ethical inconsistency) or in the ultimate
salvation of all. It is a curious thing that Calvinism which
has been held to dishonour God by suggesting that He cares only
for a remnant of His creation, should contain that universal
hope more surely than those systems of thought that have
opposed it. May it not be that God has a purpose in the lives
of all, and that he has eternally predestined the salvation of
us all, not by an irreversible fiat, but by a love so tenacious
that it cannot let us go? Before the court of Agrippa, before
the accusing Jews, St. Paul asked "Why should it be thought a
thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?" and
if we grant the credibility of the Resurrection what difficulty
is occasioned by the belief that God will by the magnetism of
His love draw all men unto Himself? and not only now but through
out eternity. If on earth sin-burdened man is constrained
to sing:

"Thy condescending grace
To me did freely move;
It calls me still to seek Thy face
And stoops to ask my love."
Lord at Thy feet I fall!
I long to be set free;
I fain would now obey the call,
And give up all for Thee."

Why, with the tokens of Christ's passion exciting his wondering awe, should it be thought that it is impossible for the now contrite sinner to exclaim

"Nay, but I yield, I yield!
I can hold out no more,
I sink, by dying love compelled,
And own Thee conqueror."

Any suggestion of the "Larger Hope" would have been to both Toplady and Wesley the rankest heresy. They would have asked if man would not repent in this the day of his visitation, how could he repent in a land of shadows? Unfortunately, neither the theology of Toplady nor Wesley was founded on sufficiently sound a doctrine of God. As Dr. Newton Flew has put it: "The vision of God which was granted to the men of Wesley's day was not equal to the revelation of Him in the first three Gospels, if it be true that God is what Jesus is, in his inexhaustible interest in human life."

No theology that softens the doctrine of retribution will long remain, but equally unstable is one that can mete out "everlasting fire" as the consequence of temporal sin. God is not "soft" - His justice must be vindicated - nor is He vindictive. Hell will cease when sin ceases. Punishment and wrong-doing are rivetted together in the moral order; the soul that sinneth it shall die, but need it die eternally? In the light of the open tomb can we believe it will? If the Cross loses one soul it is not a perfect victory over evil.

\& \& New Methodist Hymn Book, 341
Are there any for whom Jesus died in vain? In moving phrase Dr. Russell Maltby writes of the tenacious love of God. "Our theological coat was cut for the figure of Total Depravity, but when it was tried on, it was found not to fit any kind of human nature. Accordingly we let out a seam in the back, as far as it would go, and the margin thus gained, with the stitches still showing, we called prevenient grace. Still the coat does not fit, for it is not by any afterthought that we can do justice to that boundless patience and holiness of God, which loves goodness everywhere, labours for it, and delights in it everywhere. We have often thought of God as though it were "all or nothing" with Him. But it is not true. In His mysterious humility He tends the last smouldering lamp in every rebellious heart.... It is He who defends the last strip of territory against the invasion of passion, when all the rest is gone, and raises mysterious defences about beleaguered virtues whose doom seemed sure. When He is denied or unrecognised in His own person, He still lingers about a man, dimly apprehended as a sense of duty, or as some indestructible principle, some notion of what is 'not cricket', some code of thieves, or He returns upon us in some New Thought, some shadowy Infinite, some impersonal Life-Force, some half crazy system like Christian Science, worshipping its fragment of truth—and so men entertain Him unawares. These vast tracts of the unbaptized human life we make over to poets, and novelists, and dramatists, who explore them with inexhaustible interest and sympathy. Yet
that interest and sympathy comes from God, Who loves this human life of ours, not only as a moralist approving where it is good, and disapproving where it is bad, but as a poet or artist loves it, because he cannot help loving a thing so strange, piteous, and enthralling as the story of every human soul must be."

A love which manifests such boundless patience cannot be defeated at the last. Sooner or later and whatever cost to Himself, the love of God will constrain man to surrender his will and enter into the fellowship of the redeemed in Christ. Toplady believed that God had created some souls only to destroy them; and that their destruction contributed to the happiness of the more fortunate elect. True! he is not quite so forthright in his presentation, but this is, nevertheless, the essence of his eschatology. If any soul is lost eternally, it can only be because God did not desire its salvation, or that his desire for its salvation has been frustrated. The latter is an impossible alternative to Toplady, and he does not lack the courage to assert that sin contributes positively to the glory of God. It means that His justice is made manifest to all creation; and ultimately the sufferings of the reprobated will add to the blessedness of the redeemed. Such a theory receives no countenance from Wesley, but his eschatology possesses the weakness common to 18th Century Arminianism. Although predestination is denied and the

sovereignty of God interpreted as sovereign love, he does not
go so far as to suggest that sovereign love will vindicate
itself in a sovereign and universal redemption. Wesley sees
the finally impenitent go to hell because of the wilfulness
of their impenitency; but according to Toplady the doomed
endure this fate because of an impenitency that was predetermined
of God. With a more enlightened conception of God, the theodicy
of Toplady and Wesley alike becomes untenable.

It now remains to look at Wesley's doctrine of
Justification in relation to his doctrines of Regeneration
and Adoption before turning to his doctrine of Sanctification.
Justification is by faith alone, but it manifests itself in
good works. Luther in his anxiety to rid himself of the Romish
doctrine of justification by works bequeathed a doctrine, which
though the treasured possession of the Reformed Faith, has
its own peculiar dangers. Wesley recognised this and united
both doctrines in a balanced synthesis, thus avoiding the snare
of antinomianism, whilst firmly holding to the divine origin
of all that appertains to salvation; a salvation that stopped
not short of the entire renewal and perfecting of the penitent
soul.

In his sermon on "The Great Privilege of those that
are born of God (which marks an advance in thought on the
previous sermon on "The Marks Of The New Birth", being more
mature, and less uncompromising in its tone) Wesley rejects the
idea that Justification and Regeneration are synonymous terms, though they may be identical in point of time. He maintains that they are fundamentally different. Justification secures a relative change, Regeneration a real one. By Justification God does something for man - He forgives him and acquits him as righteous; man is no longer an enemy but a son; he is restored to the Divine favour - but by regeneration the sinner is made into a saint. Something is accomplished within him rather than for him. He is literally remade spiritually. Justification frees from the guilt of sin, but regeneration from its power.

"But though it be allowed, that justification and the new birth are, in point of time, inseparable from each other, yet they are easily distinguished, as being not the same, but things of a widely different nature. Justification implies only a relative, the new birth a real, change. God in justifying us does something for us; in begetting us again, He does the work in us. The former changes our outward relation to God, so that of enemies we become children; by the latter our inmost souls are changed, so that of sinners we become saints. The one restores us to the favour, the other to the image, of God. The one is the taking away the guilt, the other the taking away of the power, of sin: so that, although they are joined together in point of time, yet they are of wholly distinct natures."

A reading of the artless, but touching, biographies found in the Early six volumes of the "Lives of Methodist Preachers" enables one to understand why Wesley was so convinced that justification and regeneration are "joined together in point of time". They contain the records of men who had been living in open defiance of the

Wesley's Sermons (Sugden's Edn.) Vol. 1. pp 299-300
law of God, and who yet had been changed by a miracle of grace, and, as far as Wesley could judge, instantaneously. Furthermore this seemed to him to bear out the accounts of conversion found in Holy Scripture, with which he held his own. Modern psychologists are inclined to doubt the theory of instantaneous conversion; and point out that even in cases so revolutionary as that of St. Paul's, there has been a long period of unconscious cerebration. What appears to be instantaneous is but the sudden flowering of the slowly growing tree. This is very probably true, but to the many who are unacquainted with psychological theory, this "sudden flowering" of the personality is inexplicable except in terms of instantaneous conversion. It is not merely a divine intervention, for all conversion is that, it is a divine intervention within the life of one who had never, consciously, given thought to the Divine. It appears to be an irrational experience. In a universe governed by ineffable wisdom this cannot be so, nevertheless, its explanation is doubtless one of those things that man does not know as yet. Whilst my own experience leads me to the belief that regenerating processes are often as slow and as painful as physical generation, I have yet known one case of radical conversion that was as perplexing as it was undeniable. At all events it was a sound intuition that led Wesley to insist on a clear and decisive act of faith as a means of regeneration. Today most can recall the happy day that fixed their choice, rather than the day on which the choice was made. The latter, I believe, is very often unconscious, but the fixing of the choice is a deliberate and conscious act of the will. It is one thing to "evolve" in a Christian home and atmosphere,
it is another to feel one's chains fall off. To know the
hour when "Jesus washed my sins away" is an experience that is
fraught with encouragement; and in the hour of adversity is
a rock of strength. Whatever storms may sweep the soul, the
remembrance of that divine visitation is a Bethel, a sanctuary,
and a dynamic. Wesley knew this, and wisely laid stress on
the act of "decision". He emphasised the immediate conscious­
ness of sonship. The struggling sinner did not get a little
better every day, but enjoyed a complete spiritual renewal.

It was an experience that permitted of no doubt. As Dr.
Sugden puts it: "The essential point is that one who has by
regeneration received the gift of life in Christ cannot but be
conscious of it." By regeneration the erstwhile sinner
enters the family of God: He is adopted. On this point Wesley
is somewhat confused. He writes as though regeneration and
adoption were two different operations of the renewing Spirit
of God, whilst the distinction betwixt the terms is largely
verbal. To be born of the Spirit of God is to be begotten into
the family of God. On this point Dr. Pope comments: "No terms
are more strictly correlative than regeneration and adoption.
They describe the same blessing under two aspects; the former
referring to the filial character, the latter to the filial
privilege. But they are not thus closely connected as cause
and effect; they are co-ordinate, and the link between them
is the common sonship. The assurance of filial adoption

See Sermon X 4-6
does not produce the regenerate life; nor does the infusion of the perfect life of regeneration of itself invest the children of God with all the prerogatives of heirship. Moreover, they are as distinct from the other leading blessings in the economy of grace as they are themselves united. " It is not possible to say whether consciousness of sonship precedes consciousness of the new life in Christ or vice versa; but the matter does not call for any final pronouncement in that the order is purely one of thought and not of time. It is enough to know that by faith in the regenerating grace of Christ we are adopted into the family of God and rejoice in all the privileges of sonship.

In the course of a brief outline of Wesley's theology it is not possible to deal adequately with such questions as the nature of regeneration and its relation to baptism; or to enter into a detailed analysis of Wesley's doctrine of the Witness of the Spirit; seeing that the purpose of this chapter is to show what Wesley had in common, and wherein he differed from his contestants, thus providing the necessary background to the theology of the controversy. Nevertheless a few words concerning the assurance of grace as witnessed by the Spirit is imperative, seeing that so many in Wesley's day were antagonised by those who dared to claim that they knew that their sins were forgiven. Such a claim was not only deemed to be blasphemy, but was socially unpardonable.

Pope, A Compendium of Theology, vol. 3. p.3.
Nevertheless, there were thousands who daily witnessed to the fact of their sonship; they knew their sins forgiven; and the Spirit of God witnessed to them, pardon, peace and joy. The "Witness of the Spirit" is an important doctrine in Wesleyan theology: and though Wesley was not always consistent in his presentation of the doctrine, his main purpose is clear enough. It has a subjective emphasis, but only that it might reinforce in the conscience of the believer the fact that God is the "Author and Finisher" of both faith and salvation. To any who might ask whether the experience was not delusional, appeal was made to the fact of the physical world. "How do we know it is there apart from direct sense experience?" Even so, by as direct and as an immediate experience the regenerate soul knew the witness of God's Spirit. They perceived it, as Descartes would have said, clearly and distinctly. Thinking of the interrogator Wesley says:

"I would ask him, that proposes this question, How does it appear to you, that you are alive? and that you are now in ease and not in pain? Are you not immediately conscious of it? By the same immediate consciousness, you will know if your soul is alive to God; if you are saved from the pain of proud wrath, and have the ease of a meek and quiet spirit."

Albeit this attempt at rationale is not free from difficulty. The analogy between things seen and felt by physical sense and things spiritually apperceived, is by no means conclusive. It is very easy to mistake the voice of one's own desire for the voice of God. Not a few people can discern the will
of God in whatever furthers their temporal interests, but have no such certainty in the hour of adversity. Although Wesley appeals to experience and asks,

"How do we distinguish light from darkness?"

he, nevertheless, realises that his argument is not conclusive; for he goes on to observe:

"To require a more minute and philosophical account of the manner whereby we distinguish these, and of the criteria, or intrinsic marks, whereby we know the voice of God, is to make a demand which can never be answered; no, not by one who has the deepest knowledge of God."

Still, Wesley firmly holds that even though no infallible explanation is possible, the subject of God's witnessing Spirit is under no delusion. When St. Paul was converted on the Damascus Road he boldly claimed to have heard the voice of Jesus speaking to him in the Hebrew tongue. Wesley says:

"He knew it was the voice of God. But how he knew this, who is able to explain? Perhaps neither man nor angel."

The final appeal, however, is to the moral conduct of the in whose lives regenerate, the fruits of the Spirit, and a "good conscience toward God;" are manifested.

It is interesting to note a strange inconsistency about Wesley's doctrine of the witness of the Spirit. He makes two statements that are on the face of them mutually exclusive. In one place he writes:

"That this testimony of the Spirit of God must needs, in the very nature of things, be antecedent to the testimony of our own spirit, may appear from this single consideration. We must be holy in heart, and holy
in life, before we can be conscious that we are so; before we can have the testimony of our spirit, that we are inwardly and outwardly holy. But we must love God before we can be holy at all; this being the root of all holiness. Now, we cannot love God till we know he loves us, 'We love him because he first loved us.' And we cannot know his pardoning love to us, till His Spirit witnesses it to our spirit. Since, therefore, this testimony of His Spirit must precede the love of God and holiness, of consequence it must precede our inward consciousness thereof, or the testimony of our spirit concerning them."

Here Wesley is stressing the fact that the testimony of God's spirit is antecedent to the testimony of one's own. For it is the Spirit of God that vitalises the conscience. Without God's Spirit intervening, the spirit of man would slumber in the sleep of sin, unable of its own volition to become aware of its perilous state. But when the witness of the Spirit of God (which is "an inward impression on the soul") is felt, then conscience is awakened and a life of ethical obedience becomes possible through grace. It is just here, however, that he contradicts himself; for in this same sermon he says:

"The Scriptures describe the being born of God, which must precede the witness that we are His children, as a vast and mighty change."

In the first case we are told that the work of Christ's Spirit is antecedent to our own; and in the second that the New Birth must come before we can know the witness of the Spirit. The antinomy, however, is resolved when it is remembered that a *συμπαραπάθεια* is being considered, i.e. the establishing the truth of testimony by the agreement of two

Sermon X, 8, p. 208. Ibid 5, p. 213. Sugden's Ed.
witnesses.

Whilst I am conscious that Wesley’s doctrine of
the Witness of the Spirit deserves more adequate treatment,
I must turn from it, seeing that it is not vital to the
theology of the controversy. Toplady had no quarrel with
St. Paul’s conviction that “The Spirit itself beareth witness
with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if
children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ”.
It was the doctrine of grace that was the stone of offence.
Toplady taught that salvation was for the elect only, and that
even they were perfected only in the hour of death. Wesley,
on the other hand, had proclaimed a free and full salvation for
“every fallen soul of man”, and that by an act of faith the
justified could “gain perfection’s height”. He believed as
ardently as did Toplady in Justification by faith alone, but
went further than Toplady and declared sanctification by faith.
Moreover, this sanctification could be attained NOW and NOW.
It was a deliverance from ALL sin; even inbred sin. Perfection
was no tantalising ideal, it was within the grasp of all, for
Christ, by the one oblation of Himself, once offered, had
destroyed sin. It was “slain”, “mortified”, “erased”,
“consumed”, “extirpated”, “dried up”, or “washed away”.
Toplady asked that he might hide himself in the cleft of the
“Rock of ages”, but Wesley prayed not only for sanctuary but

| Hymn 570 in F.J.H. “Holy, true, & righteous Lord.” |
that he may be rooted in God.

"Jesus, Thine all-victorious love
  Shed in my heart abroad;
  So shall my feet no longer rove,
  Rooted and fixed in God."

If Toplady had all the weaknesses of 18th century Calvinism, he was also possessed of all its virtues. The eternal God was to him the "Rock of Ages", but He was not only a refuge, He was a stone of sure foundation, upon which Toplady raised the edifice of uncompromising morality. His belief in God supplied the dynamic of faith and inculcated fortitude. The distinctive Calvinistic ethic is clearly manifested in Toplady: only one imbued with a sense of the awful majesty of God, and with the dread awfulness of sin, could have penned the words of "Rock of Ages". Yet, I believe that Wesley aspired to a greater height than Toplady. He did not only pray that he might be cleansed from sin's "guilt and power", but that he might be "changed from glory into glory", and know, amidst all the changing scenes of life

"A rest, where all our soul's desire
  Is fixed on things above;
  Where fear, and sin, and grief expire,
  Cast out by perfect love."

Toplady, like the generality of Calvinists, denied the possibility of perfection save in the moment of death, and so altered this hymn that it read:

"Then shall I sing, and never tire,
  In that blest house above,
  Where doubt, and fear, and pain expire,
  Cast out by perfect love."

Wesley insisted that perfect love be preached and thus made to religious thought a contribution that Prof. Cell has called
"an original and unique synthesis of the Protestant ethic of grace with the Catholic ethic of holiness". He goes on to say: "The special interest in and tremendous emphasis of early protestantism upon the doctrine of justification by faith......was reunited, as in the New Testament, with the special interest of Catholic thought and piety in the ideal of holiness or evangelical perfection." Toplady and Wesley, then, are representatives of two distinct types of piety - the Calvinist and the Catholic. Neither of them were enamoured of the Roman Catholic Church, but such was Wesley's catholicity of spirit that he could love the highest where ever he saw it. E. Doumergue, writing on the religious thought of Calvin, states: "It is the theologies of the enslaved will which have saved liberty; it is the theology of Salvation by Another than man which has saved human morality; it is the theologies of renunciation of the world which have saved man's mastery over the world; it is the theologies of man's renunciation of himself which has saved human personality; it is the theologies that preached love towards God alone which have saved love towards all men; it is the theologies of eternal predestination which have saved progress - even political and social progress; it is the theologies of heteronomy which have conferred on man an autonomy so fully master of itself as to be master of all else; it is the theologies that said 'God is all, man is nothing' which have made of man

| The Rediscovery of John Wesley, page 347. |
a force, an energy, a power incomparable and divine!"

This is a fine epitome of the religious and ethical power of Calvinism; and if, as Dr. Baillie suggests, there is "some tendency to overstatement", it is, nevertheless, basically true. Yet, its truth is a profound paradox. Belief in a fixed and settled order may result in the slow evolution of potentialities, it can never engender progress; for progress and evolution are not synonymous terms. Within a predetermined and fixed scheme of things evolution is possible but not progress. The acorn is a potential oak tree, but it can never be an ash. At best it can only unfold, it does not progress. Now! in a religious philosophy that attributes all things to an eternal and irreversible decree, all possibility of progress is ruled out: the issue is automatic, and progress is best understood in terms of freedom. Deny the existence of alternative moral choice and both freedom and progress are eliminated. And yet, it is just here that Calvinism has shewn herself to be greater

\[ E. Doumergue, Jean Calvin, Vol.IV, 'La pensée religieuse de Calvin,' p. 39f. Quoted from Prof. John Baillie's "Invitation to Pilgrimage" page 104. \]

\[ Florid art evolved out of the simpler, but it was not superior. In like manner the Roman Empire evolved out of the Republic but it was a degeneration morally. The polytheism of Virgil is later than that of Homer, and that of later Brahmanism is an emergence from the former, but these are not better ethically. In the Old Testament the priestly religion followed the prophetic but was retrograde. \]
than her creed. The fact remains that none are so free as
the divinely bound, and no people have progressed so surely
as those who believed they were simply fulfilling their
eternally decreed destiny. The spiritual and moral conquests
of Calvinism have been determinants of progress: this is simply
a fact of history. Why then has Calvinism stopped short of
belief in perfection? It may be answered that Calvinism has
never denied perfection, that Toplady equally with Wesley
believed in it. The only point of dispute was that which
centered around the time in which perfection was accomplished.
But in granting the possibility the Calvinists really give up the
point. As will be seen in the next chapter both Wesley
and his supporters pressed this question: "You believe that
sin can be radically dealt with in articulo mortis, why not
now?" If perfection is possible at all it must be before or
after death, and as the latter necessitates a doctrine of
purgatory, it would not have been acceptable to either Wesley
or Toplady. The latter held that by a stroke of the divine
power complete spiritual renewal was effected in the moment
the spirit forsook its tabernacle of clay; but Wesley claimed
that as we are justified by faith, so are we sanctified by
faith, and that the act of faith whereby sanctification is
secured could be made now. He endorses his brother's sentiments.

"Now let me gain perfection's height,
Now let me into nothing fall."

"In all the confidence of hope,
I claim the blessing now."

[1 New Meth. Hymnbook, 570. ]ibid 559
Nevertheless, I think it could be safely urged that Wesley believed with the Calvinists that for the majority of believers perfection was only reached in the article of death. Yet, although he never claimed perfection for himself he roundly asserted it of many whom he knew. Now, orthodox Calvinism cannot easily come to terms with any such claim. Holding as it does that the ground on which man stands before God is faith and faith alone, it suspects all doctrines of love and holiness as tending to lay another foundation than that which is laid. Certainly Toplady gave the idea no quarter. With the elegance of metaphor that marked his controversial writings he refers to the doctrine of perfection as "a tenet raked from the dunghills of pelagianism and ranterism." He maintained that it was a branch of Manichaeism and flatly contrary to the Scripture. The argument whereby Toplady seeks to establish this last point is "woefully weak. He bases it entirely on Romans 7. 14-25. Commenting on this account of the moral conflicts of St. Paul he observes:

"According to the account which St. Paul gives of himself, he no more dreamed of his being a self-determiner, than of his having attained to sinless perfection. No wonder that some flaming Arminians have a peculiar spite against this apostle!"

As this last taunt is undoubtedly directed at Wesley it is necessary to examine what he taught concerning perfection, to ask on what he based his argument, to note whether he was or was not consistent in the development of it, and lastly to estimate its significance for, and contribution to, theology as a whole.
Chapter 15

WESLEY'S DOCTRINE OF CHRISTIAN PERFECTION
Chapter 15.
Wesley's Doctrine of Christian Perfection

Wesley taught Christian Perfection. He believed that a heart meekly and submissively resigned to the will of God was filled with divine love and so ridded of all sin. Sometimes he called his doctrine Sanctification, or Entire Sanctification, and at others the term Perfect Love was used as expressing best what he had in mind. Wesley preferred the term Perfect love, and he would undoubtedly have been saved much fruitless controversy had he used no other. The word "perfection" so outraged his opponents, and called for such repeated and frequent definition that there were moments when he seriously considered abandoning it. Yet his main treatise on the subject is entitled "A Plain Account of Christian Perfection". This is supplemented by certain of his sermons, and magnificently expressed in his brother's hymns. Early in his Oxford days Wesley was awakened and profoundly influenced by reading Jeremy Taylor's "Rules and Exercises of Holy Living and Dying",

Writing of perfection he says: "I have no particular fondness for the term. It seldom occurs either in my preaching or writings." Letters v. p. 167.

To his brother Charles he writes: "I am at my wits'end with regard to two things - the Church and Christian Perfection. Unless you and I stand in the gap in good earnest, the Methodists will drop them both." v. 5. p. 88

Exactly one month to the day he writes again: "I think it is high time that you and I at least should come to a point. Shall we go on in asserting perfection against all the world? Or shall we quietly let it drop? We must do one or the other: and I apprehend the sooner the better. Letters: v. 5 page 93

46. Sin in Believers: 13. Circumcision of the Heart:
35. Christian Perfection.
Thomas A'Kempis's "Imitatio Christi", and William Law's two works "Christian Perfection" and "Serious Call"; and was convinced of the utter impossibility of being half a Christian. He was certain that the highest life possible, manifested in complete surrender of the will to God, and entire devotion to His service, was the least that a Christian could offer.

"Nothing less is due to Him who has given Himself for us, than we give Him ourselves, all we have and all we are."

Whilst Lesley's doctrine of perfection is not unassailable, his presentation of it is marked by sobriety and sanity. Again and again he was roused to contradict the statements others would have fastened upon him. His teaching is also marked by a negative and positive content. Abandonment from sin, and a love filled heart. In a letter to Joseph Townsend, Lesley tries to tone down the uncompromising nature of his teaching concerning perfection by suggesting that he only exhorted "believers to go on to perfection". In the main Lesley declares that perfect love can be enjoyed here and now as the result of an act of faith. Yet briefly his teaching amounts to this: we are either selfishly directed or God directed. God either controls the whole of our lives or else he shares control with another. Writing to Alexander Coates he stresses this point:

"To say Christ will not reign alone in our hearts in this life; will not enable us to give him all our hearts; this, in my judgment is making Him a half-Saviour. He can be no more if he does not quite save us"

Dr. New is much greater. Lesley drank deeply at the wells of the "mystical tradition of the past." See "Idea of Perfection" p. 315 & cp. "Northern Catholicism", p. 516
from our sins.——-Who honour Him most
those who believe He heals all our sick-
ness, takes away all our ungodliness, or
those who say, He heals only the greater
part of it, till death does what He can-
ot do? I know no creature (of us) who
says, 'Part of our salvation belongs to
Christ and part to us.' No; we all say,
Christ alone saves us from all sin: and
your question is not about the Author but
the measure of salvation. Both agree it
is all Christ: but is it all salvation or
only half salvation He will give?"

Wesley no more believed in a partial salvation for men, than
he believed in the salvation of part of mankind. A perfectly
saved soul is saved unto perfection. The difficulty of many
is occasioned by Wesley's use of the word "perfection". Reading
his sermons, tracts and letters, it is hard to escape the
conviction that he gave the term a connotation of his own.
Toplady roundly declared that "perfection will admit of no
degrees"; Wesley, on the other hand speaks of setting "perfection too high"
"ow, the man-in-the-street would agree with
Toplady and say that a thing is either perfect or it is not
perfect. If it possess the slightest flaw then it is not per-
flect. Whilst he might not express himself thus he would insist
that perfection is an ultimate and absolute. Obviously the
issue rests on definition. What did Wesley mean by perfection?


Gospel Magazine 1796. page 489

Letters. Vol. 5. page 20. cp. pages 38-41 & 93
The Universal Dictionary defines "Perfection" as the "Highest attainable or conceivable degree of absolute excellence in condition, quality or achievement; faultlessness"; and also as "Completeness; fullness of development; final stage in development." From this it is clear that perfection may mean two quite different things; faultlessness or maturity. As Dr. Bett expresses it: "Perfection may mean either "full-grown" or "flawless". Perhaps one might say that the one sense is actual and historical, and the other ideal and absolute. The one means that the flower is perfect in the sense that its beauty is the full development of the plant, the other means that the flower is perfect in the sense that it could not possibly be more beautiful than it is. The one sense is therefore dynamic, and the other static." In this he is supported by Professor H.A. Hodges who writes: "'Perfect' need not mean faultless; it can mean full-grown. The oak may be stunted and mutilated, but yet by the very fact of being an oak it is perfect in a sense which the best of scorns is imperfect. To Christian perfection may be simply the maturity of the Christian life." It is obvious that Wesley did not mean flawless, for he, as I have just pointed out, cautions against "setting perfection too high", and thus defeating one's purpose. Wesley thought of perfection as the full development of spiritual potentialities. He ever insisted that growth in grace was not a doctrine that any could ignore save at their peril: that even the "perfect" needed Christ "both as prophet, priest and king". He never expected infallibility. This he makes.

"The Spirit of Methodism", page 163
"A Neglected Page in Anglican Theology" p. 108.
Letter, Sep. 11th 1762. Vol. 4, page 180
crystal clear in his sermon on "Christian Perfection".

Christians, he asserts, are not perfect in knowledge, for they only know in part. They are not free from mistake in things unessential to salvation. They may wrongly interpret the Scriptures. Moreover they are not free from infirmities, and not only physical infirmities, but all those inward or outward imperfections which are not of a moral nature: and as temptation is essential to the building of character, they are not free from temptation. Wesley is satisfied that there is no inconsistency in asserting the Christian perfection of those who are yet possessed of many flaws. His letter to Miss March is worth quoting on this point.

"The nicest point of all which relates to Christian perfection is that which you enquire of. Thus much is certain: they that love God with all their heart and all men as themselves are scripturally perfect. And surely such are; otherwise the promise of God would be a mere mockery of human weakness. Hold fast this. But then remember, on the other hand, you have this treasure in an earthen vessel; you dwell in a poor shattered house of clay, which presses down the immortal spirit. Hence all your thoughts, words and actions are so imperfect, so far from coming up to the standard (that law of love which but for a corruptible body, your soul would answer in all instances), that you may well say till you go to Him you love:

Every moment, Lord I need
The merit of Thy death."

This possibility of error in the perfect, and the fact that he pleaded that perfection be not set too high, makes Wesley's doctrine vulnerable to such taunts as "one may be a perfect Christian without being a perfect man." And yet such a jibe is unfair, for it is quite obvious that a crippled saint can be a perfect Christian, whilst being very far from perfect

Letters vol. 4. p. 208. Warfield, "Perfectionism" p. 528
in physique. How, then, did Wesley connote Christian Perfection? In a word, it was love. Love to God and love to man. Such was possible to the sanctified spirit despite the fact that it dwelt in a corruptible body.

"The plain fact is this: I know many who love God with all their heart, mind, soul and strength. He is their one desire, their one delight, and they are continually happy in Him. They love their neighbour as themselves. They feel as sincere fervent, constant a desire for the happiness of every man, good or bad, friend or enemy, as for their own. They're rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks.' Their souls are continually streaming up to God in holy joy, prayer and praise. This is plain, sound Scriptural experience; and of this we have more and more living witnesses."

From this point Wesley goes on to emphasise what has already been noted:

"But these souls dwell in a shattered, corruptible body, and are so pressed down thereby that they cannot exert their love as they would by always thinking, speaking, and acting precisely right. For want of better bodily organs, they sometimes inevitably think, speak, or act wrong. Yet I think they need the advocacy of Christ, even for these involuntary defects."

It is clear that "Perfect love" better describes what Wesley means that does the term Christian Perfection. Inevitably such language would antagonise Toplady and such as he. To them it savoured of salvation by works; moreover the perfect would scarcely need any further supply of grace. This, of course, Wesley flatly denied. In a letter to Samuel Purly he makes clear his mind on this point.

"I still say, and without any self-contradiction, I know no persons living who are so deeply conscious of their needing Christ...as those who
believe themselves, and whom I believe, to be cleansed from all sin - I mean from all pride, anger and evil desire, idolatry and unbelief. These very persons feel more than ever their own ignorance, littleness of grace, coming short of the full mind that was in Christ, and walking less accurately than they might have done after their divine Pattern; are more convinced of the insufficiency of all they are, have, or do to bear the eye of God without a Mediator; are more penetrated with the sense of the want of Him than ever they were before.

If Mr. Maxwell or you say that 'coming short is sin', be it so; I contend not. But I still say: 'There are they whom I believe to be Scripturally perfect. And yet these never felt their want of Christ so deeply and strongly as they do now.'

In a previous letter to Mr. Furly Wesley had written:

"But you think, 'They cannot want the merit of His death if they are saved from sin.' They think otherwise. They know and feel the contrary, whether they can explain it or no."

In saying this, Wesley is enunciating what might be called the paradox of perfection. On the face of it, the perfect - whether conceived as fully-grown or flawless - have no further need. The fully matured have finished growing, and it is of the nature of flawlessness that it cannot be improved upon. And yet the fact of experience is against this argument. Henry Twells has not said the last word on the subject of Christian perfection, nevertheless, he yet sounds a true note when he sings

"They who fain would serve Thee best
Are conscious most of wrong within."

It is just a platitude to say that the nearer the redeemed soul draws to Christ the more conscious he becomes of the distance...
that yet separates them. Those who resist not evil are rarely aware of their bondage, whilst the saint who strives to "gain perfection's height" sees the glittering peak lure him from afar. "Dullness in Christian experience" writes the late Rev. W.J. Moulton, "comes when a man thinks that he has already attained all that is possible for him, or enough for his salvation." We are never so sensitive to sin as when we are delivered from it. This may be a paradox, but it is, nevertheless, the experience of the choicest souls.

Now, it is obvious that a perfection that must not be set too high, and one that admits of improvement because of its consciousness of defect, creates intellectual difficulty: to find and so one is not surprised the term bitterly contested either as a self-contradiction, or as implying moral excellency on the part of sinful man who is without any merit before God, save the imputed merit of a vicarious atonement. Many will argue today, as they did in Toplady's day, that to preach perfection is to reveal blindness to the most palpable facts of life. They will give hearty assent to the judgment of the Revd. Prebendary Webb-Peploe, who said at the Keswick Convention of 1895:

"When I read such words as dear John Wesley's, 'The evil root, the carnal mind, is destroyed in me; sin subsists no longer,' I can only marvel that any human being, with the teaching of the Holy Ghost upon the word of God, can thus deceive himself, or attempt to deceive others. It is, I think, a miracle of blindness

Wesley did believe and preach that man could be free from sin here and now; although he also believed that such experience was not general. But it was sin as a voluntary transgression that he thought of as he so preached. This is really the crux of Wesley's teaching on perfection. It is the distinction he makes in his letter to Mr. Furly:

"'But are they not sinners?' Explain the term one way, and I say, Yes; another, and I say, No; 'Are they cleansed from all sin?' I believe they are; meaning all sinful tempers."

Rarely do the abstruse questions of theology and ethics permit of a yes! or no! answer; and Wesley in so replying is not simply evading the issue by a verbal quibble; rather is he seeking to establish that very distinction for which (as pointed out earlier) Dr. Tennant has pleaded so eloquently. Sin as transgression, and sin as hereditary endowment constitute the essence of Wesley's differentia in his theology of perfection. If it could be conceded that Wesley's definition of sin was adequate there would not be so much difficulty in establishing his doctrine of perfection. For it is no small thing to claim that a soul under the stress of temptation will as surely turn to the right as the needle of the compass will point to the north. Deliverance from actual transgression is a triumph of grace. But Wesley's definition is not adequate, and so his theory of perfection is not so soundly based as he thinks. There yet

Letter, Vol. 4. p. 190


See pages 350 - 2
remains the problem of "unconscious sin" which cannot be dismissed as a "contradiction in terms". It raises a very serious problem for the perfectionist; and one that can only be solved when the content of the "unconscious" is fully known and its salvation accomplished. The greatest contribution to perfectionist ethics will be made by psychoanalysis, when that at present chaotic science emancipates itself from the thralldom of a philosophy that deplores "evil", and yet denies "sin". Moreover, apart from the idea of "unconscious sin", of which Wesley had no knowledge, it is still doubtful whether Wesley can claim to be consistent even if it be granted that perfection for him meant only maturity. Does Scriptural perfection, conceived of as spiritual maturity equate sinlessness? It does if sin is defined as transgression. Yet in a letter to Mrs. Waitland sinless perfection is both affirmed and denied. He writes:

"By that word I mean (as I have said again and again) 'so loving God and our neighbour as to rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks'. He that experiences this is scripturally perfect... What then does their arguing prove who object against perfection? 'Absolute and infallible perfection?' I never contended for it. Sinless Perfection? Neither do I contend for this, seeing that the term is not scriptural. A perfection that perfectly fulfils the whole law, and so needs not the merit of Christ? I acknowledge none such - I do now, and always did protest against it. 'But is there not sin in those that are perfect?' I believe not; but, be that as it may, they feel none, no temper but pure love, while they rejoice, pray and give thanks continually. And whether sin is suspended or extinguished, I will not dispute; it is enough that they feel nothing but love. This your allow
'we should daily press after'; and this is all I contend for. O may God give you a taste of it today!"

Perfection, interpreted as the full surrender of the personality to God, and the complete use of every power for God, is quite consistent. One so God-filled and God-directed would be Scripturally perfect. This one must concede. Also it must be granted that the quest for such a spiritual experience is demanded of every Christian. The difficulty arises when one remembers that those who most nearly approximate to the divine ideal are those who are least ready to claim perfection. They know their own hearts so well that they dare not claim to be more than the chief of sinners. And this is not just pious rhetoric; they know what they are capable of if left without the protection of grace. They know that they must leave no unguarded place; their vigilance must never relax. So the question is "Are there any who are so God-filled that they "rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks"? It is not enough to say that they "do not willingly commit sin", are they so far mature as to know complete freedom from sin? Wesley's answer is an unhesitating Yes! and as he said to the Countess Huntingdon,

"God confirmed it by a thousand witnesses."

In the letter to Mrs. Veitland, which I have just quoted, Wesley says that he will not dispute whether sin is

Letters vol. 4. pages 212-3
ibid vol. 5. page 259
suspended or extinguished, but in point of fact he does dispute; and the essence of his teaching is that sin is destroyed. It is "cut out", "rooted out", or "mortified". This, he believed, was the teaching of Scripture on the subject. He preferred "destroyed" to "suspended" because St. Paul had shown a similar preference; and in interpreting κατατάθη as destroyed, or abolished, he in no way strains the text. Although it may be questioned whether he rightly expresses St. Paul's meaning, which is not exactly one of achievement, but rather one of effort to/a clearly apperceived goal. This certainty of Wesley that sin is destroyed creates many difficulties; especially as he claims man is only enabled to resist temptation and so avoid transgression, but the "carnal mind" is destroyed. That the "original offence" is "erased". Such a claim makes nonsense of the moral ideal, for in destroying the possibility of sin, it removes the possibility of virtue. Unless I can be tempted I cannot be good; and no temptation is possible to one who is delivered from the yoke of inbred sin. It is questionable whether those perfected in love are free from temptation, but if they are, it is because they have triumphed over it. But to be rid of "inbred sin", that is, of the native bias towards wrong doing, is to make temptation impossible. The soul rid of temptation is certainly free from transgression, but if the power to sin is taken away, moral freedom is taken with it. Wesley does not show how one can be tempted after the "original offence" has been erased although one of his
best friends and ablest champions challenged him to do so. Even if Wesley's definition limiting sin to actual transgression be accepted, the fact still remains that no transgression is possible if "inbred sin" is destroyed. For it is this "inbredness" that makes either sin or virtue possible, in that temptation springs from desire. Dr. Hadfield writes: "We still speak as though temptation came from without, whereas no temptation would have the slightest effect were it not that it appeared to some desire within us, which normally we ourselves suppress. We are not tempted by the world, the flesh, and the devil, but by ourselves. Adam blamed Eve, and Eve blamed the serpent, but God was not deceived, and drove them out of the garden.

Further difficulty arises when one examines Wesley's conception of sin as something that can be destroyed by rooting it out; and notes that he believes that this uprooting is instantaneously achieved by an act of faith. As anticipated earlier Wesley's defective analysis of sin vitiates much of his teaching concerning perfection. Sin cannot be removed as a dentist would extract a tooth, or a surgeon excise an appendix. The analogy of a "cancer" is better, but even it has the defect of conceiving of sin as malignant growth upon rather than within the living tissue. Sin is the infesting of the entire personality rather than the presence of a "foreign body" poisoning a part. In the

1 See John Fletcher's Works, vol. 6, page 393
"Pilgrim's Progress" Bunyan writes: "So I saw in my dream that just as Christian came up with the cross, his burden loosed from off his shoulders, and fell from off his back, and began to tumble, and so continued to do till it came to the mouth of the sepulchre, where it fell in, and I saw it no more." The sight of the Cross had eased Christian of his burden; and many a young convert has sung with gladdened heart:

"At the Cross, at the Cross, where I first saw the light,
And the burden of my heart rolled away."

not because he was henceforth to know no temptation or sin, but because the burden of guilt was lifted from him. Neither can be taken off as a weary traveller removes his knapsack, but the joy attendant on the lifting of the weight of guilt is such as "no tongue nor pen can show". Nevertheless it is one thing to be cleansed from sin's guilt and power, and another to claim that sin has been uprooted and destroyed. It is this fact that renders difficult the acceptance of Wesley's doctrine of the "Second Blessing" as an instantaneous result of an act of faith. Casting a backward glance over the many Class Meetings I have attended, one thing stands out clearly, I have only heard one man claim the "Second Blessing" since I left Cliff College. Many claimed it there, some, I fear, who have given but poor evidence of it since. But I have heard again and again the testimony of humble folk who rejoiced that their blessing was "new every morning". What would Wesley have said of this? The Class Meeting was his laboratory in which he tested every
experience. Would he have deprecated this? On the whole I think he would. Whilst he would have rejoiced to hear of every blessing his hearers enjoyed, he would yet have pleaded that they should receive the blessing of entire sanctification now. He would have urged them to

"Look for it...every day, every hour, every moment."

Logically Wesley's position is sound enough. There must be a minute when the soul is in sin, and another when it is freed; just as there is a moment when one is born, or when one dies. Yet when the theology of sin and sanctification is examined his argument is found to be inadequate. It is marked by a concept of definite gradations. One step being considered higher than the other; entire sanctification higher than sanctification, and sanctification higher than justification; whilst the truth is that we may be pleasing to God one hour and displeasing the next. This Wesley recognised for in the Minutes of 1770 he inserts this paragraph:

"Does not the talking of a justified or sanctified state tend to mislead men? almost naturally leading them to trust in what is done in one moment? Whereas we are every hour and every moment pleasing or displeasing to God according to our own works; according to the whole of our inward tempers and our outward behaviour."

As the result of maturer thought Wesley modified his earlier position, he writes:


Quoted from Sugden's Edn of Wesley's Sermons, vol. 2, page 458.
"I believe that this perfection is always wrought in the soul by a simple act of faith; consequently in an instant. But I believe a gradual work; both preceding and following that instant."

And again:

"But does God work this great work in the soul gradually or instantaneously?" Perhaps it may be gradually wrought in some; I mean in this sense, - they do not advert to the particular moment wherein sin ceases to be. But it is infinitely desirable, were it the will of God, that it should be done instantaneously; that the Lord should destroy sin 'by the breath of His mouth' in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. And so He generally does; a plain fact of which there is evidence to satisfy any unprejudiced person.

However satisfying Wesley found the evidence the fact remains that sin must be conceived of as a hypostasis to make his argument tenable. In the twinkling of an eye can a burden be lifted or a tooth extracted, but not so quickly can sin be mortified. Yet because Wesley has this hypostatic conception of sin he can claim that as we are converted in an instant by justifying grace, so can we in an instant be perfected by sanctifying grace. Instantaneous conversion I have already questioned, instantaneous perfection creates even greater problems. It is true that if God can keep me without sin for a minute, He can keep me sinless for an hour, a year, or even for the rest of my life; but whilst the logic of this argument is unassailable I feel that it does not squarely face the facts of experience. I may spend a sinless hour upon my knees, but all my hours cannot be so spent. I have to leave the sanctuary for the mart, and it is there that "I see the

Brief Thoughts.

The Scripture Way of Salvation, vol. 2. p. 459
sights that dazzle, the tempting sounds I hear". Moreover, solitude can have its perils. Discussing the words "Moment by moment I am kept in His love", Dr. Bett asked the question, "To what do your thoughts turn when the clock is off the mind?"

It was a searching question. Most of his hearers knew that their thoughts did not turn to God as surely as they ought. None would have presumed to claim perfection, though none was far from the Kingdom of God. Each, I believe, had an ardent desire to find

"A rest, where all our soul's desire
Is fixed on things above."

And at least one said

"If nothing is too hard for Thee,
All things are possible to me."

But perfection, even thought of as the maturing of potentialities, yet looms afar. The late Dr. Dimsdale T. Young once observed "The tragedy of many people is that they are "converted" without being changed", the same may be said of some who claim perfection, and yet give no evidence of it in their lives. Wesley made no such claim for himself, though he had better grounds for doing so than some who did.

To assert now that Wesley based his doctrine of Christian perfection on experience and holy Writ may seem a flat contradiction; and yet it is a statement of fact. Bluntly denying the sentiments that Dr. Dodd would have fastened upon him he says:

"Sir, have me excused. This is not according

"There is good work going on in London. But not like that which George Bell and Thomas Maxfield put a step to....They made the very name of Perfection stink in the nostrils even of those who loved and honoured it before." Letters. v. 5. p. 58.
to Mr. Wesley. ' I have told all the world
I am not perfect; and yet you allow me to
be a Methodist. I tell you flat I have
not attained the character I draw. Will
you pin it upon me in spite of my teeth?'

and in so doing creates for students of his theology what Dr.
Newton Flew has called an "insoluble" problem. Why should
any who preached "perfection" as earnestly and for so long
as did Wesley deny it of themselves whilst steadfastly
maintaining it of others? The denial is not feasible, and
yet Wesley who knew himself better than any other could
possibly know him, categorically asserts it of others and yet
denies it of himself. Why was this? Is any explanation of
such a surprising disclaimer possible? If there is it can
only be found in the psychology of Wesley himself, and it
just possible that even he might have had difficulty in
arriving at the truth. Dr. Bett suggests that Wesley realising
the fierce light that constantly beat upon him, declined to
claim entire sanctification so as not to give his enemies
cause to blaspheme. He says: "There must have been in his
life from day to day a thousand insignificant and innocent
words and actions which, distorted and exaggerated, might have
been alleged by his enemies against the high profession of
perfect love, had he made it. He knew this, and was careful
not to give the world any unnecessary occasion to blaspheme."

This is probably true, but it must be noted that Wesley did
not concern himself unduly with the world's opinion of him.

Letters. vol. 5 page 43
"The Idea of Perfection" page 350
"The Spirit of Methodism" page 161
He said that when he handed over his life into God's care he did not except his reputation.

Dr. Sugden seeks to explain Wesley's disclaimer by suggesting that he had come to see Christian perfection as an ideal rather than as an attainment. He says: "Logically he could see no reason why the ideal could not be at any time realised, provided that a man had the requisite faith; but he came more and more to see that it was an ideal, to which the believer approximates ever more closely, though it may be impossible to say that he has absolutely attained it."

This explanation Dr. Flew is constrained to reject as inadequate; and asks, "Was it some fastidiousness, some half-unconscious suspicion that avowal would be perilous to the health of his soul? It may be that Wesley in the dim recesses of his mind feared that open confession might not in this instance be good for the soul; although what could imperil the perfect? For my own part I think that Wesley was much too honest with himself to make any claim that he could not substantiate beyond question. His generosity of spirit enabled him to acclaim in others what he denied of himself. The life of his friends he could only know from the outside, he could only judge their fruits; but in his own case he knew what grace had accomplished, and also what it had yet to do. I suggest that he denies perfection of himself because of that ruthless self-honesty which will permit the

\* Wesley's Sermons, Anntd Edn. page 150, vol. 2.
"rationalisations" of the "Unconscious" no opportunity of
befogging the 'spiritual sense. Members of the "Oxford Group"
are frequently heard to speak of absolute honesty, but I
cannot help wondering whether "absolutes" are for mortals.
After years of thinking aloud in the presence of another,
(which is the quintessence of consciousness) I should hesitate
a long time before claiming absolute honesty; indeed! those
who know best the intricacies of their mental mechanisms will
never make such a claim. If Wesley had not achieved perfect
love, he had achieved to a much greater extent than many,
that knowledge of himself that makes careless or extravagant
speech impossible. Certainly when one recalls Wesley's
emphasis on perfect love, and his exhortations to his helpers
always to preach it, his disclaimer is an enigma: nevertheless,
I yet maintain that in so disclaiming to have arrived at
spiritual maturity, Wesley clearly evinces how mature he was.
At each Communion service he had prayed for perfect love ĭ
and yet denied having attained to it. Is there any light to
be gathered from the suggestion that although Wesley was far
ahead of some to whom he had attributed Scriptural perfection,
he yet knew that he had not yet fully realised all of which
he was yet capable? Whilst a whole congregation may pray
that they "may perfectly love", the "perfect love" of one

| "Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration
of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love Thee,
and worthily magnify Thy holy Name." Opening Collect
of Anglican (and Wesleyan) Communion Service.
member may be much inferior to the perfect love of another. When one man has come to the full maturity of his spiritual powers he may be still far behind another who has not yet matured. The former is perfect in the sense that he cannot be better, whilst the latter is not. If when all one's "powers find sweet employ" one can claim to be perfect, then Wesley was perfect; but if perfection equate the complete development of all of which one is capable, then Wesley's disclaimer is quite intelligible. As one star differeth from another star in glory, so also does one soul differ from another in spiritual stature. Our Lord, Himself, taught that whilst from some soil only a thirty-fold increase could be expected, others might yield sixty or even an hundred-fold. On this point Dr. Waterhouse writes: "It is perfectly true to say that Christianity recognises no inner grades and esoteric teaching, that its message is for all alike, and yet Jesus was definite in saying that those who had ears to hear heard what others did not, that according to man's faith so was it to him. He certainly recognised the existence of a class from which less was to be expected, because they had been thought capable of using but one or two talents, where others had five. He led us to expect that a return proportionate, not equal, would be required in the day of reckoning. Jesus knew far too much about the complexities of human nature, and varieties of religious experience, to treat all men alike, or expect from all a similar response." In effect, the perfection of one may
far below that of another. Perfection equated with flawless-ness, permits of no degrees; but conceived as maturity, then it is possible to maintain that whilst two people may be mature, in that they have both fully realised their potentialities, there may still be a great distance betwixt the excellence of their attainments. In which case there are degrees in perfection. Both a giant and a pigmy may arrive at maturity, but between the two "there is a great gulf fixed". Wesley was a spiritual giant, and, for the more part, moved amongst men who could never aspire to his stature; it is not, therefore, surprising that he asked of these a perfection - a maturity - that he did not claim for himself. Nevertheless, whilst I volunteer this explanation of Wesley's disclaimer, I realise that it does not reconcile the fact that he based his argument on "experience", and that the "experience" was the reward of importunate faith. Even if it held that Wesley gave to the word "experience" a corporate rather than a purely personal connotation there still remains the difficulty of explaining his disclaimer in the light of his oft repeated declaration that we are sanctified by faith. If he did not "gain perfection's height" as he so often prayed he might, it can only be because his faith failed, or that God was unable or unwilling to honour it. Neither alternative is tenable. The problem, therefore, does not permit of solution.

If Wesley did not dare to claim perfection for himself, he did not hesitate to attest the claim of certain within his societies. He says: "There are they whom I believe to be Scripturally perfect? and to any who would have boggled
at the word perfect he says: "Stop! you must not waver at that word: you are not wiser than the Holy Ghost."

In similar strain he replies to Mrs. Maitland who had asked "Would it not be safer to call it a high state of grace than perfection?";

"As to the word, it is Scriptural; therefore neither you nor I can in conscience object against it, unless we would send the Holy Ghost to school and teach Him to speak who made the tongue."

Earlier to William Dodd he had written:

"I read the Bible with what attention I can, and regulate all my opinions thereby to the best of my understanding. But I am always willing to receive more light....Whoever, therefore, will give me more light with regard to Christian perfection will do me a singular favour. The opinion I have concerning it at present I espouse merely because I think it Scriptural; if, therefore, I am convinced it is not Scriptural, I shall willingly relinquish it."

Later in the same letter he observes:

"What is the meaning of the term 'perfection' is another question; but that it is a Scriptural term is undeniable. Therefore none ought to object to the use of the term, whatever they may do with this or that explication of it."

"Perfection", then, is a scriptural term, and Wesley is justly indignant when his critics try to fasten the term upon him, as though it was of his own creation. Steadfastly he replies that the doctrine and the term of designation are those of our Lord.
"This is Mr. Wesley's doctrine: he teaches perfection!" He does: yet this is not his doctrine any more than it is yours, or any one's else, that is a minister of Christ. For it is his doctrine, peculiarly, emphatically his! It is the doctrine of Jesus Christ. Those are His words, not mine: 'Εσεσθε, ού νύν τελειοί ὑπέτεθ, ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς ουρανοῖς ΤΕΛΕΙΟΣ ἔστιν. 'Ye shall therefore be perfect as your Father who is in heaven is perfect.' And who says ye shall not; or at least, not till your soul is separated from the body? It is the doctrine of St. Paul, the doctrine of St. James, of St. Peter, and St. John; and no otherwise Mr. Wesley's than it is the doctrine of everyone who preaches the pure and the whole gospel. I tell you, as plain as I can speak, where and when I found this. I found it in the oracles of God, in the Old and the New Testament; when I read them with no other view or desire but to save my own soul."

Wesley's use of the Bible does not differ from that of Toplady. Neither of them knew anything about present day textual criticism; and so each could read universal application into texts directed to a particular individual on an express occasion. Nevertheless, though Wesley's exegesis on all subjects is not beyond question, it is yet true to say that he found the doctrine of Christian perfection explicitly taught in the New Testament. It was a doctrine he believed to be ratified in the experience of "a thousand witnesses". To the charge that such a belief was heresy he spiritedly replied:

"If I am a heretic, I became such by reading the Bible. All my notions I drew from thence."
It is obvious from all that has been said that Wesley was not consistent in his doctrine of Christian Perfection. Although, as Dr. Sangsteijthas pointed out, "to hold a man to a strict test of exact and consistent definition in a voluminous correspondence spread over sixty years is a test unfairly severe. The marvel is that, in the matter of consistency, he passes it so well." Nevertheless, having read all Wesley's letters as well as his polemics on this subject, I am left with the feeling that he never quite cleared up his own thinking on this point; and I am sustained in my judgment by finding that both Dr. Curtis and Dr. Rattenbury agree. Much of Wesley's difficulty is due to his choice of terms, and had he always consulted his own preference for the designation "perfect love", he would have avoided much bitter criticism; for although he seems to regard them as interchangeable, it is certain that whilst he meant one thing by perfection, his critics meant another. "Perfect love" is not without its ambiguities, but it is less liable to misinterpretation than Christian perfection. Moreover it is a curious fact that to add any prefix to the word "perfection" is to debase rather than to exalt it. Again, the time factor in Wesley's doctrine needs more careful consideration than was

"The Path to Perfection", page 81.

"I have found no way of harmonising all of Wesley's statements at this point; and I am inclined to think that he never entirely cleared up his own thinking concerning the nature and the scope of sin." Curtis, "The Christian Faith", p. 378. Cp. Rattenbury, "The Evangelical Doctrine of C. Wesley's Hymns", p. 300
accorded it. His primary teaching is that perfection is attained in a moment by an act of faith; but in attempting to modify this statement he, in effect, contradicts it. Obviously if perfection is attained instantaneously it can scarcely be a gradual growth. The analogy from human birth is far from satisfying. Actual birth, even when travail is long continued, is not instantaneous. It is true that there is the moment of death after years of illness, but even then it is doubtful whether the analogy can be sustained. Is there a moment when sin dies? To maintain his argument Wesley must prove that there is a moment when sin ceases to be; and this he attempts by limiting "sin" to actual transgression. But "sin" cannot be so limited. Besides overt transgression there is the sin of omission as well as that sin which has just been referred to as "unconscious". So despite the argument drawn from the analogy of slow foetal development, moment of birth, and long growth unto adulthood, it cannot be said that Wesley establishes his case. Moreover he is influenced by two strains of thought. As I have already shewn he had an hierarchical conception of holiness, and this static conception cannot be reconciled with the idea of instantaneous birth, or even of slow growth; for whilst there is always the possibility of falling from grace, there is no possibility of my being unborn. At times it would seem as though Wesley thought there was. In his sermon "The Great Privilege of those that are Born of God" he leaves one with
the impression that a single lapse into outward sin involves that
the loss of God's favour, and entire renewal is again required.
This cannot be harmonised with his analogy of human birth.
The soiled body needs only to be washed, not remade. He that
is born from above may often need spiritual cleansing, but
not regeneration. Furthermore this is a pernicious doctrine.
Occasional lapses into sin are no true index of a man's character.
This must be assessed by his habitual conduct. "He that is
bathed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every
whit." Again Wesley's argument from the analogy of human
birth has the weakness of confusing re-birth and holiness.
"That which is born of the Spirit is spirit" said our Lord
to the marveling Nicodemus, but not that it is holy. The
spiritually reborn are spiritually reborn; that and no more.
Regeneration does not mean immediate ethical rectitude or
spiritual perfection, any more than physical birth means
immediate power to think and speak.

Yet, Having taken cognizance of all these difficulties,
I would maintain that Wesley's main teaching is clear
enough. If the penitent soul will cast ALL upon God, and
believe that all the power of God is his to uphold him; then
he, God-filled and God-directed, may in the twinkling of an
eye, be saved from all voluntary transgression, and be filled
with perfect love. This does not mean that he is flawless,
but that his every power is now rescued from the service of
self and dedicated to God. The road to perfection may still
be long, but slowly, may be imperceptibly, he will arrive at

his goal. Thus perfect love is achieved in an instant, but perfection may be attained only in eternity. Confusion, however, arises when the static conception of holiness is contrasted with this; and also by Wesley's continued use of a term for which he professed no liking, and which was misunderstood and misrepresented by his opponents. Nevertheless when all is said on the subject of Wesley's inconsistency, the fact remains that in his doctrine of perfect love he lays a much needed emphasis on a New Testament doctrine that many had forgotten. In referring to it as the "grand depositum" for the preaching of which Methodism had been raised up, he is not making it "a provincialism of the Wesleyan Reformation", but is rather unveiling a half-hidden treasure of the holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.

The significance of Wesley's doctrine of perfect love has already been anticipated, but it will be necessary to evaluate it more fully when the teaching of the controversialists is examined in detail. And that is the task to which I must now address myself.
BOOK V
CONTROVERSY WITH JOHN WESLEY

Chapter 16
CHRISTIAN PERFECTION
Chapter 16.

THE CONTROVERSY WITH JOHN WESLEY.

(1) Christian Perfection.

Earlier I have tried to give a pen portrait of Toplady as a controversialist; but it is now necessary to take note of the substance of the controversy rather than the manner in which it was conducted. Viewing in retrospect the wonder grows that Toplady could pillory as he did a brother minister, particularly when it is recalled that by far the greater part of their teaching is identical. Toplady believed himself to be a staunch and unwavering Calvinist; but he was no more loyal to the cardinal doctrines of Calvin than was John Wesley, who boldly asserted that on the essentials of the faith the difference betwixt himself and Calvin was not "a hair's breadth". By his denial of justification by works, and his insistence on the doctrines of total depravity and salvation by faith alone, Wesley is one with the Reformers - and with Toplady. It is solely on the doctrine of grace that they differ: Toplady maintaining that Wesley's teaching that grace was for all and unto the uttermost was not only blasphemous but absurd. This cleavage in opinion is the more remarkable in that the "rule of faith" for both the contestants is the same. Both appealed

See chapter 5
See "The Absurdity of Universal Redemption"
Gospel Magazine 1798, pp. 406-8
to the Bible as final and inerrant; and both regarded the XXXIX Articles of the Anglican Church as the repository of the faith pure and undefiled. Yet Wesley is more catholic in his sympathies and generous in his judgments than Toplady, for although he does not "profess any coalition with Calvinism" he is yet prepared to concede that the Articles are patient of a Calvinist interpretation; whilst Toplady unhesitatingly stigmatises as "heretic", "apostate" or even "atheist" any who seek to give them an Arminian interpretation. Despite the fact that Wesley set his face like a flint against the doctrine of predestination as taught by Toplady, he nevertheless admits that it was preached by many for whom he had a sincere affection and a genuine admiration.

Compare Toplady's reference to the Scriptures and also to "their faithful epitome, the decisions of the Church of England." (A Caveat against unsound Doctrines, pp. 15-16) with Wesley's letter to "Mr. Somebody", Letters, vol. 4 p. 115. "I still (as I am able) defend the Bible, with the Liturgy, Articles, and Homilies of our Church; and I do not defend or espouse any other principles, to the best of my knowledge, than those which are plainly contained in the Bible as well as in the Homilies and Book of Common Prayer."

See Letter to Walter Churchev, Vol. 6. p. 60

"It is compatible with a love to Christ and a genuine work of grace." Yea, many hold it at whose feet I desire to be found in the day of the Lord Jesus." Letter to John Newton, vol. 4 page 298
Throughout the controversy Toplady appeals to the Scripture and the Articles and Homilies of the Church of England; and concerning the two latter he maintains an attitude of uncompromising dogmatism. He is not prepared to concede any liberty of opinion and demands that every Article shall be interpreted literally, "without sophistication or disguise". To Dr. Nowell he says:

"You seem to take for granted, that you have a right to put your own sense on the articles to which you subscribe. But this is by no means the case. Our articles, like the prophecies, are not of private interpretation. You and I, and every subscriber, are by express declaration of authority, pinned down to the plain, literal and grammatical meaning of each article. The legislature, duly weighing the importance and solemn nature of ecclesiastical subscription, have taken almost every precaution human wisdom could suggest, or the energy of language furnish, to preclude evasion, and preserve the doctrines of the Church inviolate."

It does not appear that Toplady ever contemplated the possibility of his being in error, or that he once entertained the thought that the Public Orator of the University of Oxford was as capable as he of understanding the XXXIX Articles. Without hesitation, reserve, or apology he declares "These Articles are Calvinistic." Boldly he asserts: "Open the Liturgy where you will Calvinism stares you in the face."

Now, it is just here that Wesley challenges Toplady. He is not prepared to be told what he has to believe by a

\[ \text{The C.o E. Vindicated from the Charge of Arminianism. Vol. 5. page 18} \]
\[ \text{Ibid pages 24-25} \]
stripling in the faith; even though he be "just stepped piping hot out of a university". Wesley had subscribed to the Articles fifteen years before Toplady was born, and was every bit as competent as he to interpret them. Walter Sellon, though not a Bachelor of Arts, was not prepared to surrender his right of "private judgment" at the imperious call of one who had been as dogmatic in his "first opinion" as he was now; even though he foolishly boasted that he had nothing to withdraw. But despite all criticism Toplady continued to declare that his was the only interpretation the Articles could bear, and stigmatised as betrayers of the Church all who disagreed with him. On occasions he was even more violent in his judgments than this, for he did not scruple to imply that the Arminians were enemies of Christ. In his "Christian and Philosophical Necessity Asserted" he observes:

"Arminianism pays very slender regard to Christ's authority."  

It is this attitude of Toplady that makes difficult the reading of his controversial articles. Frequently his statements are wildly extravagant, thus weakening his own argument, but nothing prevents him writing as though - as Wesley observed to Sellon - "wisdom would die with him."

\[ See Toplady's sermon on I Timothy, 1. 10. and Sellon's observations in his Church of England Vindicated from the Charge of Absolute Predestination. Pages 368 ff. \]

\[ Works, vol. 6 page 56. \]
Indeed, so vehemently does Toplady maintain his position that one cannot avoid the conviction that he is not quite so certain of it as his dogmatism suggests. "Shout here, argument weak" is a piece of platform technique that has camouflaged many a fallacy. Toplady might have accomplished more had he shouted less. Violence in argument often has a boomerang effect. Moreover he not infrequently takes for granted the very position he is seeking to prove. Hence he makes such sweeping statements as that quoted earlier. "Open the Liturgy where you will and Calvinism stares you in the face." The Arminians, however, were not prepared to let any such extravagant claim pass unchallenged. Sellon writes: "I open it on the very first words of the Liturgy which are these: 'When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive." (Ezekiel 18.27.)" As this statement emphasises self-determination it cannot be reconciled with the necessitarianism that Toplady was at such pains to uphold. He would doubtless have answered this observation by saying; "only the elect could obey the injunction." But this dogma makes all appeals and exhortations meaningless ritual. They make mockery of the moral sense. Sellon asks Toplady: "Where is the wisdom or the use of cautions and exhortations to believe and do what, according to your account, some never can, and others cannot but believe and do by virtue of an influencing and over-ruling
Further the opening words of the Liturgy are not the only ones on which a deterministic interpretation can be placed, without doing violence to the "plain, literal and grammatical meaning" upon which Toplady insists.

In the Absolution the priest declares that God desireth not the death of the sinner. A statement that can not be true if it be held that He decreed the death of countless thousands of sinners before ever they had being. Moreover it was one of the purposes of the Incarnation that "the everlasting Son of the Father" should "deliver man": but if the deliverance of all men was not intended, then it follows that God does not propose to show mercy on all men. Hence the appeal of the Litany is a meaningless and useless petition. Nor can such a position be reconciled with the Collect for Good Friday, which reads: "O merciful God, who hast made all men, and hatest nothing that thou hast made, nor wouldest the death of the sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live; have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Hereticks, and take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of thy Word &c".

Toplady sternly rebukes Dr. Nowell for presuming to question the precise meaning of Article XVII; but this does not prevent him (Toplady) supplying a limitation to the text when it suits his purpose. The phrase "sins of the world" he interprets as "sins of the elect"; and concerning Article XXXI, which asserts universal salvation, he has nothing to say. Sellon recalling how Toplady had insisted on a literal

Works of Walter Sellon, p. 424
interpretation "without sophistication or disguise", bluntly reminds him "You maintain that the XVIth Article does affirm your doctrine of predestination; and I maintain that the second and thirty-first do affirm (in words that it is impossible, without doing violence even to common sense, to draw aside to any other than their plain obvious meaning) the doctrine of general redemption. To these you have subscribed; and if you subscribed as a Calvinist you did it insincerely, and with secret provisos and exceptions of your own." and thus "hoists him with his own petard"; for Toplady frequently declared that no Arminian could sincerely subscribe to the Articles without allowing himself mental reservations.

Both before and since the days of Toplady men of equal piety and profounder learning have believed that the Articles of the Anglican Church have taught that "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved"; and have seen no reason to limit the term "world" to mean only the "world of the elect". Nor to deny that man can be saved "unto the uttermost" by the power of God who "giveth not the Spirit by measure."

* The Church of England Vindicated from the Charge of Arminianism, Works of Walter Sellon, p. 380

The history of the controversy has been, in a very brief way, anticipated in chapter 5. There I have written: "Dr. Newell's reply" to Hill's 'Pietas Oxoniensis' "was promptly countered by Hill's "Goliath Slain" and Toplady's "The Church of England Vindicated from the Charge of Arminianism". This work appeared in 1769 and was immediately examined and answered by Walter Sellon who published in 1770 "The Church of England Vindicated from the Charge of Absolute Predestination". In the same year as Toplady replied to Dr. Newell he published his translation of Zanchius which Wesley abridged and published without comment save for the stinging paragraph with which he closed. This regrettable act roused Toplady to hysterical fury and he replied in two letters of protest published in 1771.

The violence of Toplady's attack on Wesley occasioned the printing in the same year (1771) "A Letter to Augustus Montague Toplady" by Thomas Olivers. Although Wesley commented that he had not "leisure to consider the matter at large" and that he must leave Toplady "to be farther corrected by one that is his full match, Mr. Thomas Olivers", he, nevertheless, seeks briefly to vindicate his abridgement by his tract "The Consequence Proved", which he followed by "Thoughts upon Necessity" and "A Thought upon Necessity" in 1774. In which same year Toplady published his masterpiece "The Historic Proof of the Doctrinal Calvinism of the Church of England" which was carefully examined and answered with admirable restraint by John Fletcher.

See page 0 of this Essay
\Letters to the Revd Mr. John Wesley, and More Work &c
\The Consequence Proved, Wesley's Works, v.X p.370
\ibid
It will be noted at once that whilst the literature of the Arminian-Calvinist controversy of the 18th century is voluminous, that of the Toplady-Wesley controversy is, in comparison, very small. Strictly speaking it is limited to five works. Toplady's translation of Zanchius: Wesley's abridgement: Toplady's two letters of protest, and Wesley's "The Consequence Proved". It is of course undeniable that Wesley influenced the writings of his henchmen, and although he early retired from the arena he doubtless read and edited their pamphlets. It was this fact that antagonised Toplady who asked that Wesley should fight his own battles. He says: "Let him not fight by proxy." That Wesley did fight by proxy is clear from two letters to Walter Sellon, dated December 30th 1769 and February 21, 1770. So for the purpose of this chapter I propose to regard the writings of Olivers, Sellon and Fletcher as expressive of the mind of Wesley.

Of the two points at issue (Christian Perfection and Predestination) it is the doctrine of the decrees that Toplady so uncompromisingly asserted and so vigorously defended. By saying this I do not imply that he lightly esteemed the significance of Wesley's teaching concerning perfection; he tilted at it as he had opportunity, but he did not attack it with the same violence as he did the correlated doctrine of universal salvation. At no time did he attempt to deny that perfection

Works of Toplady vol. 2 page 360: or p. 96 of this Essay.
Letters of John Wesley, vol. 5 p. 167 and p. 183
was taught in Scripture. With the Sermon on the Mount before him it would have been impossible for him to do so. Wesley laid great stress on the fact that perfection was a Scriptural term; and though he believed that it could be attained here and now by an act of faith, he admitted that for many it was only achieved at the moment of death. Toplady, in common with most Calvinists, agreed with Wesley here; but, curiously enough, Walter Sellon did not. When Toplady asserted that we "put off the body of sin and the body of the flesh together" he demanded proof. Proof which, in the very nature of things, cannot be produced. He asked Toplady where perfection was attained? In his article the "Church of England Vindicated from the Charge of Absolute Predestination" he writes: "If attainable at all, it must be in the life to come. And pray where is it to be attained? In heaven? No! for without sinless perfection we shall never go there. In hell? No! he that goes there without it will never come out with it. So you must with the papists maintain the doctrine of purgatory or recant your assertion." Such a suggestion was anathema to Toplady who gave no place to the teaching of Rome. Indeed, his opposition to Wesley's doctrine of perfection is largely due to his fear of the Romish doctrine of merit. Yet despite his denial that perfection was attainable on earth he prayed in the words of the Third Collect "O Lord and heavenly Father, Almighty and everlasting God, who hast safely brought us to
to the beginning of this day; defend us in the same by
Thy mighty power; and grant that this day we fall into no sin,
neither run into any kind of danger; but that all our doings
may be ordered by thy governance, to do always that which is
righteous in Thy sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord." and he
whenever he partook of Holy Communion asked "that through the
inspiration of the Holy Spirit" he might "perfectly love".
What more did Wesley mean by perfection than deliverance from
all sin and the doing always that which is righteous in God's
sight, through a perfect love of Him?

That the doctrine of perfection is hedged with
difficulty cannot be gainsaid, but equally acute problems face
those who deny its possibility save in the article of death.
They have to explain why they pray to God to keep them from
sin if they believe sinlessness in this life to be unattainable.
If they truly believe this, it can only be because they doubt
whether God will or can answer their prayers. In which case
they call in question either His omnipotence or his goodness.
This dilemma is easily resolved by those who believe in
self-determination. It is idle to deny that many pray for
perfection yet never attain it. Yet this failure must not be
attributed to God. Perfection - like salvation - is His gift,
but it is a gift that must be accepted. If for any reason I

* The Collect for Grace in the Order for Morning Prayer.
am not able to bring to God my whole self in complete surrender I cannot achieve perfection; but the failure is mine. Christ is able and willing to save me unto the uttermost, but neither His readiness nor His power can avail anything so long as I determine to resist His grace. Toplady thundered against "Free-will", but creates for himself an insoluble problem. Whilst he daily prays that he might be kept sinless he yet denies the possibility of his becoming perfect whilst in the flesh, notwithstanding the fact that he taught unwearyingly that God ordained the holiness of His elect when he decreed their salvation. He maintained:

"The elect could no more be saved without personal holiness than they could be saved without personal existence. And why? Because God's own decree secures the means as well as the end, and accomplishes the end by the means. The same gratuitous predestination which ordained the existence of the elect as men, ordained their purification as saints; and they were ordained to both, in order to their being finally and completely saved in Christ with eternal glory." 

For one who denied the possibility of perfection and styled belief in it as "presumptious" the following is peculiar comment.

"All, therefore, who are chosen to salvation are no less unalterably destined to holiness and faith meanwhile. And, if so, it is giving God himself the lie to say, that the elect shall be saved do what they will. For the elect, like the blessed person who redeemed them, come into the world not to do their own will, but the will of him that sent them; and this is the will of God concerning them, even their SANCTIFICATION. Hence they are expressly said to be elect unto obedience. Not indeed chosen because of obedience, but chosen unto it;
for works are not the foundation of grace, but streams flowing from it. Election does not depend on holiness, but holiness depends upon election. So far, therefore, is predestination from being subversive of good works, that predestination is the PRIMARY CAUSE of all the good works which have been and shall be wrought from the beginning of time to the end. It is only the peculiar people that are truly zealous of good works."

"Reason also joins with Scripture in asserting the indispensable necessity of sanctification upon the footing of the most absolute and irrespective election; or in other words, that the certainty of the END does not supersede, but ENSURE the intervention of the Means."* From this it follows that perfection is infallibly secured for the elect; then why deny its possibility? And why pray for a sinlessness that has been predetermined and assured by reason of an unalterable edict? Surely it is idle either to ask for or seek to avoid that which God has eternally and irrevokably decreed? Moreover if the means are included in the end, then sanctification is included in the decree of election: then why must the realisation of the means be postponed until the hour of death? If I believe that my virtue is as infallibly ensured as my election then it matters not at what moment I am made sinless. Surely than it is more "presumptious" to declare that an Omnipotent God, who from all eternity decreed my election, has to wait until the moment of my physical dissolution before He can manifest in me a decreed perfection.

More Work for Mr. John Wesley, vol. 5 p. 367
ibid p. 367
Two questions are raised by Toplady's denial of the possibility of attaining perfection in this life.

(1) If sinlessness be unattainable here why pray for it each day?

(2) What evidence is there that perfection is secured in the article of death?

Toplady prays to be kept from sin because he thinks of sin as deliberate transgression, but he denies the possibility of attaining perfection because he also believes that sin dwelleth in us. He writes:

"It is undeniably certain that we who are now living are in actual possession of an evil nature, which nature we brought with us into the world."

From this evil nature only death can deliver us. Thus Toplady, like Wesley, gives a dual meaning to the word sin, and though he believes we "put off the body of sin and the body of the flesh together" he is not inconsistent in seeking that hourly-given grace whereby he is enabled to triumph over temptation. But unlike Wesley he does not believe that "the original offence" can be erased.

"Indwelling sin and unholy tempers do most certainly receive their death's wound in regeneration; but they do not quite expire until the soul is taken up from earth to heaven. In the meantime, these hated remains of depravity will, too often, like prisoners in a dungeon crawl toward the window (though in chains) and show themselves through the grate. Nay, I do not know, whether the strivings of inherent corruption for mastery, be

Essay on Original Sin. Works, vol. 3 p. 355
not frequently more violent in a regenerate person, than even in one who is dead in trespasses and sins: as wild beasts are sometimes the more rampant and furious for being wounded. A person of the amplest fortune cannot help the harbouring of snakes, toads, and other venomous reptiles on his lands; but they will breed and nestle, and crawl about his estate, whether he will or no. All he can do is to pursue and kill them, whenever they make their appearance; yet let him to be ever so vigilant and diligent, there will always be a succession of these creatures, to exercise his patience and engage his industry. So is it with the true believer, in respect of indwelling sin. Would you see a perfect saint? you must needs go out of this world, then, you must go to heaven for the sight: forasmuch as there only are the spirits of just men made perfect.

These observations abound in fallacies which John Fletcher in his "Last Check to Antinomians" hasted to expose; but Toplady's cardinal truth is borne out in experience, for though it is possible to argue that the grace of Almighty God which can save from transgression ought to be able to save us from inbred sin, the fact remains that the regenerate are more conscious of indwelling sin than are they who as yet are unconvicted of sin. Yet whilst Toplady's argument seems to be ratified in experience it is, nevertheless, a contradiction of his doctrine of grace. Throughout his ministry he taught the Calvinist doctrine of irresistible grace; and yet denies that grace can destroy sin and recreate the soul. He preached that the sinner, by a grace he could not resist, was regenerate, and by an equally irresistible grace was sanctified; but does not go on to the conclusion that by grace the is entirely sanctified: and thereby

Works v.3. pp 41-2. "A Caveat against unsound Doctrines"
he destroys the doctrine of irresistible grace. Indeed, his two main themes - original sin and irresistible grace - are self-contradictory. He brings the "irresistible force" of grace against the "immovable substance" of indwelling sin. If it be true that grace is irresistible why does it not accomplish the entire destruction of "indwelling sin" and those "unholy tempers" which "do most certainly receive their death's wound in regeneration"? Moreover why must irresistible grace have to wait until the article of death before accomplishing that perfection without which none can enter heaven? The obvious inference is that grace is not "irresistible".

With the doctrine of irresistible grace and its correlated doctrine of the final indefectibility of the elect Wesley will have nothing to do. He admits that in many perfection is only accomplished at the moment of dying; but unhesitatingly he declares it could have taken place long before. He maintains that what can be secured in the last minute could have been attained an hour before, and if an hour before, why not a day before? a year before? or even twenty years before. Nothing can refute the logic of this; and yet it an argument that is not borne out in introspection. Moreover, if God does by an act of divine power "erase" the "original offence" as Wesley maintains He does, it is hard to see what difference there is between his doctrine of the sudden, swift, destruction of sin by an overpowering act of God, and Toplady's doctrine of irresis-
ible grace. Toplady, then, teaches that although grace is irresistible perfection is impossible. Wesley, on the other hand, declares that grace is not irresistible but still it can "slay the dire root and seed of sin". Both doctrines, however, when pushed far enough have the same issue - the denial of sin. An irresistible grace fulfilling a predestined fate rules out all moral responsibility, and thereby makes impossible either sin or virtue. Equally so does Wesley's doctrine of the eradication of inbred sin. If there is nothing within me to which temptation can appeal there can be no moral value in my "virtue". Wesley, who was challenged on this point by Fletcher, might have answered that by an act of faith and complete self-surrender a new affection of such expulsive power was born in the heart that sin was denied any place. Yet this does not really meet the case; for this can only mean that sin is squeezed out, not that it is "rooted out", "destroyed", "extirpated", "dried-up", or "slain", as is the undoubted teaching of Wesley. Yet, this is by no means all that can be said on this point. It is true that if indwelling sin is eradicated temptation is no longer possible, but most would agree that the truly good man is not one who has by painful effort squeezed sin out of his heart, but one whose character is so coordinated and so ruled by grace that he turns readily and easily to the right. For such a man the way of transgression is hard.

| See page  of this essay |
As Dr. Hadfield observes: "The self cannot will to do what is contrary to its own nature. Ordinarily, a steady man cannot will to get drunk, nor an honest man to steal. There are many things that are so alien to our nature that we 'simply cannot do them'. Probably no reader of this book, by any exertion of will, could bring himself to murder: his whole nature revolts in obedience against it. His self can only act to its own nature and law." This means that character is a completely fashioned will; and if so, a will perfectly resigned to, and ready to function in accordance with, the divine will would issue in a perfect character. The possessor would be entirely sanctified, and from his sanctified nature only the highest good could emanate. But the question is not whether perfect works are the inevitable expression of the perfect character, rather must one ask whether such a character exists. "A fallacy seems to lurk" says Dr. George Galloway "in the ordinary assertion that action is necessarily determined by character, for in point of fact man in his temporal history has never unified his character so completely as to exclude the possibility of a real alternative in conduct."

To be free from sin is to be free indeed, for a man is only truly free when his choice is completely rational. But how often is one's choice completely rational? Is the good in human character ever fully realised? If it is, then perfection is possible now and is not to be thought of only as a distant ideal; but as Dr. A. E. Taylor says: "If to be fully free means that the outward deed is the expression of an inward consistent purpose,
when complete freedom is a distant ideal"). When Dr. George
Matheson sings:

"Make me a captive, Lord,
  And then I shall be free";

and goes on to sing:

"My will is not my own
  Till Thou hast made it Thine:

he is giving expression to one of the profoundest truths of the
Christian experience; for only the divinely bound are free. And
though one is constrained to question whether perfection is
attainable in this life, the fact remains that moral inability
may be the highest form of moral freedom - paradoxical though it
may seem. Yet this moral inability must not be confused with
the reaction to temptation of one from whom the "original offence"
has been erased; for in such a case the word temptation is a
mismomer, seeing that no appeal can be made to indwelling deprav-
ity. There must always be the possibility of sin if the word
temptation is to have any meaning. As Professor William James
has put it, "Not the absence of vice, but vice there, and virtue
holding her by the throat." That inability which is the hall-
mark of freedom is the inheritance of those who are born of God;
and who choose not to sin because they are so born. To such the
old alternatives of posse non peccare or non posse peccare are
both applicable. Posse non peccare because they are possessed
of the faculty of sinning should they will to exercise it; and
non posse peccare because their human wills are so reinforced by
the fullness of the Divine Spirit that they cannot choose to sin.
St. John said "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." The exegetes have differed as to the precise interpretation that should be given to οὐ χωσμην ἑμφανίζεσθαι but many hold it to mean that the regenerate cannot bring themselves to commit or to continue in sin. Toplady is of this opinion. In a dialogue between himself and a perfectionist we read:

"Because this is the only text in the whole Bible that seems to countenance your opinion, I'll give it particular consideration.

1st. Tis said that the regenerate man CANNOT sin; that is he will not, 'tis not his pleasure and desire to commit sin. So we read, Mark vi. 5, that Christ could not do any mighty works &c. not that the unbelief of the people DISABLED him from working miracles; but since their obstinacy and perverseness were so great, 'twas not his will and pleasure to do; in fact to throw away his mighty works upon them.

2dly. We may understand the word cannot as importing difficulty; the carnal man sins, pleno affectu, with full gust and affection; the regenerate man sins with reluctance, and renifus quodam. Sin is more natural to the unregenerated man, than it is to the believer; since the former is all sin, without grace; while the latter has received a vital principle of holiness, which is in itself contrary to iniquity, and perpetually strives against it.

3rdly. "Doth not commit", formally, οὐ ποιεῖ as Ahab did, give himself up to the commission of evil. This regenerate person is a believer; 'tis not the NEW but the OLD MAN, that sins; 'tis no longer the believer but sin that dwelleth in him. Grace cannot sin, nor incline a person to sin; 'tis the remaining corruption that stimulates the Christian to evil. However, after all, this text does not so much relate to the Sanctification of God's elect, but to the certainty of their perseverance; and the meaning of it is, that they cannot sin so totally, or finally, as to loose the favour of God, their interest in Christ, or their title
to heaven. They cannot sin 'the sin which is unto death;' they are born of God, and his seed remaineth in them; and therefore they cannot but endure to the end, and be saved: so that in this text there is not the least syllable of your perfection." \[1\]

By this means Toplady seeks to purge the text of a perfectionist interpretation, and at the same time make it prove his doctrine of final perseverance. The regenerate soul that elects not to sin is not, in Toplady's opinion, perfect; but only pursuing the path to perfection. The regenerate are inspired by irresistible grace, but not until articulo mortis can this grace accomplish its perfect work. But though it does not perfect it ensures final perseverance.

Wesley, as we have seen, created difficulty for himself by his definition of perfection; but no more free from ambiguity is Toplady's doctrine of sainthood. He maintains that the elect can go on to sainthood whilst on earth, but denies that this sainthood is perfection. He seeks to distinguish between holiness and perfect holiness; and goes on to say:

"A person may be demonstrated a saint, not from his being wholly sanctified; but because the Grace and Spirit of God are the governors of his heart, and the sin that is in him is not permitted to have habitual dominion over him. \[2\]

Thus Toplady believes that sainthood is achievable on earth, but denies that such an one is "wholly sanctified". Wesley would have declared such a "saint" *Scripturally perfect, and would have rejoiced that they were truly free because they were completely bound.

\[1\] Dialogue between Mr. Toplady and a Perfectionist, Gospel Magazine for 1797, pages 329-330
\[2\] ibid. (Whole dialogue pp.323 - 330)
The question, however, is not whether the perfect man is morally free because of his moral inability, but whether he exists. Unhesitatingly Wesley said he did, but Toplady roundly denied it; for he declared that to claim perfection was to set oneself above the grace of God. The spiritually perfect, he maintained, would have no further need of grace. This corollary Wesley denies by declaring that none were so conscious of their need of grace as were the already perfect. Now, though it is undoubtedly true that the saint is more conscious of his sin than is the unregenerate, the fact remains that Wesley's caution against "setting perfection too high" does not make for clarity. Obviously he means one thing by perfection and Toplady another. Toplady thinks of it, as do most, in terms of flawlessness, whilst Wesley means the living out of the command of Christ that we love God with our whole being and our neighbour as ourselves. To him the sole and supreme test is love. The perfect in love are the Scripturally perfect. These are they who are content with nothing less than the highest possible life; a life of ungrudging service to man because it is entirely devoted to God. With such a conception of perfection few will quarrel. Who can doubt that it was the ideal that beckoned Toplady all his days? But this unreserved surrender to God of every faculty and power is a very different thing from the claim that inbred sin has been completely rooted out of the heart. Still the lives of most would be enriched

\[\text{See Letter to Samuel Furley, v. 4: pp. 189-190}\]
It is now possible to return to the question that Sellon asked Toplady: "Why pray for what one believes to be unattainable?" In essence Toplady's reply is this. One does not pray for the unattainable in that one does not pray for a perfection that necessitates the extirpation of indwelling sin; but asks each day for that grace which sustains in the hour of temptation, and by which one is enabled to

"Bring into captivity
Every high aspiring thought:"

The goal of perfection may lure from afar but it can only be reached when the earthly house of this tabernacle is destroyed.

This raises the second question: "What evidence is there that perfection is attained in articulo mortis?" In the nature of things there can be none: at best it is an inference from two distinct premises. The elect shall assuredly go to heaven: only the perfect can enter heaven; hence it follows that death effects the necessary perfection.

With the theory of evolution influencing every department of thought, Sellon's question would occasion no difficulty for the present day theologian, who regards death as another step in man's ascent; and an experience that cannot in any way effect the moral life. The Kantian idea of spiritual progression (with which Toplady might have become acquainted had he lived ten years longer) enables post-18th century thinkers to

| Kant's "Critique of Practical Reason" appeared in 1788 ten years after Toplady's death. |
regard the after life as a continuance of the present and one that will afford the opportunity of self-fulfilment. Kant declared that immortality was a postulate of the practical reason, and went on to suggest that the life to come was one of infinite progression, in which the "surd of sensibility" would be eliminated, rather than one of static finality. Post-Kantian theologians are much less ready to dogmatise than were their 18th century predecessors. The reverent agnosticism that characterises present day thinkers on this subject has much to commend it. Toplady, however, preached a literal heaven and hell as the final and unalterable destination of the elect or the reprobate. Their probation ended with the grave; but if the dying one was numbered with the elect he was in the process of his physical dissolution made perfect and ready for glory; for it is of the essence of Toplady's doctrine that none are perfect whilst they live. Already I have quoted from his sermon on God's Mindfulness of Man his judgment upon this point; he writes:

"The death-bed of a Christian is the ante-chamber of heaven, and the very suburbs of the New Jerusalem. When

Kant claimed that the idea of perfection was inherent in the categorical imperative. "Thou oughtest" implies "Thou canst" and infinite "thou oughtest" implies an infinite "thou canst", and an infinite thou canst was tantamount to perfection, in that the highest good is the goal set before man, and which he only reaches in eternity. Heaven to Kant was self-realisation.
the silver cords of life loosen
apace - when the last pins of the
earthly tabernacle are taking out,-
- when the lips of the expiring
saint turn pale, and the blush forsakes his cheek, and what little
breath he draws returns cold, - when
his limbs quiver, - when the pulse
forgets to beat, - when the crimson
current in his veins begins to stagnate, and the hovering soul is just
on the wing for glory - fast as the
world darkens upon his sight, fast
as the το ἐφαρμός the mortal part
(2 Cor. v.4.) of his composition,
subsides and falls off from the dis-imprisoned spirit; he brightens into
the perfect image of God, and kindles
into more than an angel of light.

Had any one interrupted Toplady in this peroration to ask him
how he knew all this, he would, doubtless, have scarified him
for his insolence; but in the very nature of things such claims
as are here made cannot be verified. It may be true that we
put off the body of sin and the body of the flesh together;
but if it is, it is a truth that cannot be demonstrated.
It is, nevertheless, a dogma that Toplady was obliged to
preach if he was to uphold his whole thesis. The only other
alternative open to him was a doctrine of purgatory, but this
he would have vigorously rejected as a Romish doctrine and one
that the Articles described as "repugnant to the word of God".
Yet his doctrine of perfection in articulo mortis teaches that
death itself is a purgatory, it at least accomplishes a
spiritual renewal that no visitation of grace had been able
to do. This point John Fletcher makes abundantly clear in

Works, vol. 3. pages 121. 
his last "Check to Antinomianism". There he says:

"The modish doctrine of Christian imperfection and death purgatory is so contrived that carnal men will always prefer the purgatory of the Calvinists to that of the papists; for the papists prescribe, I know not how many cups of divine wrath and dire vengeance, which are to be drunk by the souls of the believers who die half-purged or three parts cleansed. These half-damned, or quarter-damned, creatures must go through a severe discipline, and fiery salivation, in the very suburbs of hell, before they can be perfectly purified. But our opponents have found out a way to deliver half-hearted believers out of all fear in this respect. Such believers need not utterly abolish the body of sin in this world. The inbred man of sin, not only may, but he shall live, as long as we do. You will ask, 'What is to become of this sinful guest? Shall he take us to hell, or shall we take him to heaven? If he cannot die in this world, will Christ destroy him in the next?' No; here Christ is almost left out of the question by those who pretend to know nothing but Christ and Him crucified. Our indwelling adversary is not destroyed by the brightness of the Redeemer's spiritual appearing, but by the gloom of the appearance of death. Thus they have found another Jesus, another Saviour from sin. The king of terrors comes to the assistance of Jesus's sanctifying grace, and instantaneously delivers the carnal believer from indwelling pride, unbelief, covetousness, peevishness, uncharitableness, love of the world, and inordinate affection. Thus the clammy sweats brought on by the greedy monster kill, it seems, the tree of sin, of which the blood of Christ could only kill the buds. The dying sinner's breath does the capital work of the Spirit of holiness; and, by the most astonishing of miracles, the faint, infectious, last gasp of a sinful believer blows away, in the twinkling of an eye, the great mountain of inward corruption, which all the means of grace, all the faith, prayers, and sacraments of twenty, perhaps forty, years, with all the love in the heart of our Zerubbabel, all the blood in his veins, all the power in his hands, and all the faithfulness in his breast, were never able to remove. If this doctrine is true, how greatly was St. Paul mistaken when he said, 'The sting of death is sin,' &c: 'thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through Christ our Lord!' Should he not have said, 'Death is the cure of sin,' instead of saying, 'Sin is the sting of death?' And should not his praises flow thus? - 'Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through death,' our great and only deliverer from our greatest and fiercest enemy, indwelling sin."
Almost instinctively the thought of death-bed perfection occasions the question Toplady put to himself. "Are all equally happy in heaven?" Are all equally advanced in glory? Does the penitent thief share the joy of St. Paul? All Toplady's argument is in favour of equal happiness, but after building as strong a case as he can he suggests that the question be left an open one, although he asserts

"that there is not a word in Scripture, whence it may be gathered that there shall; (be different degrees in glory) but that it should seem most consistent with the divine oracles, and the analogy of faith, to think that there will not."

Commencing from the premise that all are before God equally without merit, he argues that the saint possesses only the imputed righteousness of Christ, and as there are no degrees in perfection each saint is equally perfect; thus it follows that in heaven each will be as happy as the other. The argument that all may not be equally happy because all are not possessed of the same capacity for happiness he dismisses with the observation

"This objection supposes that the same contracted faculties which we now have, will accompany us in heaven; but this cannot be admitted without proof. On the contrary it would seem from Scripture, that weakness, infirmities, and defects of this sort, are excluded from that place of uninterrupted joy and perfect happiness."

The same Saviour redeeming by the same blood and justifying by the same Spirit must bless each of his elect with the same

\[ "On the Equality of Happiness in Heaven", Gospel Magazine 1796, p. 488. \]
glory. As the works of the penitent avail nothing St. Paul has no greater claim to glory than the penitent thief. As justification is by faith alone, and as this faith is the gift of God, then he that is saved at the last hour is as truly glorified as he that early gave diligence to make his calling and election sure. "I am sure" writes Toplady

"The obedience and sufferings of Christ are certainly the procuring cause of eternal life; and how it came to be, that the self same price should purchase different degrees of happiness for different persons, when all those persons are alike interested in those sufferings, and Christ underwent them equally for all them all, ---I am at a loss to conceive."

It is clear from this that Toplady - despite the reservation referred to earlier - believed that all in heaven are equally happy for all are perfect, and "perfection will admit of no degrees".

Toplady's anxiety to uphold the doctrine of the "Equality of Happiness in Heaven" is born of his desire to be loyal to the Protestant doctrine of grace. Indeed, it is this loyalty that is at the root of his antagonism to Wesley's teaching concerning perfection. The suggestion that some in heaven may be more happy than others introduces another dimension into the doctrine of grace; and this he cannot countenance, for it savours of the "Popish doctrine of merit". Catholic theology had laid stress on works as well as on faith, but Toplady rejects the supposition that sanctification

ibid. ibid page 473.
is the cause of glorification", for this too "is a popish doctrine". Moreover if on earth some are more holy than others, in heaven all will be equally holy: "Consequently they must and shall every one be compleatly, and therefore equally happy". The suggestion of reward of merit is banished into the outer darkness from whence, Toplady believed, it had come. He says:

"Let Papists drudge and toil, in imaginary hope of earning salvation; the true believer, being born from above, and actuated by the free spirit of God, knows no sordid ends. Those works which are wrought by the saints, are not, in any sense, either the cause or the measure of that reward with which the divine beauty will crown them in a future life; but, on the contrary, are themselves the genuine fruits and effects of the divine operation on their souls; and consequently, do not entitle them to an increase either of grace or glory, but are the marks of their regeneration, and the proof of their conversion."

This conviction of Toplady's that the fruits of the spirit evidenced the genuineness of one's conversion was shared to the full by Wesley. Nowhere throughout his teaching does Wesley lend any support to the doctrine of salvation by works. Loyally he holds to the 2nd Homily and the 11th Article of the Anglican Church. As truly as does Toplady he sings

"The only instrument of salvation is faith; that is a sure trust and confidence that God both hath and will forgive our sins, that he hath accepted us again into His favour for the merits of Christ's death and passion." (Homily 2.)
"We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works or deserves." (Art. XI)
"Nothing in my hand I bring", "Thou must save, and Thou alone."
But with the fear of antinomianism ever before his eyes he pleads with his followers to "so run that they may obtain".

When, on the subject of the divine causality of all that appertains to salvation, the words of Toplady and Wesley are compared, one can well understand Wesley's observation that the dispute between the Calvinist and Arminian was largely a verbal one. He goes on to suggest that his opponents were too prone to split hairs, although in this matter he was as guilty as they. Whilst he never failed to declare that

"fallen man is justified, not by perfect obedience, but by faith. What Christ has done is the foundation of our justification, not the term or condition of it."

he yet carefully distinguished between "meritorious works", "rewardable works", and "works material to salvation".

Earlier I have asked the question "Is repentance a saving work?" Toplady says"No!" Wesley says "It is a saving work, but not a work that merits salvation". It does not merit forgiveness, but it opens up the channel through which forgiveness flows. Even if the truth be with Toplady that man is saved before he sins or even before he has being, the fact yet remains he cannot know the peace of forgiveness until he accepts it. Toplady would have argued that if God has decreed our forgiveness, then we are forgiven whether we know it or not. But this is an argument a priori and one that

Letter to James Hervey, Letters, v. 3, p. 376
See pages 373 ff.
is true in a very limited sense. It is true that we are forgiven before we know it in that God has from all eternity remitted our penalties and made us heirs of a divine inheritance; but we do not enter into the inheritance until a personal estrangement has been ended: and how can this happen without both parties being aware of it? However willing to forgive our heavenly Father may be, the offender cannot be effectively forgiven until he knows it. So whilst it is true that we are saved before the foundation of the world, we are only truly at peace with God when we have accepted the forgiveness His grace constrains us to receive. Thus forgiveness is all of grace. Grace convicts of sin and thereby inspires penitence; grace mediates the peace of pardon, and through grace the hunger for more and yet more grace is stimulated. Penitence, then, is a condition of salvation, but it is not a meritorious work - it is purely a work of grace.

One would have thought that Toplady and Wesley would have agreed here, and whilst it is true that both agree that forgiveness is the work of grace alone, there is yet a threefold difference betwixt them. Toplady denies that this grace-inspired penitence is a work of man or that it is a condition of salvation. It is not a work of man but a work in man. Moreover it is not for every man, nor can it be resisted.

Luther's abhorrence of the corruptions that marked the Church of his day is doubtless the reason why he turned from all doctrines of human worth and merit. One convicted, during an act of voluntary penance, of the truth of the divine justification could not come to terms with anything that savoured of
salvation by works. Toplady, like all Calvinists, shared
this detestation of the Roman doctrine that man could contribute
towards his own redemption; and consequently had to deny that
repentance was a work of man; or that it constituted a condition
that man must fulfil. What can sinful man bring in self-justi-
fication? God's overwhelming grace will bring the elect to
repent, but the reprobate, denied any such constraining grace,
will infallibly go to his doom. Toplady's idea of grace
was an idea of grace purely unmerited, and had absolutely
nothing to do with a justice which a suffering creature could
demand from the Lord of the world. It was God's nature to
bestow the gift of salvation upon some men freely and arbit-
rarily, without merit on their part, and to prepare destruction
for others as their sinfulness deserved. No one could boast,
and no one could complain. As no one had any claim to be a
man rather than a beast, so no one had any claim to be one of
the elect and not one of the damned. God's kingly and dominat-
ing will was the ground of all grounds and the norm of all
norms. Grounds and norms there were which through God are
valid, but none which have validity over Him or for Him.
Perfectly freely and spontaneously He imposes His decree, and
His law is the law of the glorification of Himself in the
gratitude of the undeservedly blessed, and in the torment of
the deservedly condemned. Wesley might return to the Lutheran
conception of God as Love, but Toplady lays his stress on the
concept of kingship, according to which the imparting and
awakening of love by God must be considered only as a means
to the manifestation of God's majesty. According to this
it is not the salvation of the creature's soul and the universality of the divine will of Love that is of consequence, but the honour of God, who is glorified in the holy activity of the elect and in the impotent fury of the rejected. Further the "holy activities of the elect" are not the result of self-motivation but are solely the outworking of the divine will.

It is clear that in such a theology there can be no place for a doctrine of "works": all possibility of co-operation between the creature and the Creator is ruled out; and yet this theology ought to contain the hope of perfection more surely than does the theology of Wesley, who taught a limited self-determination, whilst Toplady wrote about an irresistible grace. By which grace the human will was so over-ruled by the divine that perfect concurrence with the good and acceptable and perfect will of God was effected. Yet Toplady did not regard this "perfect concurrence with the perfect will of God" as achieving perfection; or alternatively he delayed the hour of achievement until the hour of death. By its very nature irresistible grace ought to break "every barrier down", yet it is of the essence of Toplady's teaching that God in His inscrutable wisdom restrains his irresistible grace so that no soul may reach perfection whilst on earth. Thus the possibility of perfection is admitted, but its realisation is denied.

Doubtless it was Wesley's use of a term for which he professed no liking that occasioned much of Toplady's
difficulty. Had he spoken and written only of perfect love, some of the most acrimonious controversy of the 18th century might have been avoided. As we have already seen, Wesley's doctrine is not acceptable in its entirety by some of his most sympathetic interpreters, so it is not surprising that it should be rejected by Toplady. A "perfection" that is not necessarily sinless, one that can be "set too high", one that can be improved upon, and, worst of all, one that may be lost — and that finally; cannot but occasion perplexity and resentment amongst those who teach that perfection, flawlessness, and impeccability are the same thing.

It will be recalled that Fletcher and Sellon sought to justify Wesley's doctrine; Fletcher by distinguishing between three types of perfection, and Sellon by trying to show that perfection and impeccability were not synonymous terms. In his "Church of England Vindicated from the Charge of Arminianism" Toplady states that Dr. Newell is wrong when he suggests that the justified who fall into sin after their justification have that sin imputed to them. Dr. Newell had said: "They form very perverse notions of the justified, who believe, that after they are once made just, they cannot fall into sin: or if by chance, they should do anything prohibited by the laws of God, that God does not impute it as sin." To this Toplady replies first by challenging the accuracy of Dr. Newell’s rendering of the Latin, and then by

"Paradisaical, Mediatorial and Christian", Works of John Fletcher, vol. 6 page 270
Works of Toplady, vol. 5 page 40
saying:

"To talk (as you would fain make the passage do) of God's actually imputing sin to justified persons, would be a contradiction in terms: since the negative part of justification itself lies, essentially, in the non-imputation of any sin whatever, Psalm xxxii. 1, 2. And the man, to whom any one sin is imputed by God, is and must be, ipso facto, an unjustified person. All then that can be inferred from the passage is, 1. That justified men are not impeccable; the doctrine of sinless perfection in this life, even after grace received, being false, fanatical, and presumptious. 2. That, consequently, even justified persons may, and too frequently do, fall into sin; and 3. That, whenever they do so, God, whose judgment is necessarily according to truth, considers such falling as sinful; sin being sin, as much when committed by a child of God, as when committed by any other: the state of the offending person not being able to reverse the nature of things."

Sellon seized on the words of Toplady's first inference;

"That justified men are not impeccable" and replied:

"That justified men are not impeccable we deny no more than you. But is this any argument that the doctrine of sinless perfection is false? What has such a conclusion to do with the premises? You may just as well reason thus: Innocent men are not impeccable therefore the doctrine of sinless perfection is false. Never the more for that, Adam and Eve were innocent, and in a state of sinless perfection once; yet at the same time they were peccable, capable of sinning as we know by sad experience. Hence it is plain that being in a peccable state is no proof of the falsity of the doctrine of sinless perfection; whether that doctrine be false or not. One might have thought that a man of your deep sagacity might have discerned that to be sinlessly perfect, and to be \textit{peccabile} impeccable, are things widely different."

\[\text{The Church of England Vindicated from the Charge of Arminianism, Works of Toplady, vol. 5 pp. 40-1}
\[\text{The Church of England Vindicated from the Charge of Absolute Predestination. Sellon's Works, p.397}\]
There will be many who, though not possessed of Toplady's "deep sagacity", will question Sellon's easy assurance that sinless perfection and impeccability "are things widely different". Nevertheless Toplady's attempt to by arguing disprove the doctrine of sinless perfection from the premise he quotes will avail little; for it does not follow that because the justified can and do fall into sin, perfection is impossible. Indeed his premises can be made to prove the opposite; for if the justified are those to whom no sin can be imputed, they are those who enjoy an imputed perfection. On the other hand Sellon's attempt to distinguish between the flawlessness of impeccability and the flawlessness of perfection is quite untenable. The fact that Adam and Eve succumbed to temptation is, to Sellon, evidence of their peccability although they were regarded as perfect. As they fell from perfection it is maintained they were peccable, but it could just as truly be maintained that as they were peccable they were not perfect. Untried innocence cannot be equated with perfection.

Eighteenth century theology interpreting the Fall story of Genesis 3 as literal history could not avoid the dilemma involved in a "fall from perfection".

Before attempting briefly to summarise the contents of this chapter, it is necessary to point out yet again that although Toplady and Wesley differ on the subject of perfection, they yet have a common standing ground. Both taught that antinomianism was a real peril, and yet
whilst their unanimity here cannot be doubted, they, though reasoning from the same premise, arrived at opposite conclusions. To Toplady Methodism was simply "varnished antinomianism". It numbered amongst its members those, who presuming to think themselves perfect, set themselves above the law. For such do the grace of God could/nothing more; unlike St. Paul they had "already attained". But if antinomianism was the peril of those who believed in free-will, how much greater the danger for those who believed that their salvation was eternally decreed and effectually secured. Inevitably from such a doctrine there would follow the belief that as works were of no avail, they were of no account. Wesley feared this corollary and so impressed upon his own flock the doctrine of perfect love, which -whatever defect it may possess- was a genuine attempt to wed the New Testament teaching concerning holiness to the New Testament doctrine of Justification by faith. It was, as Dr. Cell has said, "the innermost kernel of the Christian ethic of life" and one that "is throughly rooted and grounded in the New Testament teaching and in the teaching of historic Christianity." Thus Wesley links the piety of the Calvinist who sings "nothing in my hand I bring" with that Catholic piety, which, rooted in his passion for holiness, enables him to say in his translation of Paulus Gerhardt,

"Too much to Thee I cannot give;  
Too much I cannot do for Thee;  
Let all Thy love, and all Thy grief,  
Graven on my heart for ever be."
Nevertheless, although Wesley returns to the Catholic idea of holiness, his is not "a thing enskyed and sainted", but piety that could be manifested in the mine and in the mart as well as in the cloister or the cell. Furthermore, it not an egoistic longing, a hunger for personal righteousness as an end in itself; but a passionate desire to enrich society through personal effort and attainment. In the words of his brother Charles he prays:

"That all mankind Thy truth may see,  
O perfect holiness in me."

A prayer that finds inspiration in that of our Saviour, "For their sakes I sanctify myself".

In summarising this chapter it is necessary to note briefly the nature of the agreement and disagreement of the two contestants. Both believed that perfection was attainable; both believed that it was taught in Scripture and in the Articles and Homilies of the Anglican Church; but whilst Wesley believed that any who had the requisite faith could attain it here and now, Toplady declared that perfection was the inheritance only of the elect, and that it was secured only at the close of their earthly pilgrimage. Wesley insists that the perfect are not only kept free from transgression, but are cleansed from indwelling sin; which latter claim Toplady denies. Again, dread of antinomianism is common to both, yet whilst Toplady sees it as the inevitable result of believing oneself to be perfect, Wesley regards the teaching
of perfection as the only antidote to "the bane of true religion". Toplady's rejection of the doctrine of Christian perfection is doubtless due, in large measure, to his inability to understand what Wesley had in mind. But it is also founded in his anxiety to uphold the Calvinist doctrine of total depravity. His emphasis on the awful sinfulness of sin, the utter helplessness of fallen man, and the unutterable undeservedness of grace, are the grand truths of the faith that he has immortalised in "Rock of Ages." Even if it be true that the hymn is a dart directed against Wesley's insolent doctrine of entire sanctification, (as is suggested by W.T. Stead,) the fact remains that it is truly titled as "A living and dying prayer for the holiest believer in the world"; that its devotional value far exceeds its polemical even though it breathes in song the Calvinist conviction that "No man is able, either of himself, or by any grace received in this life, perfectly to keep the commandments of God; but doth daily break them in thought, word, and deed."
Chapter 17

PREDESTINATION.
In the last chapter I have observed that the literature of the Toplady-Wesley controversy is limited to five works. It could, however, be said, that as far as the doctrine of predestination is concerned, it is limited to that one sentence with which Wesley closed his abridgement of Toplady's Zanchius. "The sum of all this is: One in twenty (suppose) of mankind are elected; nineteen in twenty are reprobated: The elect shall be saved do what they will: The reprobate shall be damned do what they can." Toplady roused to blazing anger by this "forgery" seeks to shew that Wesley's "consequence" cannot be drawn from the tenets of Zanchius; whilst Wesley maintains that no other conclusion is possible. To his support rally Fletcher, Olivers, and Sellon, whilst Toplady is aided by his fellow contributors to the Gospel Magazine - chief amongst whom were the brothers Hill.

Toplady in his translation of Zanchius - a work that so offended the Arminians that Tyerman was constrained to say of it, "A more impious piece in the garb of piety was never published" had written:

"Election is the golden thread that runs through the whole Christian system; it is the leaven that pervades the whole lump. It is the bond which keeps and connects together the whole Christian system; which, without this, is like a system of sand, ever ready to fall to pieces. It is the cement which holds the fabric together; nay, it is the
very soul that animates the whole frame. It is so blended and interwoven with the entire scheme of Gospel doctrine, that, when the former is excluded, the latter bleeds to death."

From this one quotation - and it could be supported by very many more - it is evident that Toplady regards election as the foundation and corner-stone of the Christian Gospel. Small wonder, then, he defended it against all of different persuasion, and with such violence that Olivers was obliged to say to him, "Politeness is not your taste."

After Wesley had published his abridgement of Toplady's translation of Zanchius, Toplady addressed to him two letters by way of rejoinder. The first is of little polemical value, and has rightly been described as a "scurrilous and undignified performance": the second is an examination of Wesley's tract "The Consequence Proved"; but it contains little of real apologetic. Purged of its invective the first letter amounts to nothing more than a charge of abridging unfairly. Toplady accuses Wesley in these words:

"You draw up a flimsy, partial compendium of Zanchius: a compendium which exhibits a few detached propositions, placed in the most disadvantageous point of view, and without including any part of the evidence upon which they stand. But this alone was not sufficient to compass the desired end. Unsatisfied with carefully and totally supressing every proof, alleged by Zanchius, in support of his argument; a false colouring must likewise be superinduced, by inserting a sentence or two, now and then, of your own foisting in."

Toplady's Works, v.5. p.272. cp Wesley's works, v.14
Oliver's Letter to Toplady, p.6. p.196
Toplady's Works, v.5 pages 319-320
In view of this accusation it is necessary to compare the abridgement with the translation. Toplady's Zanchius, even when his "Preface on the Divine Attributes" and his "Appendix concerning the fate of the Ancients" are excluded, numbers 82 pages - roughly 30,000 words. Wesley's abridgement numbers 9 pages - roughly 3,000 words; so it is obvious that Wesley has purged the original of all that he deemed superfluous. But throughout the whole of these 3,000 words Wesley does not add - apart from his conclusion - a dozen words. The charge of "inserting a sentence or two now and then" is without foundation. The only sentence Wesley inserts is one of five words. In another place he removes the word "law" and substitutes for it the words "justice and mercy". In yet another place he questions an analogy.

Toplady quite rightly asserts that Wesley omits "every proof alleged by Zanchius in support of his argument", but misrepresents the case when he observes that Wesley's compendium "exhibits a few detached propositions placed in the most disadvantageous point of view". Throughout his abridgement Wesley keeps to Toplady's numbering. From the first proposition to the last, (division and subdivision,) he follows Toplady's order. Moreover in his second letter Toplady charges Wesley with altering the phrase "Adam's degenerate offspring" to the one word "men"; and also of substituting the word "hell" for the phrase "sinful and miserable estate". A charge which is not

\[ \text{See Wesley's works, vol. 14 page 195. cp. with Toplady's works, vol. 5 p. 262.} \]
\[ \text{See Wesley's Works, vol. 14, p. 195. "Is this a parallel case?"} \]
\[ \text{Toplady's works, vol. 5 p. 377} \]
sustained by a comparison of the texts in the printed works of the rival theologians. Wesley does not remove either of the phrases complained of, nor does he insert the words objected to. Though if he did the sense of the passage would in no way be altered. I suggest that any unbiased reader of Wesley's abridgement would agree that no injustice is done to the cardinal teaching of Zanchius. All Wesley has done is to make the implicates of Zanchius's teaching clear and unambiguous to the general reader. Indeed, it is hard to escape the conviction that Toplady was more incensed by Wesley's fidelity to Zanchius than by any misrepresentation of him. Toplady in his rejoinder to Wesley's abridgement wreathes himself and his readers in clouds of verbiage, but never faces the challenge of the "Consequence Proved". Wesley's argument is simply this: If God has eternally decreed the salvation of the elect, they must be saved; "they will be saved do what they will"; or if He has decreed the reprobation of any, then such cannot avoid their doom; "they will be damned do what they can". By stringing together texts wrenched from their context, Toplady upholds his doctrine of election, but so presents it that it affronts not only the intellect, but the conscience. He makes man a puppet and God an ogre. Both of these assertions he would have denied with uncompromising invective, and so it is necessary to examine in greater detail the necessitarianism which underlies his whole philosophy; for whilst Toplady would have held to the paradox that God is supreme, and man is free, he so pressed the doctrine of supremacy that he made nonsense of the idea of responsibility.
"No freedom no morals" has long been the essence of libertarian ethics; for one of the strongest arguments brought by the libertarians has been that necessitarianism makes impossible all ethical values. Toplady, however, does not recognise this fact. Unequivocally he declares a divine fatalism, without hesitation he preaches the salvation of the elect, and the damnation of the reprobate: yet withal he still speaks and writes of justice, deserts, and responsibility. Commencing from the doctrine of the foreknowledge of God, which he equates with foreordination, he builds up his argument, which can be reduced to various propositions such as he finds in Zanchius.

1. "Divine predestination has for its objects, all things that are created: no creature, whether rational or irrational, animate or inanimate, is exempted from its influence. All things whatever, from the highest angel to the meanest reptile, and from the meanest reptile to the minutest atom, are the objects of God's eternal decrees and particular providence."

2. "Predestination may be considered, as relating generally to mankind, and them only: and in this view we define it to be, 'The everlasting, sovereign, and invariable purpose of God, whereby He did determine within himself, to create Adam in his own image and likeness, and then to permit his fall; and to suffer him, thereby, to plunge himself and his whole posterity (inasmuch as they all sinned in him, not only virtually, but also federally and representatively) into the dreadful abyss of sin, misery and death."

3. "Consider predestination as relating to the elect only, and it is 'That eternal, unconditional, particular and irreversible act of the divine will..."
whereby, in matchless love, and adorable sovereignty, God determined within himself to deliver a certain number of Adam's degenerate offspring, out of that sinful and miserable estate, into which, by his primitive transgression, they were to fall."

4. "Predestination, as it regards the reprobate, is 'That eternal, most holy, sovereign, and immutable act of God's will, whereby he hath determined to leave some men to perish in their sins, and to be justly punished for them.'"

5. "We assert, that, as all men, universally, are not elected to salvation; so neither are all men universally, ordained to condemnation."

6. "We assert that the number of the elect and also of the reprobate, is so fixed and determinate, that neither can be augmented or diminished."

7. "That the decrees of election and reprobation are immutable and irreversible."

8. "They, who are predestinated to life, are likewise predestinated to all those means, which are indispensably necessary in order to their meetness for, entrance upon, and enjoyment of that life."

9. "Not one of the elect can perish, but they must all necessarily be saved."

10. "The non-elect were predestinated, not only to continue in final impenitency, sin and unbelief; but were likewise, for such their sins, righteously appointed to infernal death hereafter."

11. "The condemnation of the reprobate is necessary and inevitable."

12. "Notwithstanding God did, from all eternity, irreversibly choose out and fix upon some to be partakers of
salvation by Christ, and rejected the rest (who are therefore termed by the apostle, the refuse, or those that remained and were left out); acting, in both, according to the good pleasure of his own sovereign will: yet he did not herein act an unjust, tyrannical, or cruel part; nor yet show himself a respecter of persons."

This is the essence of Toplady's doctrine of election, concerning which Wesley passed so damning a judgment. The question that must now be asked and answered is a simple one, although it may not permit of a simple answer. "Is Wesley's appraisal sound?" Toplady had no doubt whatever that it was not, and in his tract on "The Scheme of Christian and Philosophical Necessity Asserted" he labours to expose the fallacies inherent in Wesley's judgment. It cannot, however, be maintained that Toplady answers Wesley's challenge. Skillfully he avoids the crux of the matter; nowhere does he disprove the "consequence" of Wesley; for no amount of theological chicanery can disguise the fact that a predestined fate cannot be avoided. From this it follows "The elect shall be saved, do what they will: The reprobate shall be damned, do what they can". Propositions 9 and 11 above permit of no other interpretation, for if "Not one of the elect can perish" and if "The condemnation of the reprobate is....inevitable"; then it is beyond controversy that the elect shall be saved and the reprobate shall be damned.

Now, before looking at Toplady's attempted rebuttal of this conclusion, it is necessary to look yet again at his accusation of unfair abridgement. All the scriptural and philosophical foundation of Zanchius is omitted, only the bare outlines of the propositions are recorded and these are slightly emended.
I say "slightly emended" for the sense of the passage in every case is fully maintained — indeed, clarified by brevity. On the three occasions when he adds to the text of Zanchius his purpose is clearly evident. He questions the relevance of an analogy, substitutes two words for one, and adds five words at the close of chapter four of his abridgement. Toplady's translation reads:

"Before I conclude this head, I will obviate a fallacious objection, very common in the mouths of our opponents: 'How say they, 'is the doctrine of reprobation reconcilable with the doctrine of a future judgment?' To which I answer, that there need no pains to reconcile these two, since they are so far from interfering with each other, that one follows from the other, and the former renders the latter necessary. Before the judgment of the great day, Christ does not so much act as the judge of his creatures, as their absolute Lord and Sovereign. From the first creation to the final consummation of all things; he does in consequence of his own eternal and immutable purpose (as a divine person), graciously work in and on his own elect, and permissively harden the reprobate. But when all the transactions of providence and grace are wound up in the last day: he will then properly sit as Judge; and openly publish, and solemnly ratify, if I may so say, his everlasting decrees, by receiving the elect, body and soul into glory, and by passing sentence on the non-elect (not for their having done what they could not help, but) for their wilful ignorance of divine things, and their obstinate unbelief; for their omissions of moral duty, and for their repeated iniquities and transgressions."

After abbreviating this somewhat Wesley adds the words "which they could not help" and thereby throws into bold relief the absurdity of speaking in one breath of the "permissively hardening of the reprobate", and in the next of "their wilful ignorance of divine things, and their obstinate unbelief".

— The Doctrine of Absolute Predestination", pp.268-9 of v.5 Toplady's works.
In the place where Wesley substituted "justice and mercy" for the word "law", he not only reveals the weakness of Toplady's argument but makes valid the proposition.

Toplady writes:

"He is a tyrant, in the common acceptation of that word, who (1) either usurps the sovereign authority, and arrogates to himself a dominion to which he has no lawful right: or (2) who, being originally a lawful prince, abuses his power, and governs contrary to law. But who dares lay either of these accusations to the divine charge?"

Neither of these propositions is sound. It does not follow that a usurper will be a tyrant; nor does it follow that government "contrary to law" will be tyrannical. If the law itself be tyrannical, then government "contrary to law" will be benevolent. Wesley makes sense of the sentence by saying "He is a tyrant... who... abuses his power and rules contrary to justice and mercy".

Where Wesley challenges the appositeness of the analogy, Toplady had said:

"God, in the reprobation of some, does not act a cruel part. Whoever accused a chief magistrate, of cruelty, for not sparing a company of atrocious malefactors?"

To this Wesley adds the question "Is this a parallel case?"

There is one other case of substitution of a word. Toplady writes: "The ancient fathers only make use of the word predestination, as it refers to angels or men, whether
good or evil". Wesley abbreviates this to "However it (predestination) chiefly refers to angels or men, whether good or evil". The sense of the passage is not impaired and it is doubtful whether the substitution of the word "chiefly" for "only" is intentional. It is probably a slip of the pen. At all events, Wesley does not deliberately seek to alter the complexion of Toplady's translation - he had nothing to gain in controversy by doing so - and so Toplady's charge of superinducing a false colour "by inserting a sentence of two, now and then", is an exaggeration.

Naturally Toplady was deeply incensed by Wesley's abridgement, and he had good reasons for being so. Quite apart from Wesley's unpardonable use of Toplady's initials; the stripping of Zanchius of all his adornments, so that his contours stood out in bold relief, would kindle in Toplady a white-hot anger. To see the darling of his heart and mind paraded in such manner would rouse his fiercest wrath, and in the defence of his beloved mentor he would engage to the full all his powers of invective and satire. The task of deciding whether Toplady was more antagonised with Wesley for using his initials than for abridging his translation, is one that would give pleasure to a psycho-analyst. On the whole I incline to the view that the prestige of his hero meant more to Toplady than did his own, yet self-conceit was not entirely absent. But be this as it may: when Wesley's

\[\text{ibid p. 228.}\]
\[\text{Wesley's Abridgement, Works vol. 14, p. 192}\]
abridgement reached Toplady he lost no time in unburdening himself in a letter that must ever demean him in the eyes of his reader. The violence of his emotion unbalanced his thought. An angry man rarely thinks clearly, and in his anger Toplady seeks to support his tenets "with language worthy of Billingsgate and arguments worthy of Bedlam".

As was to be expected the burden of Toplady's replies to Wesley is the proving false of the latter's summing up with which he closed his abridgement. Hence it is necessary to examine in some detail both this summing up and the replies it evoked. Wesley in his summary of Zanchius and in his tract "The Consequence Proved" centres attention on the following four points.

1. The certainty of the salvation of the elect.
2. The certainty of the damnation of the reprobate.
3. The uselessness of attempting to avoid one's predestinated end.
4. The impossibility, if not absurdity, of attributing either sin or virtue to necessitated beings.

It has already been noted the Rule of Faith for both Toplady and Wesley was the Scriptures and their "faithful epitome" the doctrinal standards of the Anglican Church as expressed in the Articles and Homilies. But whilst Wesley allows the right of private judgment, Toplady does not. He interprets every article in the light of the seventeenth, but Wesley claims the right to expound this particular Article in the light of the rest. That Article XVII can bear the
interpretation that Toplady puts upon it is beyond dispute. Yet - as I have already said - the fact that the extreme Calvinists found it necessary to supplement this particular Article with the more forthright confession as contained in the Lambeth Articles is proof that it was not free from ambiguity. Wesley said he subscribed to its "plain, unforced grammatical meaning" as truly and as sincerely as did his friend George Whitefield - or his opponent Augustus Toplady. Moreover there is no ambiguity about Articles II, XV, and XXXI wherein universal redemption is expressly taught; so Wesley claimed for himself the right to interpret for himself Article XVII, and allowed similar liberty to Toplady in respect of the others. Scholars both before and since Toplady's day have disagreed as to the precise meaning to be put upon an article that was doubtless purposely so framed as to permit of either an Arminian or Calvinist interpretation.

As Article II speaks of the salvation "of men" (without any reservation), and as Article XV speaks of "the sins of the world", and as Article XXXI goes still further and speaks of "the sins of the whole world", it is apparent that Toplady's statement "Open the Liturgy where you will and Calvinism stares you in the face" is not above question. It is not, therefore, surprising that the more extreme Calvinists should desire a confession of faith that estab-

| See Wesley's letter to "John Smith", Letters v.2, pp.58-65 |
lishes beyond doubt the doctrine of absolute predestination. This they secured in the Lambeth Articles, but - as already shown - they, by so doing, acknowledged that the doctrines of free will and universal salvation were not alien to the spirit and teaching of the Church of England. As Article XVII stands, it is possible to deduce it from it a doctrine of universalism just as truly as a doctrine of limited atonement; for nowhere does this Article expressly declare that salvation is not intended for all. It reads: "Predestination to Life is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby (before the foundations of the world were laid) he hath constantly decreed by his counsel secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour. Wherefore, they which be endued with so excellent a benefit of God be called according to God's purpose by his Spirit working in due season." In this and what follows immediately there is no statement of a limited atonement, for the called and chosen may not be a few, or many, but all. May it not be that God, whose love cannot fail or be defeated, has predestined every soul He has created to share His glory, even though eternity is needed to ensure their perfection. Whether this be true or not, one fact stands out clearly, the idea of a Shepherd seeking "until He find", is more likely to secure acceptance by an enlightened conscience, than the infamous suggestion that a Holy, all-wise, all-powerful creator had brought into
existence countless thousands only to condemn them to endless woe, that thereby his own glory may be enhanced.

Wesley no more than Toplady gave any place to the idea of a universal restoration, but he could not tolerate the thought that God did not purpose to extend to all the gift of pardon. He believed in the sovereignty of God, but the God he put in the sovereign place bore no resemblance to the being that Toplady was pleased to extol. It is this difference of opinion as to the nature of God that underlies the whole controversy. Toplady's emphasis is on the vindication of the divine will, Wesley's on the revelation of the divine love. As the divine will cannot be thwarted the elect must be saved whether they wish it or not, and the reprobate must be lost no matter how much they may desire to be saved. Toplady did not admit that this was the true consequence of his vindication of the decrees; and laboured to show that none would be lost after doing all they could to be saved, nor would any be saved whose life did not bear the evidences of grace; and in so doing undermines much of his teaching concerning salvation by faith alone. It is true that he seeks to safeguard his position by showing that the decree of election includes all the means to that end; but the fact still remains that both the saved and the damned were given no choice as to their destiny.
By a simple, if rather lengthy, illustration Fletcher supports Wesley's "Consequence". In his tract "An Answer to the Revd. Mr. Toplady's Vindication of the Decrees" he writes:

"I side with Mr. Wesley for the consequence; guarding it against cavils by a clause, which his love for brevity made him think needless. And the guarded consequence which I undertake to defend runs thus: from the doctrine of the absolute and unconditional predestination of some men to eternal life, and of all others to eternal death, it necessarily follows that some men shall be saved, do what they will, till the absolute and efficacious decree of election actually necessitate them to obey, and be saved; and that the rest of mankind shall be damned do what they can, till the absolute and efficacious decree of reprobation necessitate them to sin and be damned.

An illustration will, at once, show the justness of this consequence to the unprejudiced reader. Fifty fishes sport in a muddy pond, where they have received life. The skilful and almighty owner of the pond has absolutely decreed, that ten of these fishes, properly marked with a shining mark, called 'election', shall absolutely be caught in a certain net, called a 'gospel net', on a certain day, called 'the day of his power'; and that they shall every one be cast into a delightful river, where he has engaged himself by an eternal covenant of particular redemption to bring them without fail. The same omnipotent proprietor of the pond has likewise absolutely decreed, that all the rest of the fishes, namely, forty, which are properly distinguished by a black mark, called 'reprobation', shall never be caught in the gospel net; or if they are entangled in it at any time, they shall always be drawn out of it, and so shall necessarily continue in the muddy pond till, on a certain day, called 'the day of his wrath,' he shall sweep the pond with a certain net, called a 'law net', catch them all, and cast them into a lake of fire and brimstone, where he has engaged himself by an everlasting covenant of non-redemption, to bring them all without fail, that they may answer the end of their predestination to death, which is to show the goodness of his law net, and to destroy them for having been bred in the muddy pond, and for
not having been caught in the gospel net. The owner of the pond is wise as well as powerful. He knows, that, absolutely to secure the end to which his fishes are absolutely predestinated, he must also absolutely secure the means which conduce to that end; and, therefore, that none may escape their happy or their unfortunate predestination, he keeps, night and day, his hold of them all by a strong hook, called 'necessity', and by an invisible line, called 'Divine decrees'. By means of this line and hook it happens, that if the fishes which bear the mark 'election' are ever so loth to come into the gospel net, or to stay therein, they are always drawn into it in a day of powerful love; and if the fishes which bear the mark of 'reprobation' are for a time, ever so desirous to wrap themselves in the gospel net, they are always drawn out of it in a day of powerful wrath. For, though the fishes seem to swim ever so freely, yet their motions are all absolutely fixed by the owner of the pond, and determined by means of the above mentioned line and hook. If this is the case, says Mr. Wesley, ten fishes shall go into the delightful river, let them do what they will, let them plunge in the mud of their pond ever so briskly, or leap towards the lake of fire ever so often, while they have any liberty to plunge or leap. And all the rest of the fishes forty in number, shall go into the lake of fire, let them do what they can, let them involve themselves ever so long in the gospel net, and leap ever so often towards the fine river, before they are absolutely necessitated to go, through the mud of their own pond, into the sulphurous pool. The consequence is undeniable, and I make no doubt but all unprejudiced persons see it as well as myself: as sure as two and two make four, or, if you please, as sure as ten and forty make fifty, so sure ten fishes shall be finally caught in the gospel net, and forty in the law net. Should Mr. Toplady say, that this is only an illustration, I drop it, and roundly assert, that if two men, suppose Solomon and Absalom, are absolutely predestinated to eternal life; whilst two other men, suppose Mr. Baxter and Mr. Wesley, are absolutely predestinated to eternal death; the two elect shall be saved, do what they will; and the two reprobates shall be damned, do what they can: that is, let
Solomon and Absalom worship the abomination of the Zidonians and of the Moabites in ever so public a manner; let them, for years, indulge themselves with heathenish women collected from all countries; if they have a mind, let them murder their brothers, defile their sisters, and imitate the incestuous Corinthians, who took his own father's wife; yet they can never really endanger their finished salvation. The indelible mark of unconditional election to life is upon them; and forcible, victorious grace shall, in their last moments, if not before, draw them irresistibly and infallibly from iniquity to repentance. Death shall unavoidably make an end of their indwelling sin; and to heaven they shall unavoidably go. On the other hand, let a Baxter and a Wesley astonish the world by their ministerial labours; let them write, speak, and live in such a manner as to stem the torrent of iniquity, and turn thousands to righteousness; with St. Paul, let them take up their cross daily, and preach and pray, not only with tears, but 'with the demonstration of the Spirit and with power;' let unwearied patience and matchless diligence carry them with increasing fortitude through all the persecutions, dangers, and trials, which they meet with from the men of the world, and from false brethren; let them hold on in this wonderful way to their dying day; yet, if the indelible mark of unconditional reprobation to death is upon them, necessitating, victorious wrath shall, in their last moments, if not before, make them necessarily turn from righteousness, and unavoidably draw back to perdition; so shall they be fitted for the lake of fire, the end to which, if God Calvinistically pass them by, they were absolutely ordained through the predestinated medium of remediless sin and final apostasy. This is the true state of the case: to spend time in proving it, would be offering the judicious reader as great an insult as if I detained him to prove that the north is opposed to the south."

It is hard to say whether the eloquence or the sanity of this argument is the more appealing. Certainly it establishes by way of illustration and analogy the truth of Wesley's consequence: the elect shall be saved and the reprobate shall be
damned, and that irrespective of moral worth.

Wesley had not the leisure of either the Vicar of Madeley or the Vicar of Broad-Hembury, and had, therefore, to content himself with a much shorter statement of his case. He maintained that his consequence was established by several of Toplady's propositions when taken singly, and that it was beyond question that the total of his argument permitted of no other conclusion. Toplady had claimed "When love is predicated of God it implies (1) His everlasting will, purpose and determination to save his people"; and so Wesley replied: "I appeal to all men, whether it is not a natural consequence, even of this, that 'all these shall be saved, do what they will'. You may say, 'O, but they will only do good'. Be it so: Yet the consequence stands." He continues in the words of the third proposition as given above, and by stressing the words IMMUTABLE and UNCONDITIONAL, says "From hence it undeniably follows 'these shall be saved, do what they will'. If proposition 9 alone be true ("Not one of the elect can perish") then the consequence stands -'the elect shall be saved do what they will'.

Infinitely more terrible is the second part of the consequence as it relates to the non-elect. The thought that eternal bliss has been reserved for some creates difficulty for the ethicist, but the idea that before all time God has decreed the damnation of any is simply intolerable. Calvin, 

† The Consequence Proved, Wesley Works, v.X p. 370
himself, regarded this doctrine with some misgiving, but not so Toplady. In his eleventh proposition he asserts "The condemnation of the reprobate is necessary and inevitable." What other conclusion, then, could Wesley - or any other reader - arrive at save the one he did? Proposition 11 categorically asserts the damnation of the reprobate, whilst the preceding one reaffirms it in language that permits of no equivocation. Only one conclusion is possible, and Wesley stated it - "The reprobate shall be damned do what they can."

The sum total of Toplady's teaching on predestination is simply this: if one is numbered amongst the elect one's future bliss is certain, but if one is numbered amongst the reprobate, then infernal death hereafter is inevitable; and nothing that one can do, be it good or bad, can effect this issue in the slightest degree. Toplady could not deny this; but he tried to avoid the suggestion that a good man might have to endure an eternity of woe, or that a bad man might be received into glory by asserting that the elect manifest in their lives their receipt of electing grace, whilst the non-elect would prove and justify their reprobation by wallowing in their sins. By this means he seeks to maintain some semblance of justice and moral value. But he is not able to do so. His primary teaching does not permit this suggestion that good works are the evidence of election. Vigorously had he declared any doctrine of merit to be false.

\[\text{Proposition 11 as given above, but actually proposition 6 in chapter 4 of his Zanchius.}\]
Even if it be held that the good works of the elect are not meritorious but purely election-evidencing works, Toplady's claim cannot stand; for these election-proving works or the evil works of the reprobate, whereby their damnation was evinced and ultimately justified, are no more truly works than is the movement of a straw when blown by the wind. Toplady taught that whatever be man's destination, be it heaven or hell, it was quite independent of effort, achievement, or resolve. Thus he could not consistently deny that the elect were saved do what they would or the reprobate were damned do what they could. Nevertheless, he did by arguments—some ingenious and others nonsensical—try to get rid of the criticisms all necessitarian doctrines inevitably evoke.

He challenges Wesley to prove that any man could be lost after striving to be saved. In his tract "More Work for Mr. John Wesley" he asks:

"Can Mr. Wesley produce a single instance of any one man, who did all he could to be saved, and yet was lost? If he can, let him tell us who the man was, where he lived, when he died, what he did and how it came to pass he laboured in vain? If he cannot, let him either retract his consequences, or continue to be posted for a shameless traducer."

Obviously Wesley could do no such thing; for had he done so he would have proved the very dogma that he was contesting.
He would have proved that a struggling sinner was lost despite all his efforts to attain salvation. Yet, Wesley's consequence still stands and is put into clear light by a simple illustration by John Fletcher. He writes:

"As Mr. Toplady's bold request may impose upon his inattentive readers, I beg to point out its absurdity by a short illustration. Mr. Wesley says, 'If there is a mountain of gold, it is heavier than a handful of feathers,' and his consequence passes for true in England; but a gentleman who teaches logic in mystic Geneva, thinks that it is absolutely false, and that Mr. Wesley's forehead "must be petrified, and quite impervious to a blush" for advancing it. "Can Mr. Wesley", says he "show us a mountain of gold which is really heavier than a handful of feathers? If he can, let him tell us what mountain it is, where it lies, in what latitude, how high it is, and who did ever ascend to the top of it; if he cannot, let him either retract his consequences or be posted for a shameless traducer."

When one further examines Toplady's claim that the elect will be saved - not do what they will - but because their holiness is as ensured as their destiny; the fact still has to be faced that the bright light of election casts the dark shadow of reprobation. If the holiness of the elect is secured in the electing decree, then the reprobation of the damned must be so decreed and with their reprobation the sin that makes certain their damnation. In short, Toplady's theology of predestination makes necessary his philosophy. He is a necessitarian, and of his teaching Sellon says:

"Your blasphemous doctrine makes God the author of all the sin in the world."

\[Vindication of the Decrees, Fletcher's Works, v.4. pp. 229-230\]
\[Works of Walter Sellon, p. 444.\]
In another work (An Answer to Aspasio; Vindicated) Sellon advises that predestination had better be left to Turks and heathens - in fact he regards the doctrine as a heathenish one. "To believe that God the gracious, the kind, the merciful God, nay the God who is love itself, should from all eternity have decreed the inevitable damnation of unspeakable numbers of his helpless creatures, without any fault of their own; such a belief seems only worthy of those who have lost all the feeling and tenderness of humanity."

Together with Fletcher and Oliver he seeks to show Toplady (although all of them had doubtless a larger public in view) that necessitated sin or necessitated virtue is a contradiction in terms. Wesley had already attempted this in his abridgement of Toplady's translation by adding to the last sentence of his eighth proposition the words "which they could not help"; and thereby set the whole argument in so clear a light that its weakness - to say nothing of its cruelty - was clearly exposed.

An Answer to Aspasio Vindicated, page 129.

See page 468 of this Essay where the context is given.

"....For their wilful ignorance of divine things, and their obstinate unbelief, for their commissions of moral duty, and for their repeated iniquities" WHICH THEY COULD NOT HELP.
As one would expect Wesley’s addendum added fuel to the already thrice heated fire of Toplady’s wrath; for in burning anger and biting satire he seeks to prove that the added five words caricatured his meaning. The unprejudiced reader will see that (whatever may have been Wesley’s motive in adding his addendum) he, far from caricaturing Toplady’s doctrine, reveals it weakness. From such propositions as “Man fell in consequence of the divine decree”: Whatsoever comes to pass, comes to pass as part of the original plan”: Whatsoever comes to pass, comes to pass by virtue of this absolute omnipotent will of God”: Whatsoever comes to pass, comes to pass necessarily”: “God worketh all things in all men, even wickedness in the wicked”: The non-elect were predestined to continue in final impenitency, sin, and unbelief”: what other deduction can be drawn?

In vain does Toplady labour to prove that such absolute necessitarianism does not destroy moral responsibility. His contortionist efforts to keep a foot in the camps of the libertarian and the determinist only make him appear ridiculous. Moreover when various excerpts from his translation of Zanchius are compared they are seen to be self-contradictory. He seeks to take back with one hand what he has given with the other. The following extracts from Olivers’ letter will serve to evidence this.
Whatsoever comes to pass, comes to pass necessarily. p. 14. (193, 199)

(Qotation from the works of Augustine, Luther and Bucer) God may, in some sense, be said to will the being and commission of sin. p.13. (198)

God worketh all things in all men, even wickedness in the wicked. p. 25 (210)

The will of God is the primary and supreme cause of all things. p. 7. (193)

The only reason that can be assigned why the Deity does this, or omits that, is because it is his own free pleasure. p. 9 (195)

The sole cause why some are saved and others perish, proceeds from his willing the salvation of the former and the perdition of the latter. p. 11. (196)

To say that he willeth sin, does not in the least detract from the Holiness and rectitude of God. p. 14. (199)

Whatsoever comes to pass, comes to pass by virtue of this absolute, omnipotent will of God. p. 7. (193) His will and the execution of it, are irresistible. p.13. (198)

The purpose or decree of God, signifies his everlasting appointment of some men to life and of others to death; which appointment flows ENTIRELY from his own free and sovereign will. p. 19. (204)

God's free and voluntary permission of sin, lays no man under any forcible or compulsive NECESSITY of committing it. p. 13 (199)

Sin, as sin, is the abominable thing that his soul hateth. p. 13. (198)

God is the creator of the wicked, but not of their wickedness. p. 74. (257)

The reprobate shall undergo this punishment justly on account of their sins. Sin is the meritorious and immediate cause of any man's damnation. p. 49 (232)

Again, the condemnation of the ungodly is not unjust, seeing it is for sin. None are, or will be punished but for their iniquities. p. 74 (257)

He cannot consistently with the purity of his nature, the glory of his attributes, and the truth of his declarations be himself the AUTHOR of sin. p. 74 (257)

God does not force them into sin. p. 71. (254) In consequence of their natural depravity, they are voluntarily biased and inclined to evil ---and without any other efficiency lay violent hands on their own souls. p. 76 (259)

He does not condemn any of those (the reprobate) because he has not chosen them, but because they have sinned against him. p. 74. (256)

Slightly abbreviated.

Numbers in brackets refer to pages in vol. 5 of works.
Now it is never difficult to reduce to absurdity an opponent’s arguments if one takes them from their context; or if one reads his own interpretation into utterances made at one time upon one point with utterances made at another time on other points. Yet a careful reading of the context of the foregoing quotations makes it clear that Olivers has not been seeking a purely dialectical advantage.

Toplady really tries hard to reconcile his two positions, which, in effect, are

1. All that happens is the will of God
   and
2. Man alone is responsible for his conduct and for the consequences that flow from it.

But, as Wesley emphasised, none can be held to be either sinners or saints in the divine economy as represented by Toplady. Even if, be held that the inherent corruption of human nature is the cause of transgression, the fact has to be faced that Toplady insists that whatever comes to pass, comes to pass necessarily, and this by virtue of God’s absolute and omnipotent will, the execution of which is irresistible. Moreover his argument from the maxim “effectus sequitur causam proximam” will not bear the weight he would put upon it.

For whilst it is true that a stone falls by its own weight, none would be excused the killing of another by pleading that a stone falls by its own weight. The stone will fall by reason of the law of gravitation, but if I let a stone fall on another my culpability lies in the fact that knowing this law’s operation I still allowed - or failed to prevent - the tragic consequence.
Moreover the conclusion drawn from the argument is not valid in that the analogy is not a true one. God has allowed man to fall, but before the fall a remedy had been provided. Had God simply willed the fall and had left mankind without hope of redemption He would not be the being our moral sense proclaims him to be. It is, however, to the glory of God that He has provided a way for man to rise; for

"An offering and a sacrifice,
A Holy Spirit's energies,
An Advocate with God";
are as much decreed by Him as was the primal fall. With this comment Toplady would have cordially agreed, only he would have hastened to add that the efficacy of the redemptive work of God was limited to the elect. For the non-elect no salvation was possible for none had ever been intended. Only the elect could be saved, and these were not only assured of heaven as their destiny, but also of all the grace and holiness that necessary to get them there. The elect were to enjoy predestinated holiness as a means to a predestinated glory, whilst the reprobate were predestinated to continue in all their sin and in a final impenitency that they may go to their ultimate doom. Thus Toplady tries to show that only the good will get to heaven, and only the bad will go to hell; but he does not answer Wesley's consequence, that the elect whether they be good or bad will get to heaven, and the reprobate be they good or bad will go to hell. From an infallible, irresistible, irreversible decree no other consequence can result.
Yet, curiously enough, Toplady protests against Wesley's consequence in the name of the divine justice. He cannot tolerate the thought that a holy and righteous God would be unjust to any of His children: and so to maintain his doctrine of reprobation he has to prove either that the reprobate are not of the family of God, and therefore not possessed of any title to justice; or else that they are condemned solely because of their sin. This latter he can not do if he remains loyal to his primary teaching. He has owned "The sins of the reprobate were not the cause of their being passed by"; nor the virtues of the elect the cause of their election. In endeavouring to weld his two theses into a consistent whole he simply riots in confusion. Man sins necessarily, he is damned solely because God of His good pleasure has withheld His saving grace, yet despite the fact that he is "predestinated to final impenitency" he is, for his sins, "righteously appointed to infernal death hereafter." Well might Sellon describe such a doctrine as a slander on the Church of England. He asks Toplady:

"Can you slander the Church of England worse than by affirming that she holds a doctrine...which represents the God of mercy as dooming millions and millions of his helpless creatures to NECESSITATED sin and unavoidable torments for same, only to show his SOVEREIGNTY and magnify His JUSTICE? Justice as you represent it, no better than the tyranny of Tiberius, who because it was unlawful to strangle virgins
first
caused the hangman **must** to deflower a
virgin, and afterwards to strangle her**". **

Sellon has here borrowed his illustration from
Wesley's "The Consequence Proved", for there when commenting
upon the "justice" that necessitates that it might destroy
Wesley says:

'Mr. T. himself owns, "The sins of the reprobate
were not the cause of their being passed by; but
merely and entirely the sovereign will and determin­
ing pleasure of God". "O, but their sin was
the cause of their damnation, though not of their
preterition;" that is God determined that they
should live and die in their sins, that he might
afterwards damn them!

Was ever anything like this? Yes, I have read
something like it: When Tiberius had determined to
destroy Sejanus and all his family, as it was un­
lawful to put a virgin to death, what could be done
with a daughter, a child of nine years old? Why,
the hangman was ordered first to deflour, and then
to strangle her! Yet even good Tiberius did not
order her to be strangled 'because she had been
defloured!' If so, it had been a parallel case; it
would have been just what is here affirmed of the
Most High."

Toplady, though he never tried to hide the
darker side of his doctrine, asked that Calvinism be allowed
to "stand upon its legs", and was promptly taken at his word
by Fletcher who showed that if election was the "right leg",
reprobation was the "crooked left leg". Word for word he
translates Toplady's vindication of the decrees so as to
show that "dreadfully crooked as the left leg of Mr. Toplady's
system is, it perfectly agrees with the right leg; that is
with his crooked election, and his bandy predestination."

| Works of John Wesley, v. X p.373 |
| Works of John Fletcher, v.4, p. 237 |
The following excerpts from Fletcher's reply to Toplady will show how he endeavoured to vindicate Wesley's Consequence.

"The elect could no more be saved without personal holiness than they could be saved without personal existence. And why? Because God's own decree secures the means as well as the end, and accomplishes the end by the means. The same gratuitous predestination which ordained the existence of the elect, as men, ordained their purification as saints; and they were ordained to both, in order to their being finally and completely saved in Christ with eternal glory." p. 17

"God the Father hath chosen us in Christ, before the foundation of the world that we should (not be saved, do what we will; but) 'Be ye holy and without blame before him in love' Eph.1.4. Election is always followed by regeneration, and regeneration is the source of all good works." P.18

"Yet, again, God hath from the beginning", that is from everlasting, &c "'chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth' 2 Thess. ii.13. All, therefore, who are chosen to salvation are no less unalterably destined to holiness and faith in the mean while. And, if so, it is giving God the lie to say that the elect shall be saved do what they will. For the elect, like the blessed person who redeemed them, come into the world not to do their own will, but the will of him that sent them; and this is the will of God concerning them, even their sanctification. Hence they are expressly said to be elect unto obedience.

The reprobates could no more be damned without personal wickedness than they could be damned without personal existence. And why? Because God's own decree secures the means as well as the end, and accomplishes the end by the means. The same gratuitous predestination which ordained the existence of the reprobate, as men, ordained their pollution as sinners; and they were ordained to both, in order to their being finally and completely damned in Adam with eternal shame.

"God the Father hath reprobated us in Adam, before the foundation of the world, that we should (not be damned do what we will; but) be unholy and full of blame before him in malice. Reprobation is always followed by apostasy and is the source of all bad works.

"Yet, again, God hath from the beginning, that is from everlasting, reprobated you to damnation through pollution of the spirit and disbelief of the truth. All, therefore, who are reprobated to damnation are no less unalterably destined to wickedness and unbelief in the meanwhile. And if so it is giving God himself the lie to say that the reprobate shall be damned, do what they will.

For the reprobate, like the blessed person who rejected them, come into the world not to do their own will but the will of him that sent them; and this is the will of God concerning them, even their wickedness. Hence they are expressly said to be reprobated unto disobedience.
Not, indeed, chosen because of obedience, but chosen unto it; for works are not the foundation of grace, but streams flowing from it. Election does not depend upon holiness, but holiness depends upon election. So far, therefore, is predestination from being subversive of good works, that predestination is the primary cause of all the good works which have been and shall be wrought from the beginning to the end of time. Pages 18, 19.

"God decreed to bring his elect to glory, in a way of sanctification, and in no other way but that. 'If so' cries Mr. Wesley, 'they shall be saved whether they be sanctified or no'! What notwithstanding their sanctification is, itself, an essential branch of the decree concerning them? The man may as well affirm that Abraham might have been the progenitor of nations though he had died in infancy &c. Equally illogical is Mr. Wesley's impudent slander, that 'the elect shall be saved do what they will,' that is, whether they be holy or not." pages 23, 24.

"Paul's travelling, and Paul's utterance, were as certainly and as necessarily included in the decree of the means, as his preaching was determined by the decree of the end". Page 20.

Not indeed reprobated because of disobedience, but reprobated unto it; for works are not the foundation of wrath, but streams flowing from it. Reprobation does not depend upon wickedness, but wickedness depends upon reprobation. So far, therefore, is predestination from being subversive of bad works, that predestination is the primary cause of all the bad works which have been and shall be wrought from the beginning to the end of time.

God decreed to bring his reprobate to hell in a way of sinning, and no other way but that. "If so" cries Mr. Wesley, "they shall be damned whether they sin or no". What, notwithstanding their sinning is, itself, an essential branch of that decree concerning them? "The man may as well affirm, that Paul might have preached the gospel viva voce, in fifty different regions, without travelling a step!" Page 23. Equally illogical is Mr. Wesley's impudent slander, that "the reprobate shall be damned do what they will", that is, whether they be wicked or not.

The rich glutton's gluttony, and his unmercifulness, were as certainly and as necessarily included in the decree of the means, as his being tormented in hell was determined by the decree of the end.

By this means of comparison and contrast, Fletcher demonstrates that Toplady's argument is two-sided; and that it does not really face the issue involved. If he has rightly stated the
case when he says "We can only do what God from eternity willed and foreknew we should", then Wesley's consequence stands unshaken; and if Toplady's assurance that holiness will inevitably be manifest in the elect be true, then one can only follow in the wake of Wesley and question the value of an "inevitable holiness". Almost a century after Toplady had preached necessitarianism in the name of Christian Theism, T. H. Huxley wrote in his "Lay Sermons", "I protest that if some great power would agree to make me always think what is true and do what is right, on condition of being turned into some sort of clock and wound up every morning before I got out of bed, I should instantly close with the offer. The only freedom that I care about is the freedom to do right; the freedom to do wrong, I am ready to part with on the cheapest terms to any one who will take it from me". Professor Huxley was much too acute a thinker not to have seen the contradiction in terms involved in the idea of "clockwork morality"; but in seeking "freedom to do right" he did not demand that moral responsibility should be required of those who possessed only "the freedom to do wrong". He differed in this from Toplady who, whilst he held that "All things turn out according to the divine predestination, not only the works we do outwardly, but even the thoughts we think inwardly" and also that "The will of God is the primary and supreme cause of all things", yet insisted on moral accountability for necessitated thought and action. It is this wanting it both
ways that creates Toplady's problem; for it is of the essence of determinism that free will is a fiction, and therefore it is nonsense to speak of moral responsibility. As Dr. James Welton puts it: "Without freedom there is no responsibility, and therefore no morality. It would be a mockery to show that one kind of life is better than another if a man be really an automaton, even though he may be deluded by the belief that he determines his own conduct". The thorough-going determinist does not shrink from this consequence of the denial of free-will. Holding that nature is a "closed system", he applies to the operations of the moral self the concept of causation which he discovers and formulates as the result of reflecting upon the processes of the physical world. A man acts in response to forces and influences over which he has no control; if he performs any particular act it is because the influence at work compels him to do it. It is all a matter of cause and effect; everything down to the minutest impulse, depends upon and proceeds from a definite cause whose ultimate origin is in the processes of nature. A man, therefore, is not free and consequently cannot be held responsible in the moral sense for anything he does. If one reads in place of the phrase "the processes of nature" the "will of God", one has Toplady's conception of man's place in the universe, with the exception that he would not have admitted that man cannot be held responsible for his conduct, and justly punished for his wrong-doing. The problem of the freedom of the will may be
described as one of the perennial, because one of the most important problems of philosophy; and one that has exercised the minds of some of the world's greatest thinkers. With pardonable exaggeration one writer has said "the history of the problem of the will is almost the history of philosophy". Fortunately I am not called upon to decide between the rival schools, but one thing is indisputable, if necessitarianism be true then, as Dr. W.T. Davison observed in his Fernley Lecture, "they may discuss ethical subjects who will, for us all controversy and interest in the subject is over". For surely Professor Wildon Carr goes to the heart of the matter when he states: "This moral responsibility IS the freewill problem." Toplady denied free-will, and yet insisted on moral responsibility. It is, therefore, necessary to look yet again at his conception of necessity.

After Wesley had published his tract "The Consequence Proved", he wrote a larger work entitled "Thoughts upon Necessity", which he later supplemented by another tract "A Thought upon Necessity"; the former was seized upon by Toplady and criticised in his "The Scheme of Christian and Philosophical Necessity Asserted"; which in its turn was examined by John Fletcher. Both argument and counter argument are continued at great length, but their sum total can be reduced to a sentence in each case. Toplady, as is to be expected, contradicts...
Toplady, as is to be expected, commences his reasoning from the doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of God, and maintains that as God is the supreme controller of the universe then ALL that happens therein is the outworking of His holy will. Thus he bases his whole case upon the principle of absolute, omniscient, and infallible causation; and declares that any denial of this primary causation in the name of self-determination is an embracing of the error of Manes. Wesley replies, if All that is to happen - even the movement of every speck of dust to a predestined place - is decided before the world was formed, then there can be no place for voluntary agency, and consequently no responsibility. Moreover for God deliberately to create a puppet endowed with the false belief that he determines his own action while all time he is chained by an inescapable necessity is to be guilty of a cruelty only a little less infamous than that implied by the horrible suggestion that He creates certain of these puppets only that they might endure an endless woe. Wesley does not attempt to deny that necessity is the law of life, but he makes no secret of his conviction that Toplady's doctrine of necessity dethrones the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ in order to make room for One whose moral character bears no likeness whatever to the exquisite tenderness and infinite compassion of Him who declared, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father".

Before turning to Toplady's treatise on necessity, it might be well to note in passing that it is not strictly
a reply to Wesley. It is a statement of philosophical necessity supported by passages of Scripture; and the bulk of it could have been written had Wesley never published a word. It is true that Toplady in many places quotes from Wesley's tract—but not always accurately, and never kindly—but his thesis is essentially an apologetic for determinism, rather than a rejoinder. As a polemic it is not comparable with Fletcher's reply to it, which is a restrained and careful analysis of the various points raised. The following extracts may be taken as indicating his main points.

"I would define necessity to be that by which, whatever comes to pass can not but come to pass (all circumstances taken into the account); and can come to pass in no other way or manner, than it does."

"The human body is necessarily encompassed by a multitude of other bodies. Which other surrounding bodies (animal, vegetable, &c) so far as we come within their perceivable sphere, necessarily impress our nerves with sensations correspondent to the objects themselves. These sensations necessarily (and for the most part instantaneously) propagated to the soul: which can no more help receiving them, than a tree can resist a stroke of lightning. Now, (1) if all the ideas in the soul derive their existence from sensation; and (2) if the soul depend absolutely upon the body for all those sensations; and (3) if the body be both primarily and continually dependent, on other extrinsic beings, for the very sensations which it (the body) communicates to the soul;—the consequence seems to me undeniable: that neither the immanent nor the transient acts of man (i.e. neither his mental, nor his outward operations) are self determined; but on the
contrary, determined by the views with which an infinity of surrounding objects necessarily and almost incessantly, impress his intellect. And on what do these surrounding objects themselves, which are mostly material (- - - - - -) depend? Certainly not on itself. It could neither be its own creator, nor can it be its own conserver."

"It seems most agreeable to the radical simplicity, which God has observed in his works, to suppose, that in themselves, all human souls are equal. I can easily believe, that the soul of an oyster-woman has, naturally, the (unexpanded) powers of Grotius, or of Sir. Isaac Newton; and that what conduces to raise the philosopher, the poet, the politician, or the linguist, so much above the ignorant and stupid of mankind, is not only the circumstance of intellectual cultivation, but (still more than that) his having the happiness to occupy a better house, i.e. a body more commodiously organised, than they. The soul of a monthly reviewer, if imprisoned in the same mud walls which are tenanted by the soul of Mr. John Wesley, would similarly circumstanced, reason and act (I verily think) exactly like the bishop of Moorfields. And I know some very sensible people, who even go so far, as to suppose, that, was a human spirit shut up in the skull of a cat, puss would then, notwithstanding, move prone on all fours, purr when stroked, spit when pinched, and birds and mice be her darling objects of pursuit. Now, though I can, by no means, for my own part, carry matters to so extreme a length as this; yet, I repeat my opinion, that much, very much, depends on corporeal organisation....That is, as I apprehend, the soul is more capable of exerting its powers, when lodged in a capacious and well-constructed vehicle. I dare believe, that the brain of Dr. Thomas Nowell is, to that of Mr. John Wesley, as two to one, at the very least. And yet all this is the result of absolute necessity....I just now hinted the conjecture of some, that a human spirit, incarcerated in the brain of a cat, would, probably, both think and behave as that animal now does. But how would the soul of a cat acquit itself, if inclosed in the brain of a man?"

"Foreknowledge, undarkened by the least shadow of ignorance, and superior to all possibility of mistake, is a link, which draws invincible necessity after it". 
"From the evidence alleged, concise and superficial as my allegations have been, we may fairly (and I think unanswerably) conclude: that contingency has nothing to do with births, or burials; and, consequently, that chance never yet added, nor ever will add, 'A single unit to the bill of mortality'. If, therefore, the initial point, from whence we start; and the ultimate goal, which terminates our race; be thus divinely and unchangeably fixed: is it reasonable to suppose, that chance, or any freewill but the freewill of Deity alone, may fabricate the intermediate links of the chain, whose two extremes are held immovably fast in the hands of God himself? - Impossible"

Now, from these extracts alone, it is obvious that Toplady is an extreme necessitarian. He is at one with the sceptics of his day in declaring that man is bound by "inevolutabilis ordo rerum." His stress is primarily laid upon the fact that in the lives of all there are events that evidence the over-ruling guidance of some Power external to man; and in developing this idea he emphasises the fact of causation, and the interplay of heredity and environment in producing a character, which, in its turn, manifests itself in conduct which is the inevitable expression of the strongest desire. He does not, however, accept the conclusion that such reasoning makes inevitable; for along with an absolute determinism he pleads for moral accountability. To Wesley's observation that in such a system "There can be no moral good or evil" he replies:

"Says the objector, 'Moral good or evil' cannot consist with necessity. I, on the contrary, say, that it both can and does."

The point at issue is clear, everything turns on what is meant by necessity. This is a law governed world, in which many events
happen of necessity; yet leave man's moral freedom unimpaired. But according to Toplady's teaching of absolute predestination no freedom is possible. Now, it is undeniable that a right definition of the terms freedom and necessity would have saved much controversy. As Hume observed "a few intelligible definitions would have put an end" to much verbal quibbling. If by "freedom" is meant liberty or physico-political freedom, that is freedom from external restraint, then no one is free. And this seems to be the ground on which Toplady built his argument. Now, for instance, could one deny the law of gravitation? Of necessity heavy bodies must fall to the earth. But this conception of necessity is a very different thing from that which reduces man to an automaton: causation and necessity are not synonymous terms for the ethicist. Volitions are caused, and they in their turn are causes by reason of their effects; yet a volition however caused is in a different category from mere physical causation. The impact of one billiard ball upon another causes it to move, but the movement differs greatly in calibre from that of a man who has witnessed an accident and hurries to render assistance. Intense cold always freezes, just as intense heat always burns; but, for the moralists, external circumstances do not "of necessity" produce the same reaction. "Every man" says Professor Hyslop of Columbia, "must be the cause of his own volitions; otherwise they are not his volitions or acts at all. If I move my arm to pick up my pen, it is not the pen which "caused" the act, nor is it my surroundings, the physical objects about me. If they produced the effect, they should continue to do so as long as
they are about me. There may have been reasons in my surroundings or in the special circumstances under which I am placed for picking up my pen, but 'reasons' are not external causes, and they may not be causes at all. Similarly, if I steal, the act arises from conditions within myself not from the action of external objects; otherwise every conscious agent would be expected to steal immediately he came near the same objects, nay, would be forced to do so. It might even be true that every man would steal under the same conditions, but these conditions would have to be internal, for it is a fact that the sameness of external conditions does not issue in the same results with different persons. To conceive freedom in this way is to see it as self initiative as opposed to foreign initiative; it is only a name for mental causation as contrasted with mechanical causation. There is this supreme difference between the two conceptions, the former establishes personality, whilst the latter would destroy it. "The very essence of personality is the capacity to act as an independent cause. I am myself the cause of my volitions and no other cause is needed." But this, as Dr. Illingworth points out "does not mean the ability to act without a motive, as some of its (freewill) opponents still stupidly seem to suppose. But it does mean the ability to create, or cooperate in the creating our own motives, or to choose our motive, or to transform a weaker motive into a stronger by adding weights to the scale of our own accord, and thus to determine our conduct by our reason; whence it is now usually called the power of self determination - a phrase to which

*Elements of Ethics, p.155
*Christian Faith in an Age of Science, p. 293 (Dr. Rice)
St. Thomas very nearly approaches when he says, 'Man is determined by a combination of reason and appetite (appetitu rationali), that is by a desire whose object is consciously apprehended by the reason as an end to be attained, and he is therefore self-moved'.

Self-determination is, however, anathema to Toplady; he regards it not only as untrue philosophically, but as bordering on the blasphemous. He regards it as an attempt to elevate man to the dignity of God whilst sinking God below the lowliest of His creatures. Some-how he does not seem able to grasp the fact that according to his teaching man is only a pawn with no more choice in his flight or destination than a wind-blown feather. It is too apparent to require demonstration that necessity is interwoven throughout the whole fabric of the universe, its laws permit neither of repeal nor defiance; but this physical necessity has no place in the realm of ethics. Toplady, despite his fondness for logic, overlooked one elementary principle of reasoning, an argument to be valid must be in the same "universe of discourse".

Neither Wesley, nor his followers, were so foolish as to deny the law of causation or to suggest that man was absolutely free; their sole protest was that unless man is possessed of alternative moral choice, and the power to prosecute the line of conduct chosen, it is useless to speak of moral values. If a preordaining decree has decided the moment of my birth and death,

\[ J.R. \text{ Illingworth, Personality: Human & Divine, p.33.} \]
and has "fabricated the intermediate links of the chain" so
that I am impelled to a definite end - be the end what it may
then to speak of "rewarding" me is simply foolish; whilst to
speak of "punishing" me, is more than foolish, it is immoral.

Toplady's conception of the divine justice was grounded
entirely on the supremacy or rights of God; but Wesley so
interpreted justice as to set the rights of man over against
God's. "Sin had not turned man into a mere vessel of wrath
or of mercy, a creature who was damned because of guilt he
had inherited, or saved by a grace that acted without reason
or any regard to foreseen faith or good works. The worst
criminal had his rights, especially the right to a fair
trial before a fair tribunal; and these rights did not cease
simply because the judge was God, and the accused, or even
the condemned, was man. The Creator owed something to the
creature He had formed, and these obligations did not cease
because the first man had sinned. In a perfectly real sense
sin had only increased the duty of God to be just. If original
sin was what Augustine had stated it to be, and what the
Calvinist maintained it was, then it would be truer to name it
the radical wrong of man. The race had not been consulted
by the first man; he was not their representative, for they had
no will in his appointment and no veto on his acts. And so
by every law of justice they ought to be pitied rather than
blamed for what they had suffered in consequence of him; and
it was impossible to conceive anything nearer infinite injustice
than allowing it to involve millions of men in every age and of every age in eternal death." In saying this Dr. Fairburn is only underlining what I have already said: the protest of Wesley and the Arminians generally was in the name justice. No theory of predestination, however watertight its logic may be, can gain acceptance by the intellect if the conscience is outraged. Furthermore, Toplady's necessitarianism did not satisfy the intellect, for it attempted the impossible—the reconciling of an irresistible fiat and moral determination. And still further, Toplady's conclusions were not always the irrefragable dicta he thought them to be. He might, in the words of Tyerman, be "a pope infallible", but there were others who did not think that because they held "opinions different from his" they were "reprobate knaves or fools". Sellon's limitations were many; Olivers was in large measure self-taught; both had had much rougher furrows to hoe than any Toplady had known; but in dialectics they were not one whit inferior to him. Fletcher was, perhaps, the ablest controversialist of them all. His gift of lucid and apt illustration made him a doughty opponent. In his "Remarks on Toplady's Philosophical Necessity" he not only answers Toplady, but shows that to define necessity as "an indissoluble concatenation of secondary causes, created for that end, and of effects, as has a native tendency to secure the certainty of all events"; and then to say that such "necessity of infallible

\[ \begin{align*}
& \text{Christ in Modern Theology, pp. 170-171} \\
& \text{Life of Wesley, pp. 54-5 of vol. 3}
\end{align*} \]
"certainty" lays "no compulsory force on the will of the agent" is so glaring a contradiction in terms, that only one blinded by the light he sought to diffuse, could have failed to see it. It is then needful to look still more closely at Toplady's argument and Fletcher's rejoinder.

Toplady had written:

"The soul is, in a very extensive degree, passive as matter itself."

and also:

"These sensations are necessarily (----) propagated to the soul; which can no more help being affected by them, than a tree can resist a stroke of lightning."

Fletcher seized on these two statements and declared that such teaching degraded man to the level of an inanimate thing; lower even than the beasts.

"Mr. Toplady's scheme of philosophical necessity, by rendering reason useless, saps the very foundation of all moral philosophy, and hardly allows man the low principle of conduct which we call instinct in brutes. Nay the very brutes are not so affected by the objects which strike their senses; but they often run away, hungry as they are, from food which tempts their eye, their nose, and their belly, when they apprehend some danger, though their senses discover none. Beasts frequently act in full opposition to the sight of their eyes; but the wretched scheme which Mr. Toplady imposes upon us as Christian philosophy, supposes that all men necessarily think, judge and act, not only according to the sight of their eyes, but according to the impression made by matter upon all their senses. How would heathen themselves have exploded so carnal a philosophy."

Remarks on Toplady's Scheme of Christian and Philosophical Necessity, page 345 vol 4 Fletcher's Works.

Christian & Philosophical Necessity Asserted, p.17

ibid p. 20
Earlier Fletcher had said:

"This scheme is contrary to genuine philosophy, which has always represented the soul as able to resist the strongest impressions of all the objects that surround the body; and as capable of going against the wind and tide of all the senses. Even Horace, an effeminate disciple of Epicurus, could say, in his sober moments,

Justum et tenacem propositi virum, &c

'Neither the clamours of a raging mob, nor the frowns of a threatening tyrant, neither furious storms, nor roaring thunders, can move a righteous man who stands firm to his resolution. The wreck of the world might crush his body to atoms, but could not shake his soul with fear'. But Mr. Toplady's philosophy sinks as much below the poor heathen's, as a man who is perpetually borne down, and carried away by every object of sense around him, is inferior to the steady man whose virtue triumphs over all the objects which strike his senses."

Further this doctrine of soul passivity sets aside both reason and conscience "for" as Fletcher says:

"Of what use is conscience? Of what use is the internal light of grace, which enlightens conscience within, if man is necessarily determined from without; and if the objects which strike his senses irresistibly turn his judgment and his will, insomuch that he can no more resist their impressions, 'than a tree can resist the stroke of lightning?'"

Thus the robbing man of the power to discriminate twixt right and wrong, and the rendering of all his actions as inevitable as the falling of a tree when struck by lightning, is a defacing of the image of God within the soul - "which consists chiefly in self-activity and self-motion."
Fletcher further urges that Toplady’s doctrine of passivity results in the denial of sin, seeing that all that happens is chargeable on God.

"If Mr. Toplady’s scheme of necessity is true, all sin may be justly charged on Providence, who, by the surrounding objects which necessarily impress the intellect, causes sin as truly and as irresistibly as a gunner causes the explosion of a loaded cannon by the lighted match which he applies to the touchhole. And Eve was wise when she said, 'The serpent beguiled me and I did eat'; for she might have said, 'Lord, I have only followed the appointed law of my nature; for providentially coming within sight of the tree of knowledge, I perceived that the fruit was good for food, and pleasant to the eye. It necessarily impressed my nerves with corresponding sensations; these sensations were necessarily and instantaneously propagated to my soul; and my soul could no more help receiving these forcible impressions, and eating in consequence of them, than a tree can resist a stroke of lightning'. I should be glad to know with what justice Eve could have been condemned after such a plea, if Mr. Toplady’s scheme is true; especially if she had urged, as Mr. Toplady does, that God’s necessities gives birth to providence, that is, to the all-directing superintendency of divine wisdom and power, carrying the whole preconcerted scheme into actual execution, by the subservient mediation of second causes, (such as the fair colour of the fruit, and the eye of Eve,) 'which were created for that end' Page 14. Can any man say, that, if Mr. Toplady is right, Eve would have charged God foolishly?"

Such a doctrine of necessity Fletcher regards as contrary to Scripture, common-sense, and historic Christian doctrine. Moreover it so degrades man that the excellence or depravity of his character is solely the resultant of his physical
powers. It is also hypocritical for God to sit in judgment upon His creatures when ever act of every one of them has been necessitated by an irresistible decree. These objections are carefully worked out by Fletcher, who examines Toplady's Scripture proofs and counters them by others of his own. Throughout all his rejoinder Fletcher firmly holds Toplady to this main point - the inevitable consequence of a predestinated impression upon the soul "which can no more help receiving them, and being affected by them, than a tree can resist a stroke of lightning".

"How can God reasonably set life and death, water and fire, before us, and bid us choose eternal life and living water, if surrounding objects work upon us, as the lightning works upon a tree on which it falls? And when the Lord commands the reprobate to choose virtue, after having bound them over to vice, by the adamantine chain of necessitation, does he not insult over their misery, as much as a sheriff would do, who, after having ordered the executioner to bind a man's hands, to fasten his neck to the gallows, and absolutely to drive away the cart from under him, should gravely bid the wretch to choose life and liberty, and bitterly claim against him for neglecting so great a deliverance?"

Furthermore, in such a philosophy judgment becomes a ritual as fraught with cruelty as with meaninglessness.

"It represents the proceedings of the Day of Judgment, as the most unrighteous, cruel and hypocritical acts, that ever disgraced the tribunal of a tyrant. For if God, by eternal absolute, and necessitating decrees, places the reprobates in the midst of a current of circumstances, which carries them along as irresistibly as a rapid river wafts a feather; if he
encompass them with tempting objects, which strike their souls with ideas, that cause sin in their hearts and lives, as inevitably as a stroke of lightning raises splinters in the tree which it shatters; and if we can no more help being determined by these objects, which God’s providence has placed around us on purpose to determine us, than a tree can resist a stroke of lightning; it unavoidably follows, that when God will judicially condemn the wicked, and send them to hell for their sins, he will act with as much justice as the king would do, if he sent to the gallows all his subjects who had the misfortune of being struck with lightning. Nay, to make the case parallel, we must suppose, that the king had absolute command of the lightning, and had previously struck them with the fiery ball, that he might subsequently condemn them to be hanged, for having been struck according to his absolute decree.

It is, moreover, a fundamental flaw in Toplady’s theory of necessity that the brain is the mind, or the seat of the spirit.

Toplady/writem: (as already quoted twelve pages earlier)

"The soul of a monthly reviewer, if imprisoned within the same mud walls which are tenanted by the soul of Mr. John Wesley, would, similarly circumstanced, reason and act (I verily think) exactly like the bishop of Moorfields."

His addendum to this prompted Fletcher to say:

"But what I chiefly dislike in this scheme is, its degrading all human souls in such a manner as to make them receive their moral excellence and depravity from the contexture of the brains.

Remarks on Toplady’s Scheme &c., Fletcher’s Works, v. 4, p. (349)

It will be recalled that Olivers makes use of a similar argument in his letter to Toplady. "A king who commands all his subjects to commit High Treason, and then commands them to be burnt for having done so", is Oliver’s analogy concerning the King of Heaven who commands the sin of His creatures and then damns them everlastingly for what they could not help. See Oliver’s letter, page 13.

Remarks on Toplady’s Scheme &c. Fletcher’s Works, v. 4 page 352 and Toplady’s Works, vol. 6 page 24.
by which they work, and from the place of the bodies in which they dwell. Insomuch that all the difference there is between one who thinks loyally, and one who thinks otherwise, - between one who believes that Christ is God over all, and one who believes that he is a mere creature, - consists only in the make and position of their brains. Supposing, for example, that a gentleman has honourable thoughts of his king and of his Saviour; and is ready, from a principle of loyalty and faith, to defend the dignity of George the third, and the divinity of Jesus Christ; supposing also that another gentleman breaks, without ceremony, these two evangelical precepts, 'Honour the king;' 'Let all the angels worship him' (Christ); I ask, Why is their moral and religious conduct so opposite? Is it because the first gentleman's free-willing soul has intrinsically more reverence for the king and for our Lord, because he keeps his heart more tender by faith and prayer, and his conscience more devoid of prejudice, through a diligent improvement of his talent, or through a more faithful use of his free agency, and a readier submission to the light that enlightens every man? No such thing: if Mr. Toplady's scheme is true, the whole difference consists in the 'mud walls' and external circumstances."

After some pointed observations concerning Toplady's suggestion that "a human spirit, incarcerated in the brain of a cat, would probably think and behave as that animal does"; he goes to the very core of Toplady's necessitarianism and observes:

"From his capital doctrine, that human souls have no free will, and no inward principle of self-determination; and from his avowed opinion, that the soul of one man, placed in the body of another man, 'would, similarly circumstanced, reason and act exactly like' the man in whose mud walls it is lodged; it evidently follows, 1. That, had the human soul of Christ been placed in the body and circumstances of Nero, it would have been exactly as wicked and atrocious as the soul of that bloody monster was. And 2. That is Nero's soul had been placed in Christ's body, and in his trying circumstances it would have been exactly as virtuous and immaculate as that of the Redeemer: the consequence is undeniable. Thus the merit of the man Christ did not in the least spring from his righteous soul, but from his mud walls, and from the happiness which his soul had of being lodged in a brain peculiarly modified. Nor did the demerit of Nero flow from his free agency and self-perversion; but only from his mud walls, and from the infelicity which his necessitated soul had of being lodged in an ill-constructed vehicle, and placed on that throne on which Titus soon after deserved to be called 'the darling of mankind'."

| Fletcher's Works, v. 4, p. 352 | ibid pp. 353-4 |
| Toplady's Works, v.6 page 24, cp. with Fletcher, 4; 353 |
Now, as Fletcher pointed out, no one would try to deny that there is a close connexion between the soul and the body; and that each greatly influences the other. As Horace put it: "The soul which dwells in a body oppressed with last night's excess is clogged by the load which disorders the body." Often the spirit's powers are denied full realisation by reason of bodily infirmity; and on the other hand a serene spirit has many times aided the body's recovery. But it is absurd to argue, as does Toplady, that the only determinant of the energies and direction of the spirit is the "mud walls" in which the spirit is for a time confined. It would be hard to find a more materialist philosophy, especially one dignified with the name theology. The "Reviewers" of November 1775, whom Fletcher quotes, express the sentiments that must occur to any reader of Toplady's Philosophical Necessity.

"The old controversy concerning liberty and necessity has lately been renewed. Mr. Toplady avows himself a very strenuous and very positive champion on the side of necessity, and revives those arguments which were long since urged by Spinoza, Hobbes, &c. It is somewhat singular in the history of this dispute, that those who profess themselves the friends of revelation should so earnestly contend for a system which unbelievers have very generally adopted and maintained. This appears the more strange when we consider that the present asserters of necessity manifest a very visible tendency to materialism. Fate and universal mechanism seem to be so nearly allied that they have been usually defended on the same ground and by the same advocates. Mr. Toplady, indeed, admits that the two component principles of man, body and soul, are not only distinct
but essentially different from each other. But it appears in the sequel of his reasoning, that he has no high opinion of the nature and powers of the latter. 'An idea,' he observes, 'is that image, form, or conception of anything, which the soul is impressed with from without; and he expressly denies that the soul has the power of framing new ideas, different from or superior to those which are forced upon it by the bodily senses. 'The soul,' he affirms, 'is, in a very extensive degree, passive as matter itself.' On his scheme, the limitation with which he guards this assertion is needless and futile.... His moral doctrine is of a piece with the rest; the result of his reasoning on the subject is, in his own words, that 'man, in every instant of his duration, is a passive instrument in the hands of necessity.'"

of determinist philosophies in general and of Toplady's in particular, hedonism and antinomianism are legitimate offspring. Summing up Toplady's doctrine the reviewer says:

"'Let us drink and drive away care, drink and be merry,' as the old song says, which is the practical application."

His characteristic sense of fair-play does not allow Fletcher to leave this conclusion as it stands, for he hastens to say that he does not insinuate that this application is charged upon Mr. Toplady, but mentions it only as the"natural consequence of his system of necessity."}

It now remains for me to examine the scriptural basis of Toplady's doctrine of necessity; and particularly to enquire whether his correlative doctrine of a limited atonement is soundly based.

Commencing with Genesis xx.6 Toplady quotes at great length passages that have little, if any, reference to the subject of philosophical determinism. With no appeal to context he not infrequently misrepresents the whole meaning of the

Fletcher's Works, vol. 4 pp.354-5 ibid p. 355
passage. Fletcher examines Toplady's proofs, and shows that in many cases the meaning is absolutely alien to any doctrine of necessitation. The first text Toplady quotes is the one already noted: Genesis xx.6, which he renders "I withheld thee from sinning against me": and from this infers a general withholding of the elect from sin, and (by imputation) a refusal to so withhold any numbered amongst the reprobate. The text reads: "And God said unto him in a dream, Yea I know that in the integrity of thy heart thou hast done this, and I also with-held thee from sinning against me, and therefore suffered I thee not to touch her." When this text is read as a whole and in relation to its context, it is clear that Toplady's use of it is unsound; indeed, it may questioned whether it is honest. No doctrine of necessity can be inferred from a story of self-restraint. Again the second passage quoted: "I will harden his heart, that he shall not let/people go." Exodus iv.21., is no argument for a philosophy that has nothing to distinguish it from the fatalist doctrines of the ancients. The very word "shall" speaks of self-determinism. To establish Toplady's doctrine, the text would have to read, "I have so hardened his heart that he cannot let the people go". Later a reference is made to Proverbs xxi.1., where Toplady makes the comment

"Odd sort of self-determination this";
but the passage quoted has to be stretched very considerably before it can be regarded as an argument for absolute predestination. Fletcher replies to Toplady on this point in the following words:

"We have never denied the supreme power which God has even over the hearts of proud kings, who, generally, are the most imperious of men. When he will absolutely turn their will for the accomplishment of some providential design, his wisdom and his omnipotence can undoubtedly do it. Thus by letting the Philistines loose upon Saul's dominions, God turned his heart, and made him change his design of immediately surrounding and destroying David. Thus he turned the heart of Ahasuerus from his purpose of destroying the Jews, by the providential reading of the records which reminded the king of his indebtedness to Mordecai. Thus he turned the heart of Pharaoh towards Joseph, by giving Joseph wisdom to explain the prophetic dream. For in such cases, 'the lot is cast into the lap' without an eye to the Lord, 'but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord'. Proverbs xvi.33. But these peculiar interpositions of providence no more prove, that God absolutely turns the hearts of all kings, and of all men in all things, and on all occasions, as Mr. Toplady's system supposes, than a farrier's drenching now and then a horse, in peculiar circumstances, proves that all horses throughout the world never drink but when they are drenched."

Fletcher in criticism of Toplady's use of Scripture makes the following points:

1. "Detaching a Scripture from the context, that what God does for particular reasons may appear to be done absolutely, and from mere sovereignty.

2. "Because God can do a thing, and does it on particular occasions, Mr. Toplady and his adherents infer, that he does it always.

3. "The necessitarians confound our inability to do some things with an inability to do all things.

| Fletcher's Remarks on Toplady's Scheme, Vol.4. p. 363 |
4. "The Calvinists suck scriptural metaphors till they imbibe the blood of error instead of 'the sincere milk of the word'.'"

5. "If there occurs in the Bible a poetical expression, founded upon some common though erroneous opinion, to which the sacred penman, accommodate their language in condescension to the vulgar, Calvinism fixes upon that expression and produces it as a demonstration of what she calls 'orthodoxy'."

6. "As the necessitarians build their doctrine (of absolute necessity) upon poetical expressions, so do they upon proverbial sayings.

7. "The word 'shall' frequently implies a kind of necessity, and a forcible authority.

To each of these points Fletcher brings illustrations from Toplady's tract, and seeks to show that such quotations, as are found therein, frequently have little relevance to the substance of his argument. It is not possible to repeat all Fletcher's arguments in refutation of Toplady; to do that would necessitate the transcribing of almost the whole of his reply. It is enough to point out that very few of the many quotations used will bear the strain that Toplady seeks to put upon them; and that throughout his whole polemic there is a confusion of what Fletcher calls "a necessity of consequence with an absolute necessity". As this is a vital distinction I will quote what Fletcher had to say.

"A necessity of consequence is the necessary connexion which immediate causes have with their effects, immediate effects with their causes, and unavoidable consequences with their premises. Thus, if you run a man through the heart with a sword, by a necessity of natural consequence he must die; and if you are caught and convicted of having done it like an assassin, by necessity of legal consequence you must die. Thus, again, if I hold that God,
from all eternity, absolutely fixed his everlasting love upon some men, and his everlasting wrath upon others, without any respect to their works, by necessity of logical consequence I must hold, that the former were never children of wrath, and must continue God's pleasant children while they commit the most atrocious crimes; and that the latter were children of wrath while they seminally existed together with the man Christ, in the loins of sinless Adam, before the fall.

Now, these three strong necessities of consequence do not amount to one grain of Calvinian absolute necessity; because, though the above mentioned effects and consequences necessarily follow from their causes and premises, yet those causes and premises are not absolutely necessary. To be more plain: though a man whom you run through the heart to rob him without opposition, must die, and though you must suffer as a murderer for your crime, yet this double necessity does not prove that you were absolutely necessitated to go on the highway and to murder the man. Again: though you must, indirectly, at least, propagate the most detestable error of Manes, that is, the worship of a double-principled deity, if you preach a god made up of absolute, everlasting love to some, and of absolute, everlasting wrath to others, yet you are not necessitated to do this black work, because you are by no means necessitated to embrace and propagate this black principle of Calvin. Once more: by necessity of consequence, a weak man who drinks to excess is drunk; yet his drunkenness is not calvinistically necessary; because, though the man cannot help being drunk if he drinks to excess, yet he can help drinking to excess; or, to speak in general terms, though he cannot prevent the effect when he has admitted the cause, yet he can prevent the effect by not admitting the cause. However, Mr. Toplady, without adverting to this obvious and important distinction makes it for granted that his readers will subscribe to his doctrine of absolute necessity, because of a variety of Scriptures assert such a necessity of consequence as I have just explained.

Take the following instances:

"How can you escape the damnation of hell?" Page 83. These words of Christ do not prove Calvinian reprobation and absolute necessity; but only that those who will obstinately go on in sin shall, by necessity of consequence, infallibly meet with the damnation of hell. "'If the Son shall make you free,' (and he shall make us free if we will continue in his word) 'ye shall' by necessity of consequence 'be free indeed.'" Page 91. Again: "'Why do ye not understand my speech? Even because,' whilst you hug your prejudices, 'ye cannot hear
This passage does not prove Calvinian necessity: it declares only, that, while the Jews were biased by love of honour, rather than by love of truth, by necessity of consequence they could not candidly hear, and cordially receive, Christ’s humbling doctrine. Thus he said to them, "How can ye believe, who receive honour one of another?"

"He that is of God heareth God's words; ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." Page 92. Here is no Calvinism, but only a plain declaration, that by necessity of consequence no man can serve two masters, no man can gladly receive the truths of God, who gladly receive the lies of Satan. "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep." Page 92. That is you eagerly follow the prince of darkness; "the works of your father the devil ye will do;" and therefore, by necessity of consequence, ye cannot do the works of God; ye cannot follow me; ye cannot rank among my sheep. Again: - "I give my sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish." John x. 28. That is, their salvation is necessary, and cannot be hindered." Page 93. True; it is necessary, but it is only so by necessity of consequence; for damnation follows unbelief and disobedience, as punishment does sin; and eternal salvation follows faith and obedience, as rewards follow good works. But this does no more prove, that God necessitates men to sin or to obey, than hanging a deserter, and rewarding a courageous soldier, prove that the former was absolutely necessitated to desert, and the latter to play the hero. Once more: - "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, whom the world cannot receive," as a comforter without proper preparation. Now this no more proves that the world cannot absolutely receive the Comforter, than my asserting, that Mr. Toplady could not take a degree at the university before he had learnt grammar, proves that he was for ever absolutely debarred from that literary honour."

From this point Fletcher goes on to emphasise that Toplady not only confused necessity of consequence with absolute necessity, but that he as surely confused natural necessity with (what Fletcher called) "moral necessity". From such texts
as "When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the
lightning of the thunder; then did he see it, yea, and searched
it out.", and "And break up for it my decreed place, and set
bars and doors, and said hitherto shalt thou come, but no
further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed? Hast thou
commanded the morning since thy days; and caused the dayspring
to know its place; that it might take hold of the ends of the
earth that the wicked might be shaken out of it."; Toplady
would adduce a doctrine of absolute necessity, when it/\_clear
that the inspired poet is seeking to teach that although God
has set man in a world that is governed by law, he is, neverthe­
less possessed of moral power. Moreover even the physical
laws of the universe are not laws of absolute necessity as
is suggested by Toplady. Fletcher makes this point:

"That nothing happens independently on that
cause, (The supreme First Cause) and on the
providential laws which God has established,
we grant. But this does not prove at all
the Calvinian necessity of all our actions.
Nor does it prove that man, who is made in
God's image, cannot, within his narrow sphere,
frequently exert his delegated power at his
own option, by making and executing his own
decrees."

He continues:

"If Mr. Toplady denies it, I appeal to his own
experience and candour. Can he not, by a good
fire, reverse, in his apartment, God's decree
of frost in winter? and by a candle, can he not
in his room reverse God's decree of darkness at
midnight? Can he not, by icy, cooling draughts
elude the decree of heat in summer?"
decreed that man can dispel the darkness or bring himself into the shade when the light too strongly beats upon him. By a number of parallel arguments Fletcher shows that even the physical universe is not bound fast, and that within the universe man is the freest of all God's creation. He challenges Toplady's statement that our every action from the cradle to the grave is settled before ever we come into the cradle.

All the texts that Toplady quotes to establish the assertion that birth, death, and all that happens during one's lifetime is not merely foreseen but foreordained, are carefully scrutinised and are shown to have no relevance whatever to the doctrine of absolute necessity. Toplady had written:

"I shall not be very prolix. Two or three plain and pertinent testimonies will answer the same purpose, as two or three hundred. Let us begin with the article of birth. Rachel said unto Jacob, give me children or else I die. And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel; and he said am I in God's stead? Gen. xxx. 1,2. Joseph said unto his father, they are my sons, whom God hath given me in this place. Gen.xlviii. 9. Thy hands have made me and fashioned me together, round about. Job x.8. Thou art he that took me out of the womb: Psal. xxii. 9. .... Lo, children are the heritage of the Lord. Psalm cxxvii.3 ---Or, as the liturgy translation reads, Lo, children and the fruit of the womb are an heritage and gift that cometh of the Lord.....Thou hast covered me (i.e. clothed my soul with a material body) in my mother's womb: in thy book (of decree and providence) all my members were written. Psalm cxxxix. 13.16. To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven; (i.e. God has fixed an exact point of time, for the accomplishment of all his decrees: among which fixed and exact points of time, are) a time to be born and a time to die. Eccles. iii. 1,2."

| Christian & Philosophical Necessity Asserted, pp. 72-3. Toplady's Works, vol. 6 |
By such reasoning and use of Scripture Toplady would convince his readers that man is only a puppet to be danced by his Master who pulls the strings when and as he pleases. But the texts will bear no such deterministic interpretation. Fletcher puts his finger on the fallacy that is inherent in all such reasoning. He replies as follows:

"All these Scriptures prove only, 1. That when a woman is naturally barren, like Rachel or Sarah, an extraordinary interposition of God's providence is necessary to render her fruitful. 2. That the fruitfulness of women as that of our fields, is a gift of God. 3. That children grow in the womb and come to birth according to the peculiar energy of those laws which God, as the God of nature, has made for the propagation of animals in general and mankind in particular. And, 4. That as there is a "time to be born," namely, in general, nine months after conception; so there is a "time to die", which, in the present state of the world, is seventy or eighty years after our nativity, if no particular event or circumstance hastens nor retards our birth and our death."

Fletcher goes on to prove his case by observing that God cannot appoint the date of birth without previously appointing a day of conception, and that if Toplady's contention be true, then God must have necessitated "whoredom and adultery, in order to fabricate the link of the birth of every bastard child." Moreover he shows that women who remain virginal do not bear each child and yet had they married they might have been the mother of a large family. Nor can it be maintained that their celibacy was necessitated, any more than it could be maintained that all the women guilty of abortion were fulfilling the

Fletcher's "Remarks on Toplady's Scheme &c WORKS, vol. 4, page 378
ibid page 379
divine decree which had condemned their unwanted embryos never to come to birth.

Again the argument that the moment of one's death is fixed long before he ever saw the light of day is fraught with the graving difficulties. If such be the case what end is realised by the instinct of self-preservation? Sheer fatalism is the only possible issue of such a doctrine. No number of texts clipped from their context can prove that God has left man no say in the lengthening or shortening of his days. Insurance companies do not share Toplady's conviction, for they know that the choice of wisdom will prolong our days, whilst man may, by his folly, considerably shorten them. Certain of the inspired writers of holy writ are definitely of this opinion. "Length of days and long life shall they add to thee". "If thou wilt walk in my ways, then I will lengthen thy days". Fletcher does not overstate the case against absolute necessity when he says:

"That to carry the doctrine of providence so far as to make God absolutely appoint the birth and death of all mankind, with all their circumstances, is to exculpate adulterers, and murderers, and to charge God with being the principal contriver and grand abettor, of all the atrocious crimes, and of all the filthy, bloody circumstances, which have accompanied the birth and death of countless myriads of men. And therefore, the doctrine of the absolute necessity of all events, which is commonly called "absolute predestination", is to be exploded as unscriptural, irrational, immoral, and big with impious consequences."

Proverbs, 3, 2. I Kings 3; 14. Fletcher's Remarks on Toplady's Scheme &c Works v.4: p. 382
In like manner he sifts Toplady's theology as it arises from his doctrine of necessity. He lays hold on Toplady's "very momentous hint" as found in the passage which reads:

"Let me give our free-willers a very momentous hint, viz. That the entrance of original sin was one of those essential links, on which the Messiah's incarnation and crucifixion were suspended. So that, if Adam's fall was not necessary (i.e. if it was a precarious, or contingent event); it would follow, that the whole Christian religion, from first to last, is a piece of mere chance medley; and consequently cannot be of divine institution. Arminians would do well to consider whither their principles lead them."

A very casual reading of Toplady will convince the unprejudiced that others besides the Arminians "would do well to consider whether their principles lead them": for the implication of this "very momentous hint" is that God is the author of sin, in that he decreed the fall in the belief that man had better be a sinner than be Christless. The denial of Toplady's hint would not be attended with the dire consequence he fears. Fletcher feared much more the consequences attendant upon Toplady's hint than any that followed the denial of it. He writes:

"If God necessitated the mischief, in order to remedy it, the gratitude of the redeemed is partly at an end, and the thanks they owe him are only of the same kind with which Mr. Toplady would owe me, if I wantonly break his legs, and then procured him a good surgeon to set them. But what shall we say of the non-redeemed? Those unfortunate creatures whom Mr. Toplady calls the reprobate?"

Works of Fletcher vol 4 p. 386. cp. with Toplady, v. 6 p. 87
Toplady's works, vol. 6 p. 87
Works of Fletcher, vol. 4; page 387
Further Fletcher sees in this "momentous hint" a direct incentive to antinomianism:

"If it was necessary that Adam should sin in order to glorify the Father by making way for the crucifixion of the Lamb of God; is it not also necessary that believers should sin, in order to glorify God more abundantly, by 'crucifying Christ afresh,' and 'putting him again to open shame?' Will they not, by this means, have greater need of their physician, make a fuller trial of the virtue of his blood, and sing louder in heaven? O how perilous is a doctrine, which at every turn transforms itself into a doctrine of light, to support the most subtle and pernicious tenet of the antinomians, 'Let us sin that grace may abound!'"

There is always the danger of antinomianism in any presentation of predestinationism; the elect rejoicing in their security, and the reprobate apathetic in the consciousness of the futility of all moral endeavour; both might say that as works avail nothing, they count for nothing.

Moreover Toplady goes to an absurd extreme in suggesting that any doctrine of self determination is blasphemy against the Most High. He holds that Wesley's teaching leads to a "more gross" Manicheanism than that taught by "Manes himself". Whereas in his "Historic Proof" Toplady accuses Wesley of being an atheist (for he says Arminianism is atheism) in his "Christian and Philosophical Necessity Asserted" he charges him with polytheism; for he says that Wesley's doctrine elevates every man to the dignity of a god. Apparently Toplady regards self-determination as an apotheosizing of mortal man.

Fletcher by many illustrations shows the absurdity of such
an argument. If Toplady's theory be taken at its face value a child deciding to take shelter from the rain is a god; for none can deny that the child can consult its own taste whether it takes shelter, or remains in the rain; and this power of self determination lifts into the realm of deity a frail mortal; and at the same time degrades the sovereign giver of every good and perfect gift. Unhappily Toplady is so infatuated with intellectualism that he cannot perceive what is plainly obvious. Day by day he must have contradicted in practice his much loved theories. When against the doctor's orders he struggled into the pulpit to give his last avowal of his Calvinistic belief he was very definitely a "self-determining agent"; but in doing so he sought to glorify God and not to dethrone him. He did not believe himself to be a god when he decided not "to ride a horse for fear of breaking his neck"; he only revealed himself as a sensible man who refused to take undue risks; but in so doing he unconsciously interrogates his own assurance that the moment of one's death is fixed before time began. In short his conduct negates his testimony. He writes:

"For my own part, I solemnly profess, before God, angels and men, that I am not conscious of my being endued with that self-determining power, which Arminianism ascribes to me as an individual of the human species. Nay I am clearly certain that I have it not."  

It is difficult to reconcile this avowal with Toplady's conduct. How did he come to exchange livings with Mr. Luce? or why did he leave the sequestered hamlet of Broad Hembury for the chapel in Orange Street, London? Unless he was merely an automaton he must have agreed to the proposed exchange, and later to have sought a wider and more strenuous place of labour. To say that "he went out at the call of God", does not alter the fact that he obeyed the call, and obedience can only be postulated of a moral agent. Furthermore in obeying the call he had to determine the means of his removal and the itinerary of his transport. And yet again, when he made his will he declared that he was "in a competent state of bodily health, of perfect mind and memory"; observations that could only be of and by a person. Moreover the very fact that one makes a will is evidence of self-determination. So as already observed Toplady's practice and precept would daily be in conflict.

In justice to Toplady it must be stressed yet again that the primary cause of his denial of free-will is his anxiety to uphold the glory of God, and the divine causality of ALL that appertained to salvation. He abhorred the impious thought that any sinful mortal should presume in God's presence to plead some virtue of his own. "Nothing in my hand I bring", "Thou must save, and Thou alone", are cardinal features of Toplady's theology, and one cannot be sufficiently grateful for them. The glory that has departed from some pulpits in the land will return when preachers get back to this fundamental truth of

| Works, vol. I page 134 |
Toplady’s theology. The pathetic feature of the controversy is that Toplady could not see that Wesley was as faithful as was he to the basic teaching of the Reformers. No theologian (not even Luther and Calvin themselves) was more faithful to the doctrine of salvation by faith alone. But Wesley, in his dread of antinomianism, insisted on seeing the evidence of faith in works. He steadfastly commended the Pauline injunction, "Work out your own salvation in fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you". To any who suggested that this "working together with God" savoured of free will, and thus detracted from the glory of God, he had a ready reply. Of such he asks:

"How is more for the glory of God to save man irresistibly, than to save him as a free agent, by such grace as he may either concur with or resist? I fear you have a confused, unscriptural notion of "the glory of God". What do you mean by that expression? The glory of God, strictly speaking, is his glorious essence, and his attributes, which have been ever of old. And this glory admits of no increase, being the same yesterday, today and forever. But the Scripture frequently speaks of the glory of God, in a sense something different from this; meaning thereby, the manifestation of his essential glory, of his eternal power and godhead, and of his glorious attributes, more especially his justice, mercy, and truth. And it is in this sense alone that the glory of God is advanced by man. Now this is the point which lies on you to prove: 'That it does more eminently manifest the glorious attributes of God, more especially his justice, mercy and truth, to save man irresistibly, than to save him by such grace as it is in his power either to concur with, or to resist.' "


Predestination Calmly Considered: Wesley’s Works v. 10 p. 231
It is obvious that there can be little glory in saving a soul which cannot resist salvation; and none at all in effecting the damnation of those souls for whom no salvation was ever intended. Beyond all doubt it is the dreadful theory of reprobation that makes Toplady's theology so repellent. Any system of thought that has as its corollary the damnation of helpless multitudes, is not merely suspect, but is anathema. Nor can any good be served by seeking to justify reprobation by pleading that it is the consequence of sin. In a philosophy of necessity sin is simply a misnomer. Moreover it is the essence of Toplady's doctrine that God's foreknowledge of sin is not the cause of His reprobatory decree; the reprobate go to their doom solely because it pleased God to condemn them.

As Calvin puts it:

"God of his own good pleasure ordains that many should be born, who are from the womb devoted to inevitable damnation. If any man pretend that God's foreknowledge lays them under no necessity of being damned, but rather that he decreed their damnation because he foreknew their wickedness, I grant that God's foreknowledge alone lays no necessity on the creature; but eternal life and death depend on the will rather than on the foreknowledge of God. If God only foreknew all things that relate to all men, and did not decree and ordain them also, then it might be enquired whether or no his foreknowledge necessitates the thing foreknown. But seeing he therefore foreknows all things that will come to pass, because he has decreed they shall come to pass, it is vain to contend about foreknowledge, since it is plain all things come to pass by God's positive decree."

After such a statement it is also "vain to contend about" sin, justice, or mercy. Nothing remains but adamantine necessity.

---

Calvin's Institutes, Book 3, c. 23, s. 6.
The elect will respond to the gospel call and by an irresistible grace will persevere unto the end; whilst the wretched reprobate will hear the call only to become the more deaf, blind and ignorant; and finally will perish through the application of a "remedy" which has for them no healing power. Such a theology justifies Sellon’s description of it as one of "absolute wrath, vengeance and damnation." Nor does he overstate the case when he says that such teaching amounts to this: "That God from all eternity made the devil a free gift of the greatest part of mankind." Yet, despite all the stinging rejoinders his theology evoked Toplady continued to write of the absurdity of general redemption, and to declare that whilst the elect would never fall from grace, the reprobate "would continue in final impenitency and unbelief", and "for such their sin righteously condemned to infernal death hereafter."

Now, it must not be supposed that Toplady built only upon shifting sand. He had behind him the support of a not ignoble band of thinkers and teachers. His "Historic Proof" is no mean work of scholarship and research, even though it may be questioned whether he fairly makes use of his authorities.

\[\text{Compare Calvin. "He calls them that they may be the more deaf; he kindles a light that they may be the more blind; he brings his doctrine to them, that they may be the more ignorant; and applies the remedy to them, that they may not be healed." Inst. B.3, c. 24, s.13}\]

\[\text{The Church of England Vindicated from the Charge of Absolute Predestination. Sellon's Works, p. 359}\]

\[\text{Ibid page 423.}\]
As noted already in this chapter he was sometime's tempted to stop short in his quotations: and always does it appear that he interpreted his authorities (Scripture included) in the light of his doctrinal position. He "proves" a case, rather than "establishes" one. I propose, therefore, to give a brief glance at his two correlated doctrines of a limited atonement and final perseverance, and to note how his opponents criticised his premises and rejected his conclusions.

The doctrine of universal redemption Toplady declared to be absurd; but on the other hand asserted that final perseverance was inherent in the decree of election, and therefore expressive of the wisdom of God. Wesley sang of a love that was "wide as infinity", but was constrained to reject the doctrine of final perseverance when he saw that it tended to antinomianism. Both Fletcher and Oliver's wrote against it; indeed, Oliver's tract entitled "The Refutation of Unconditional Perseverance" was described by Adam Clarke as "one of the best tracts ever written on this subject, and unanswerable." Not only were tracts written for and against universal salvation and final but perseverance, both Toplady and Wesley sang their doctrines. Toplady in his "A debtor to mercy alone" rejoices that though the saints in heaven may be more happy than he, they were not more secure. He knows that the "Kind Author and ground of" his "hope", will not "relinquish at last a sinner so signally loved".

Written on the title-page of Oliver's 1790 edition of his tract.
He blessed "the Father whose distinguishing grace" was manifested in the "salvation of those He had marked out for his own." Wesley replied in the verses of his brother Charles. He denied unconditional perseverance, for he believed that "a gracious soul may fall from grace". Nor did he allow the doctrine of a limited redemption to pass unchallenged. Passionately he preached the redemption of the world through our Lord Jesus Christ. He sang of "a love for every sinner free"; and of a grace that reached the whole creation.

Yet whilst multitudes would be inspired by the stirring stanzas set to moving music, the literary world had to be reached and convinced by reason rather than fired by emotion. So it is not surprising that tract and counter-tract sped from the press. Walter Sellon replied to Toplady's letter to Dr. Nowell, and to Elisha Coles' tract on the Sovereignty of God; and also found time to examine the "Arguments against General Redemption". Now, I have already shown that Toplady had a very poor opinion of Sellon as a controversialist; but it is interesting to note that he prefers to abuse his opponent rather than answer his argument. It is, however, very probable that a tract that appeared in the Gospel Magazine for 1798 was Toplady's reply to Sellon, for it gives briefly but clearly his reasons for regarding general redemption as "absurd".

Whilst, like most of his writings, it is an argument a priori

Hymn 5. Works, vol. 6 pp. 400-401
Sellon's tract is entitled "Arguments against general Redemption Considered".
it is yet based in experience in the sense that he looked around him and saw men and women die in their sins: and so he concluded that their final impenitency must be of God's willing. If God had willed the salvation of all, then none could die before grace had constrained their repentance. As no repentance was shown, obviously God had not willed their forgiveness: and so it followed that these lost souls perished by reason of their sins for which no satisfaction had been offered. The justice of God precluded His demanding satisfaction from the sinner after satisfaction had been afforded by their Surety on the cross. Further Toplady argues that if universal redemption be true then Christ died even for those souls which were already in hell before He came to earth; which supposition he regarded as a "gross absurdity". Moreover, Jesus, Himself, had spoken of an unforgivable sin; how then could He atone for such as were guilty of this sin? He asks the weary and heavy-laden to come unto Him and promises them rest; but no matter how weary were those who had sinned against the Holy Ghost, no salvation was possible for them and so Toplady asks:

"Can it be imagined that Christ died to procure a pardon for what God has declared to be unpardonable? This would be to set God and Christ at variance, and to represent the blessed redeemer as coming down from heaven not to DO, but to OPPOSE the will of him that sent him. If therefore, there have been, some who committed that sin for the remission of which Christ neither did nor could die, it follows that there are some who are without the pale of redemption."
Finally Toplady sets into his structure the corner stone of divine love; and suggests that if Christ suffered for all, it was because He loved all. How then could it be said that He who loved all would permit the damnation of any?

"Christ can never be said to love them that perish; and, if he never loved them, how could he die for them? which can be the spirit only of the most tender love conceivable. It therefore follows that there are many whom he never loved, and, by consequence, many for whom he never died."

To those who suggested that Christ died for all, but knew that some for whom He died would scorn and reject the offered salvation; Toplady replies that such a suggestion is dishonouring to God; for to hold that God would offer a gift to those whom He knew would refuse it is to suggest that God was cruel. Apparently it was not cruel to damn from their mother's womb those for whom no salvation had ever been provided; but cruel to plead with those whom, in His foreknowledge, God knew would never accept.

"On the principles of God's bare Foreknowledge (waving the absolute decree), the Doctrine of Universal Redemption is highly absurd: for God could not but know, from all eternity, who would believe and who would not: and does it not deeply reflect on his wisdom and the work of Christ's sufferings, for him to give his Son to die for the Salvation of those, who, he knew at the same time, would never be saved?"
This argument Toplady pressed at some length upon Wesley not when he asserted that as God knew who would be saved, it was cruel and merciless to offer them a grace that would the more effectually damn them. He writes of the contradiction in terms involved in the idea of a "damning grace". He even goes so far as to infer that those who affirm a universal salvation are denying the Omniscience of God, the truth of Scripture, and are cutting off"  

"entirely, the sovereignty of the Supreme Being, by which he dispenses his favours to his creatures at pleasure, without trespassing on the equity and righteousness of his nature; since none of them have any claim to the least favour, above another, by any thing in themselves, which they are possessed of independently of him who alone maketh any to differ." 

Flatly he informs Wesley that the charge of cruelty that Arminians brought against Calvinism could be much more fairly laid to themselves.  

"While honest Calvinism makes grace the real administration of present holiness and endless happiness to all on whom it is conferred. The former turns the very goodness of God into eventual poison. The latter only affirms that the non-elect are left in a state of nature, without the addition of ineffectual grace to double the measure of their sin and misery; and that, with regard to the elect, whose millions are countless by man, God both intends their regeneration, and actually effects it by the omnipotence of his love. On the whole, we must, 1. either deny the omniscience of God (and we may as well deny his existence outright); or, 2. make grace itself the designed ministration of death to
unnumbered myriads of men; or, 3. acknowledge, with Scripture, that God is the sovereign dispenser of his own grace; that this grace is divinely effectual; and, consequently, that God hath mercy on whom he will have mercy."

In seeking to prove the cruelty of Arminianism he challenges Wesley "to prove the contrary" if he can. He asks:

"Does God know, or does he not, previous to, and at the time of, whether the persons, to whom the offer is made, will or will not reject it? Let us have no equivocation. No shuffling. No evasion. No shifting of terms. If you say, "God does not know what the event will be;" I give you up for incurable. It is less impious to deny the very existence of God, than to strip him of his omniscience, and thereby make him (as far as in you lies) such an one as yourself. By pleading divine ignorance (I shudder at the very idea), you certainly slip out of my hands: and it is the only way by which you can. But your escape costs you very dear. In flying from Calvinism, you jump into atheism. If you say that "God does not know what the issue will be, and that he deliberately offers, or designedly implants (no matter which), his grace, to or in a person, who, he certainly knows, will augment his guilt by finally resisting the grace so offered or implanted;" — then where, oh where, is the goodness of God? I see not the least trace of it.... If God knows, that the offered grace will be rejected; it would be a mercy to forbear the offer. Prove the contrary if you are able."

Toplady did not see that it would have been a much greater mercy if God had never created a soul which, according to his teaching, was necessitated to sin and die in a state of necessitated impenitency. If to offer the sin-sick soul therapeutic grace is cruel seeing that the suffering one may reject the healing agency, how much more cruel is it to create millions

More Work for Mr. John Wesley: Works, v. 5 pp. 427-8
Tbid pp. 424-5
of souls predestinated to drink deeply of the poisoned well of sin; and then to tantalise them by the sight of an antidote which, though freely bestowed on some, is for ever denied to them? To this point of view Toplady turned a blind eye, and so was able to say:

"According to Mr. Wesley's own fundamental principle of universal grace; grace itself, or the saving influence of the Holy Spirit on the hearts of men, does and must become the ministration of eternal death to thousands and millions."  

In triumph he continues:

"Level therefore your tragical exclamations, about unmercifulness, at your own scheme, which truly and properly deserves them."

His triumph, however, was short lived. John Fletcher took up the challenge; and by shearing through Toplady's word-spinning stripped the argument of its verbal camouflage and exposed it as a contradiction in terms. In essence Toplady's position is that God would have shown the reprobate most mercy had He shown him none at all. Mercilessness thereby becomes the supreme mercy. Fletcher, in reply, stresses, as was his wont, the absurdity of offering any grace to a soul that could not possibly accept it. He emphasises that no rational being can reconcile absolute predestination and moral responsibility. Moreover he accuses Toplady of confusing foreordination and foreknowledge. He says:

"Upon the whole... it is evident, if I am not mistaken, that, though the grand Calvinian objection, taken from God's foreknowledge, may,

\[ \text{ibid pages 423-4} \quad \text{ibid page 426} \]
at first sight, puzzle the simple; yet it
   can bear neither the light of Scripture,
   nor that of reason."

To Toplady’s argument that the offer of grace "must become the
   ministration of death to millions", Fletcher replies by giving
two simple illustrations:

"Ten men have a mortal disorder; a physician
   prepares a sovereign remedy for them all; five
   take it properly and recover; and five, who will
   not follow his prescriptions, die of their dis-
   order: now who but a prejudiced person would
   infer from thence, that the physician's sovereign
   remedy is 'become the ministration of death' to
   the patients who die, because they will not take
   it? Is it right thus to confound the remedy with
   the obstinate neglect of it? A man wilfully starves
   himself to death with good food before him. I say
   that his wilfulness is the cause of his death.'No,'
   replies a decretist, 'it is the good food which you
   desire him to take.' This absurd conclusion is all
   of a piece with that of Mr. Toplady."

Moreover Toplady’s argument involves a contradiction of his main
thesis. Always has he set his face like a flint against any
doctrine of salvation by works; and yet here he is advocating a
doctrine of double damnation by reason of works. He says God,
by withholding a grace that he foreknows will be rejected by the
reprobated, is truly showing His mercy; for by not offering this
grace he enables the reprobate to avoid greater condemnation.
The idea of "greater damnation" is certainly found in Scripture;
and each day sees evidence of the truth the axiom "to whom much
is given, of him shall be much required"; but it is hard to
reconcile this with Toplady’s teaching that the reprobate are
lost be their sins

\* An Answer to Toplady's Vindication of the Decrees,
Fletcher's Works, vol. 4 page 302
\* Ibid page 299
many or few; and so it is difficult to see how they can add to their damnation, seeing that their lot is in no way the result of foreseen sin, but solely the good pleasure of God. It is cardinal to Toplady's doctrine of election that none are saved in virtue of foreknown holiness; the degree of blessedness is determined by an unalterable decree of God. Whilst he hesitates to dogmatise he, nevertheless, inclines very strongly to the idea of "equal happiness in heaven". From this one might fairly infer that Toplady believed in equal misery in hell; and if that be so his argument that it is merciful of God to withhold that which would effect a double damnation, is not in step with the rest of his teaching. He says:

"Surely God can never be thought knowingly to render a man more inexcusable, by taking such measures as will certainly load him with accumulated condemnation, out of mere love to man!"

and thinks by this ironical observation to establish his doctrine of mercy; but does not see that by implication he is charging God with hate. He has already maintained that God "fills up the measure of the iniquity of the reprobate", and as he now says God does not "load accumulated condemnation out of mere love to man" the inference is inescapable.

In satire he observes:

"To offer, and even to give, his grace to those that will certainly reject it and make ill use of it, and thereby render it

More Work for Mr. John Wesley, Works, vol. 5 p. 426
the means of greater condemnation; this is 'mercy, goodness, compassion, and tender loving kindness!" | 

If Toplady's primary teaching that God can not add/or detract from the number of the elect be true then it can rightly be inferred that He cannot add to or detract from the degree of predestinated blessedness or misery; and so all his fulminations against the "cruelty of the Arminian doctrine of grace" becomes meaningless. Fletcher says:

"The absurdity of Mr. Toplady's argument may be placed in a clearer light by an illustration. The king, to display his royal benevolence, equity, and justice, to maintain good order in his army and excite his troopers to military diligence, promises to give a reward to all the men of a regiment of light horse, who shall ride so many miles without dismounting to plunder; and he engages himself to punish severely those who shall be guilty of that offence. He foresees, indeed, that many will slight his offered rewards, and incur his threatened punishments; nevertheless, for the above mentioned reasons, he proceeds. Some men are promoted, and others are punished. A Calvinist highly blames the king's conduct. He says, that his majesty would have shown himself more gracious, and would have asserted his sovereignty much better, if he had refused horses to the plunderers, and had punished them for lighting off horses which they never had; and that, on the other hand, it became his free grace to tie the rewardable dragoons first to their saddles, and by this means to necessitate them to keep on horseback, and deserve the promised reward. Would not such a conduct have marked his majesty's reputation with the stamp of disingenuity, cruelty, and folly? And yet, astonishing! because we do not approve of such a judicial distribution of the rewards of eternal life, and the punishments of eternal death, Mr. Toplady fixes the charge of cruelty upon the gospel which we preach." | 

Ibid page 427
Answer to Toplady &c. Fletcher's Works, v. 4 pp. 297-8
In the Gospel Magazine for the month of May 1800 there appears Toplady's answers to nine questions that had been asked of him concerning his doctrine; and as these answers are a true epitome of his theology I propose to close this chapter by quoting some of them - at least in their essentials.

Question 1. "Did God eternally foreknow whatsoever shall come to pass?"

Answer: "Yes. If God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, then hath he fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass - But the apostle affirms the former, Eph. i.II. - therefore the latter is true."

Question 4. "What will man be condemned for? Will it be for what he could not avoid?"

Answer: "Man will be condemned for sin and for sin only. - If it be just to punish sin, then 'twas just to decree to punish it. That man sins freely, is true - that being depraved, he cannot save himself, is true, Jer.xiii. 23. - that he runs into many evils which he might avoid, is true also."

Question 5. "Can an unconverted man be under any obligation to pray?"

Answer: "Every man ought to pray; yet without faith it is impossible to please God: the prayer of an unconverted sinner is sinful, but his prayerlessness is much greater sin. All that an unconverted man does, being merely from self-love, he cannot lay God under an obligation to give him his grace."

Question 6. "Is it owing to God's decree, that a man continues in his lapsed estate? Look at Ezek.xviii.32."

Answer: "It is man's own wicked will has brought him into this helpless estate. No unconverted man is willing to forsake all sin - or to forsake sin as contrary to God - it is punishment, not sin that he dislikes."
Question 7. "Does not the Scripture say that God willeth every man to be saved? Yet your doctrine infers, we shall be damned do what we can."

Answer: "I Tim. ii.4 - All mankind are not intended - for all men are not saved, yet who hath resisted his Will? All mankind are not brought to the knowledge of the truth, nor have all mankind the means of grace. - Some were ungodly before of old, ordained to this condemnation, Jude 4. But by all men are designed men of all sorts - Gentiles as well as Jews - the apostle striking at the Jewish prejudice, who thought none would be benefited by the Messiah but themselves. It is an abominable inference from the doctrine of election, that some will be damned do what they can. There is no man on earth ever did what he could. See this largely proved in 'More work for Wesley'. But on the Arminian plan, the greater part of the world will be damned let God do what He can. It is far worse to say, God cannot save man, than to say men cannot save themselves - unless treason against God be less evil than treason against man's fancied free-will."

Question 9. "Is not absolute predestination in direct opposition to the revealed will of God?"

Answer: "Can you urge any argument against absolute predestination, that will not effect absolute prescience? God's REVEALED will, which is the only rule of our conduct, is one thing, his decretid or secret will is another."

It will be clear to any who are not in bondage to their own preconceptions that if Toplady's first answer be true, it is idle to say anything further about sin, prayer, or the extent of grace. From an absolute, infallible, irresistible decree, such as Toplady preaches, there can only come a non-moral, mechanical necessitarianism: Small wonder, then that Tyerman commented as he did, or that Wesley should say that "The sum of all this is... The elect shall be saved, do what they will: The reprobate shall be damned, do what they can."
EPISODE.

Augustus Montague Toplady is immortal. His hymn "Rock of Ages" is sufficient of itself to secure for him a place amongst the writers of deathless verse. Beyond all question his hymns have established his claim to a place in the gallery of religious genius. As a singer of the Christian way he deservedly ranks along side of Charles Wesley and Isaac Watts. His polemics can be forgotten; but so long as the church on earth calls men from their sins, so long will "Rock of Ages" be sung, and its author be remembered with gratitude. In saying that Toplady's polemics can be forgotten I do not imply that they are worthless; but there can be no questioning the fact that Toplady's pamphlets alone would not have endeared to any generation save his own; and probably only to a minority in it. His doctrine and manner of presenting it are alike repellent. He writes as some infallible pontiff, as though there could not be any other opinion but his own worthy of a moment's consideration. His conceit is boundless, and in his zeal he takes leave of good manners. His truculence and rudeness leave one aghast; and it is almost inconceivable that the bitter and intemperate controversialist could be so sweet a singer. He damages his own case by the violence with which he maintains it: his teaching is scarred by vituperation. His style is not the kind that makes converts; fanatics, perhaps; sceptics, may be; but believers, never. As Dr. Ryle pertinently remarks: "Thousands who neither cared nor
understood anything about his favourite cause, could understand that no cause ought to be defended in such a spirit and temper." In short, Toplady is not a loveable character, and try as I will I cannot make a hero of him. Doubtless a study of his psychology would do much to explain his egoism; and when one remembers the type of clergyman that devitalised the witness of the Church in the 18th Century, one is thankful for him and the protest he made against the secularism and materialism of his day. Amongst many of his colleagues he must have stood out as a sober man stands out in a drunken crowd. It is unfortunate that his physical health militated against his marrying; for had he known the softening influences of home, and the education that results from having to rear a family, he might have become more a man of the hearth and less of an habitué of the study. As it is he appears essentially an ecclesiastic and an academic. It is true that he was very devoted to his mother. Some might say too devoted and that his character was impoverished by his too great fondness for her. A strong strain of sadism (which found a verbal if not a physical outlet) along with a passionate fondness for animals seems to have run through his nature. The photograph, which forms the frontispiece of Wright's "Life of Toplady" portrays a rather cold and forbidding man, one too "wrapped up in himself" to have time for others. The
task of reconciling the poet and the polemist would give pleasure to a psychoanalyst, but I dare not presume to offer any explanation as to how these two personalities were enabled to live side by side. Toplady's convictions were deep though his views were narrow; and trammelled as he was by his doctrinarianism he never got very far beneath the surface of things; and this despite his great show of, and fondness for, logic. Yet despite the many traits in his character that one must deplore, I believe that he was truly devout. Some may suggest that he was not a little pharisaical, but can only be thought of his overweening credal self-confidence. There is no suggestion that he made long prayers where he could be seen of men, but he certainly gave no room to any doctrine that conflicted in the slightest degree with his own. And on this point Professor John Haillie observes: "The truth is that an over-confident orthodoxy can be just as pharisaical as an over-confident righteousness, so that we must as much beware of regarding right belief as of regarding right conduct as a secure possession about which we may boast. If it was said, 'Not of works, lest any man should boast', so it must also be said, 'Not of creed, lest some other man should boast of that'." Toplady did boast and that unceasingly. Still, he doubtless
felt that he had something about which he could and ought
to boast. Judging his days to be few he felt keenly the
important nature of his mission. He counted no labour too
strenuous so long as he could glorify God. As a victim of
tuberculosis his strength must have been severely tamed; yet
almost unto the end he toiled indomitably beneath his great
Taskmaster's eye.

When I first commenced reading Toplady, a colleague
described him to me as "the Barth of the 18th century". I
do not agree. Toplady, as a theologian is not comparable with
Barth, whom Dr. H.R. Mackintosh described as "incontestably
the greatest figure in Christian theology that has appeared
for decades". It is true that Barth and Toplady have certain
things in common, but their differences are greater than their
agreements. Both are dogmatic theologians, neither offer any
apology for their position, which they express with unmistakable
frankness. But Toplady's main tenet is predestination; and on
this feature of Calvinism Barth nowhere insists. Both are
convinced that man's plight is grave; but man does not need
either Barth or Toplady, Wesley or Cell, to convince him of
this: - a very brief introspection is enough.

Toplady, as I have already hinted, was a traditional
and conservative theologian; and as he was possessed of a

| Types of Modern Theology, page 263 |
mind that moved in cycles, it is not surprising that he digged again the wells that his spiritual fathers Augustine, Zanchius, and Calvin had digged. Yet, Toplady was not truly a Calvinist. He was a predestinationist. It is true that predestination and all that follows from a predestinating decree were doctrines of Calvin, but Calvin did not make them both the centre and circumference of his system as does Toplady. Furthermore, Toplady is not a Calvin; he had not the mighty sweep and reach of thought that marked the great Genevan. If it be said that Toplady starts at the point where Calvin leaves off, it must be replied that if he did, he did not go forward but only round in a circle.

In his doctrine of the sovereignty of God he finds his principle of necessity, but does not perceive that necessitarianism, interpreted as causation, is not incompatible with free-will. Every act of will is necessitated, but not in such way as to destroy either moral freedom or moral accountability. Blinded by a passion for intellectualism he did not see where his much trodden paths were leading him. He denies that his doctrines of necessity and foreordination make God responsible for evil; but that is unquestionably where his dogma led. Ignoring all questions of ethics, he emphasised that whatever God willed was good, simply because it was willed of God. But why stress this with such emotion? No one has ever doubted that whatever God does will be good; the question is not whether the will of God will be good, but whether man has rightly read and interpreted the
will of God. John Stuart Mill's famous dictum springs at once to mind. "I will call no being good, who is not what I mean when I apply that epithet to my fellow creatures." St. Paul said: "If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his"; and this is just as true as a canon for the interpretation of doctrine as it is a test of one's affinity with Christ. Toplady was certain that all the pageantry of life was but the unveiling of the will of God; but had he grounded his teaching upon the love of God, he would have upheld a truer theodicy than the one he laboured so hard to support. In all his thinking he is purely deductive; and for the more part his arguments are a petitio principii. His conclusions follow from his premises, but almost invariably he assumes in his first premise the conclusion he seeks to establish. Whilst his attack on Arminianism is both violent and sustained, most of his broadsides are wasted effort. The feeling left with me as I look back on five years reading is that Toplady spent much time and energy in erecting a man of straw, only to knock him down again. Innumerable points he makes against the Arminians are not really points at all. They believed just as surely as did he in the sovereignty of God, the law of causation, and in man's inability to save himself. As I have tried to show there was very little in Toplady's theology with which Wesley quarrelled. The controversy centres solely on the doctrine of grace. Original sin, total depravity, vicarious

atonement, and the life everlasting, were all doctrines on which Toplady and Wesley did not differ "a hair's breadth". Had Toplady devoted a tithe of the time to a reading of Arminius that he gave to the translation and the defending of Zanchius, it is highly probable that many of his pamphlets would never have been written. He clung to the doctrine of predestination in the belief that the self-determinists were attacking the doctrine of the sovereignty of God in the name of free-will; but his teaching is never drawn from an examination of human experience. It is the unfolding of an abstract idea. Moreover his dogmatism is presumptuous. Absolute inscrutability can only issue in agnosticism; yet Toplady dogmatises with amazing self assurance concerning the secret will of God; but when asked for proof of his assertions promptly replies that it is not for mortals either to enquire of or question the divine wisdom. In short, Toplady's theology is not very practicable. Nevertheless, it contains some truths of imperishable worth; and for these one is deeply grateful. If Toplady had been content to sing his theology he would have left behind him a much more fragrant memory; for all that he has to say of abiding worth is contained in his hymns. In these we find much needed warnings against self-trust, oft repeated is the truth that man's state is by nature dire, and apart from grace, hopeless. After the pitiful exhibitions of a so-called Christian humanism it is clear that nothing is more need...
than a return to the virile faith of the Reformers. Though it is not easy through the dust of controversy to see Toplady as clearly as one might desire; there can be no disputing his loyalty to the fundamental doctrines of grace; and however much one may deplore his insistence upon predestination, one can still rejoice that the reformed faith had so able and so pertinacious an advocate. Moreover Toplady in his hymns and diary reveals all that is best in Calvinistic piety. There is search here no longer for holiness through the labours of one’s hands. One may toil to show forth the glory of God, but none will dare to plead such labour as deserving the favour of God. As an atonement for sin neither toil nor tears can avail anything. Christ must save, and Christ alone. This emphasis, then, is Toplady’s enduring contribution to theology. Would that he had sought to make no other! Unquestionably it is his doctrine of election that offends. And yet, though Toplady’s doctrine of reprobation has long since taken its flight from the pages of theological literature, some doctrine of election is inherent in the doctrine of God. Any God-fearing man that passes his life in review cannot escape the conviction that “there’s a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will.”

Wesley’s brother Charles recognised this when he wrote:

“If of parents I came
Who honoured Thy name,
’Twas Thy wisdom appointed it so.”

Election to damnation is an abhorrence, but election to service

Hamlet, Act. 5, Scene 2.
The Wesley’s Birthday Hymn
and privilege in the kingdom of God is a fact of experience; and none who have heard the call will lightly forego the joy this service brings.

Not infrequently biographers express the hope that they may have kindled the reader's desire to study the work of their "hero" for themselves. I am sorry that I cannot add my name to their number. Toplady's tracts - as Dr. Henry Bett observed - "have only an antiquarian interest"; and I am sure that Stead was right when he wrote "the dust lies thick upon these works, nor is it likely to be disturbed now or in the future". Yet I have tried fairly to present a word portrait of a man who was a strange mixture of grace and infirmity; and I hope that I have not unwittingly done as I was advised and written his tombstone. For whilst Toplady is not the writer to whom I would turn to ask the way to the celestial city; he is one whose songs would inspire me as I journeyed. The controversialist can be forgotten; but the author of "Rock of Ages" is immortal.
BIBLIOGRAPHY
N.B. This does not pretend to offer a scientific bibliography of Toplady, competing with the excellent one compiled by Thomas Wright of Olney; but is solely a list of the works read and consulted during the period of the preparation of this thesis. I have, however, carefully compared my own list with that of Wright's and also with the British Museum Catalogue. All references are to the six volume edition published in 1825. The single volume edition of 1837 is of necessity printed in very small type. Both contain the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Church of England Vindicated from the charge of Arminianism.</td>
<td>February 1769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Doctrine of Absolute Predestination Stated and Asserted; with a preliminary discourse on the Divine Attributes.</td>
<td>November 1769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix concerning the Fate of the Ancients</td>
<td>1769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley relative to his pretended Abridgment of the writings of Zanchius on Predestination.</td>
<td>April 1770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Great against unsound doctrines. Sermon preached at Blackfryars on Sunday April 29</td>
<td>1770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesus seen of Angels. Two sermons preached on Christmas Day 1770</td>
<td>1771</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God's Mindfulness of Man</td>
<td>N.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Thoughts on the Projected Application to Parliament for the Abolition of Ecclesiastical Subscriptions</td>
<td>November 1771</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical Subscription no Grievance. A sermon preached at the annual visitation of the Clergy of the Archdeaconry of Exeter held at Cilumpton Tuesday May 12</td>
<td>1772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Work for Mr. John Wesley: or A vindication of the Decrees and Providence of God from the defamation of a late printed Paper, entitled &quot;The Consequence Proved&quot;.</td>
<td>1772</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Word concerning the Bathing-tub Baptism 1773

Good News from Heaven: Sermon preached June 19th 1774 at the Lock 1775

Freewill and Merit fairly examined. Sermon preached 15th May 1774 at St. Ann's Blackfriars. 1775

The Sketch of a Sermon on John 7. 38-39 Written on March 20th 1774

The Scheme of Christian & Philosophical Necessity Asserted in answer to Mr. John Wesley's tract on Necessity 1775

An Old Fox tarred and Feathered 1775

Joy in Heaven over one repenting Sinner: Sermon Preached 29th October 1775 at St. Luke's Old St. 1775

The Existence and the Creed of Devils Considered; with a word concerning Apparitions. Sermon preached at St. Olave's Jewry, October 29th 1775 1775

Christmas Meditations 1775

Questions and Answers relative to the National Debt. 1775

Moral and Political Moderation Recommended December 13th 1776

Reflections for the Year beginning 1776 1776

Private Diary of Augustus Toplady 1778

Poem on the Death of Toplady

Chronology of England from Egbert to Henry VIII

Reflections on the Conversion of Matthew

Life a Journey

A Short Essay on Original Sin

Essay on the Various Fears to which God's People are Liable

A Meditation for New Year's Day.
A Description of Antinomianism

Thoughts on Revelation 7. 14-15

Considerations on Hebrews 6. 4,5,6.

Remarks on Ecclesiastes 7. 16.

Observation on I Corinthians 15. 28.

Explication on Romans 8. 4.

An explication of that remarkable passage Romans 9. 3.

An Illustration concerning I Corinthians 15. 29

Explanation of that Declaration of the Apostle I Cor. 15.5.

A Sacramental Meditation

Meditation on the Collect for the First Sunday in Advent.

Concise History of the Creeds and Te Deum

Query concerning Passage in the Marriage Ceremony.

A Cursory review of valour &c.

continued overleaf.
On Sacred Poetry

Thoughts on the Assurance of Faith

Speech: Whether the World is to be Destroyed &c

Speech: Whether unnecessary cruelty to the Brute Creation is not criminal

Speech: Whether our good works will add to our future glory?

The Manner of Stoning a criminal to death among the Ancient Jews.

Some account of Mr. John Knox

Life of Mr. Fox.

Life of Dr. Jewel

Some account of Dr. Carleton

Memoirs of John, Lord Harington

Some account of the Life of Herman Witsius, D.D.

Some account of the Revd. Mr. Alsop

Some account of Dr. Thomas Wilson

Some outlines of the life of Dr. Isaac Watts

Some account of Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe

An Attempt towards a Concise Character of the late Revd. Mr. Whitefield.

Anecdotes, Incidents, & Historic Passages.

Sketch of Natural History. Birds.

Meteors

Sagacity of Brutes

Solar System

Observations and Reflections

Excellent Passages from Eminent Persons

Christianity Reversed

A Sketch of Modern Female Education
Important Remarks

Particulars of Pope Joan

A Contemplation on Snow

Reflections on a Thunder Storm

Thoughts on Perseverance

Course of Family Prayer

Collection of Letters

An Answer to the Following Question: "Whether popular Applause can yield solid satisfaction to a truly great mind."

Answer to a question: "Whether a Highwayman or a cheating Tradesman is the honester person."

Juvenile Poems on Sacred Subjects

Petitionary Hymns

Eucharistic Hymns

Paraphrases

Occasional Pieces on the Death of Friends

An Appendix, consisting of several pieces not properly reducible to any of the preceding herds

Poetical Compositions written in Nature Years.
WORKS OF TOPLADY NOT INCLUDED IN THE VARIOUS EDITIONS OF HIS PUBLISHED WORKS.

Preface by Toplady to two Sermons by the Revd. J. Hervey. July 1769

Sermon on Phil. iv. 4. by J. Hervey. May 1770

Two Letters of the Revd. J. Hervey. Published in the Gospel Magazine for 1771

Letter of the Revd. Dr. Doddridge. Published in the Gospel Magazine for 1771

Sermon by Revd. J. Hervey published in two parts in the Gospel Magazine. (Feb. & March) 1776

The Revd. Mr. Toplady's Dying Avowal of his Religious Sentiments 1778

The Liturgy of the Church of England Explained and Vindicated so as to appear in perfect harmony with the Scriptures. Advertised in 1822

Equality of happiness in Heaven. Advertised in 1822 and also published in the Gospel Magazine (pp. 473 - 89) 1796


Wherein consisted Adam's Sin? Article published in Gospel Magazine, pp. 468-9 1796

Whether only the punishments due to sin were transferred to Christ; or whether the sins themselves....were transferred to Christ? Article published in Gospel Magazine pp 19-27 1797

Of the Covenant of God with the Elect. Article published in the Gospel Magazine, pp 5-15 1798

The Covenant of Grace, in every age the same, as to the substance of it. Contributed to the Gospel Magazine, pp. 365-373 1798


* Notes added or handled by Toplady
Dialogue between Toplady and a Perfectionist. Sept. 1797
Contributed to Gospel Magazine.

Character of Dr. Gill. Contributed to the Gospel Magazine pp. 161 ff. Dated July 29th 1772. Published 1798

A Candid Acknowledgement of Toplady. Contributed to the Gospel Magazine, pp. 79-80 1798

Of the several dispensations of the Covenant of Grace. Article in Gospel Magazine, pp. 1-9, 133 - 139. 1799

Questions answered by Toplady, Article published in Gospel Magazine, pp 172 ff 1800

Religious Ideas from printing, pp 291ff of Gospel Magazine 1800

The Righteousness of Saints Considered, p. 1. Article in Gospel Magazine 1802

The Church a Garden. A short observation found on page 485 of Gospel Magazine 1805

-----------------

Thoughts on Predestination, by Minimus, Article in Gospel Magazine, pp 14-17 1799

Toplady used the nom de plume of "Minimus"; and it is very probable that this letter or article is from his pen. Both the style and substance are identical. But as others used the same pen name when writing to the Gospel Magazine it is not possible to dogmatise. That others did use the name "Minimus" to conceal their identity is witnessed by Toplady's letter of protest to the Editor, dated December 1st 1777.
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Continued)

LETTERS OF TOPLADY NOT FOUND IN THE PUBLISHED WORKS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RECIPIENT</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>SOURCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs Hussey</td>
<td>7th April 1775</td>
<td>Gospel Mag. 1796 page 157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revd. Mr. Huddleston</td>
<td>14th June 1767</td>
<td>Gospel Mag. 1797 page 45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revd. Dr. John Baker</td>
<td>7th July 1770</td>
<td>Winter's Life of Toplady, page 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revd. Martin Madan</td>
<td>26th February 1773</td>
<td>Gospel Mag. 1815 page 37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re Quarles Emblems</td>
<td>3rd Jan. 1777</td>
<td>Winter's Life of Toplady, page 63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. B. (at Gloucester)</td>
<td>19th March 1778</td>
<td>Gospel Mag. 1779 page 461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Bushby</td>
<td>21st Sept. 1767</td>
<td>British Museum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(Works or Articles on Toplady & Contemporary Writers)

Vindication of Mr. Toplady by the Editor of his Works, in Gospel Magazine 1798, pp. 228-231 1798

Essay on the Life and Writings of Toplady. (Preface to "A Course of Family Prayer &c") John Watkins 1832

Christian Leaders of the Last Century J.C. Ryle 1869

Life of Toplady. (Memoir) W. Winters. 1872

Life of Toplady. T. Wright 1911

Article on Toplady in:-

Dictionary of National Biography. Leigh Bennett
Chambers's Encyclopedia
Harmsworth's Universal Encyclopedia
Everyman's Encyclopedia
Chambers's Biographical Dictionary
Concise Dictionary of National Biography.
The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge
Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart

Article on Hymnody in Encyclopedia Britannica 9th edition
(Brief reference to Toplady is made in this Article)

Articles in Dictionary of National Biography:-

Thomas Olivers J.W. Lloyd
George Whitefield Alexander Gordon
Countess of Huntingdon J.H. Overton
Catherine Macaulay W.P. Courtney
James Hervey J.H. Overton
John Fletcher W.C. Sydney
Richard Hill T. Hamilton
Rowland Hill
John Wesley Alexander Gordon
Charles Wesley
John Nelson Ronald Bayne.
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Continued)

Edited by the Revd. John Telford, B.A. 1931

Edited by Nehemiah Curnock 1909 - 16

Annotated by R. W. Sugden, D.Litt. 2 vols. 1921

Wesley's Works (Edition of 1872.) Sermons & polemics
as stated hereunder:

Sermons:

On the Trinity
On the Fall of Man
On Predestination
God's love to Fallen Man
The General Deliverance
The Mystery of Iniquity
On Divine Providence
The Wisdom of God's Counsels
The Case of Reason impartially considered
Of Hell
Of the Church
On Schism
On Perfection
On Temptation
On Working out our own Salvation
What is man?
On Conscience
On Faith
What is man?
On the Omnipresence of God
On Faith
The Heavenly Treasure in earthen Vessels
Free Grace
True Christianity Defended
On Grieving the Holy Spirit
On Love
On the Holy Spirit

Polemics:

The Doctrine of Original Sin, According to
Scripture, reason and experience.
Predestination Calmly considered
A Dialogue between a Predestinarian and his Friend
A Dialogue between an Antinomian and his Friend
A Second Dialogue between an Antinomian and his Friend
Preface to a Treatise on Justification
The Question, "What is an Arminian?" answered by
a Lover of Free Grace
Thoughts upon God's Sovereignty
Polemics:
"The Doctrine of Absolute Predestination stated and asserted, by the Reverend Mr. A. ... T."
The Consequence proved
Thoughts upon Necessity
A Thought upon Necessity
Some Remarks on Mr. Hill's "Review of all the doctrines taught by Mr. John Wesley."
A Preservative against Unsettled notions in Religion.
A Plain Account of Christian Perfection
Appeal to men of Reason and Religion.

(The Works of writers contemporary with Toplady and Wesley.)

Lives of Early Methodist Preachers. (6 vols.)
(By Thomas Jackson.) 1871

The Arminian Magazine 1779 - 1798
The Gospel Magazine 1776-1796: 1796-1805 and ------- 1871
Works of John Fletcher (9 vols.) Edition of 1806-08

Eleven Letters from the late Revd. Mr. Hervey published by his brother W. Hervey.

An Answer to Aspasio Vindicated by a Country Clergyman. (i.e. Walter Sellon) 1767

The Church of England Vindicated from the Charge of Absolute Predestination as it is stated and asserted by the translator of Jerome Zanchius in his letter to the Revd. Dr. Nowell. Walter Sellon 1770

A Defence of God's Sovereignty against the impious and horrible assertions cast upon it by Elisha Coles in his practical treatise on that subject.
Walter Sellon 1814

Arguments Against General Redemption considered Walter Sellon 1807

A Letter to August Montague Toplady occasioned by his late letter to John Wesley.
Thomas Olivers 1771

A Rod for a Reviler: Or a Full answer to Rowland Hill's Letter.
Thomas Olivers 1777

A Full Refutation of the Doctrine of Unconditional Perseverance.
Thomas Olivers 1790
**BIBLIOGRAPHY (Continued)**

(Works and Articles on Wesley and Methodism)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article in London Quarterly Review:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Wesley's Doctrine of Perfect Love.</td>
<td>W.J. Moulton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are our Doctrines?</td>
<td>J.A. Beet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Critic of the Evangelical Revival</td>
<td>Editor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Methodist Revival</td>
<td>J.A. Beet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodism &amp; Modernism</td>
<td>W.T. Davison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unity of Doctrine in the Wesleyan Church</td>
<td>J.A. Beet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wesley &amp; Present Day Preaching</td>
<td>W.T. Davison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Great Book on Religion</td>
<td>H.R. Mackintosh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puritanism</td>
<td>C.S. Carter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wesley's Standards in the Light of today</td>
<td>J.A. Beet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wesley's Wit &amp; Humour</td>
<td>W.B. Brash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Churchmanship of John Wesley</td>
<td>T.F. Lockyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodism &amp; Anglo-Catholicism</td>
<td>A.W. Harrison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Wesley &amp; John Henry Newman</td>
<td>J.S. Lidgett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Author</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The English Church in the 18th Century</td>
<td>C.J. Abbey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rediscovery of John Wesley</td>
<td>G.C. Cell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Wesley &amp; the 18th Century</td>
<td>M. Edwards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Spirit of Methodism</td>
<td>H. Bett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Conversion of the Wesleys</td>
<td>J. W. Rattenbury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Wesley in the Evolution of Protestantism</td>
<td>M. Piette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Wesley &amp; the Religious Societies</td>
<td>J. Simon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Wesley &amp; Methodist Societies</td>
<td>J. Simon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Wesley &amp; the Advance of Methodism</td>
<td>J. Simon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Wesley: The Master Builder</td>
<td>J. Simon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Wesley: The Last Phase</td>
<td>J. Simon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wesley</td>
<td>J. Laver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversion of John Wesley</td>
<td>R. Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Son to Susanna</td>
<td>W. Harrison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Wesley: His Conferences and His Preachers</td>
<td>W.L. Doughty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wesley's England</td>
<td>J.H. Whitelaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life &amp; Times of the Revd. John Wesley</td>
<td>L. Tyerman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England: Before &amp; After Wesley</td>
<td>J.W. Bready</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Life of John Wesley</td>
<td>R. Southey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life of John Wesley</td>
<td>J. Telford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Wesley</td>
<td>W.H. Hutton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography of Works of John &amp; Charles Wesley</td>
<td>Richard Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Methodist Publications</td>
<td>Richard Green</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BIBLIOGRAPHY: (Continued)

A New History of Methodism (2 vols) (H.B. Workman. 1909
(W.J. Townsend
(G. Eayrs

Place of Methodism in the Catholic Church

John Wesley: Christian Philosopher and Church Founder.

Religion in England
(Under Anne & the Georges)

History of my own Times

John Wesley and Modern Religion

H.B. Workman 1878
G. Eayrs 1857
J. Stoughton
G. Burnet 1935

HYMNOLOGY.

Dictionary of Hymnology

The Hymns of Wesley & Watts

The Hymn Book of the Modern Church

Hymn-Writers & Their Hymns

Hymns of Methodism in their Literary relations

The Hymns of Methodism

"Rock of Ages"

The Methodist Hymn Book

The Evangelical Doctrines of Charles Wesley's Hymns

Psalms & Hymns for Public & Private Worship (Collected)

Songs of Praise Discussed

Julian
B.L. Manning 1943
A.E. Gregory 190?
S.W. Christophers N.D.
Henry Bett 1913
Henry Bett 1945
Anonymous

1904 - 1933

J.E. Rattenbury 19

A.M. Toplady 1776

Percy Dearmer 1933

| This is a new and enlarged edition of the previous named work.
**BIBLIOGRAPHY (Continued)**

Articles from the Encyclopedia of Religion & Ethics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Author</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Absolute</td>
<td>James B. Baillie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam</td>
<td>W.H. Bennett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arianism</td>
<td>F.J. Foakes-Jackson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arminianism</td>
<td>Frederic Platt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquinas</td>
<td>J.M. Heald</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anger (Wrath of God)</td>
<td>T.B. Kilpatrick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benevolence</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salvation</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soteriology</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antinomianism</td>
<td>J.M. Sterrett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bible</td>
<td>W. Sanday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calvinism</td>
<td>James Orr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supralapsarianism</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coercion</td>
<td>T.C. Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional Immortality</td>
<td>H.W. Pulford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covenant Theology</td>
<td>W.A. Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Fall</td>
<td>James Denney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Righteousness (In St. Paul's Teaching)</td>
<td>James Denney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Election</td>
<td>A.S. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predestination</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edwards &amp; The New England Theology</td>
<td>B.R. Warfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Will</td>
<td>D. Mackenzie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confessions</td>
<td>W.A. Curtis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Continued)

Articles from E.R.E. (Continued)

Libertarianism & Necessitarianism
Grace
Sin (Christian)
Hymns (Modern Christian)
Perseverance
Original Sin
Orthodoxy
Pelagianism & Semi-Pelagianism
Perfection (Christian)
Presbyterianism
Providence
Trinity
Tritheism.

* (Articles from the 5 volume work "An Outline of Christianity")

The Conversion of Paul
The Personality of Paul
Paul's Interpretation of Christianity
Christianity & Greek Thought
Paul's Doctrine in the Light of Today
Creeds and Councils
Why Dogma is Needed
The Scholastic Movement
Eve of the Reformation
Spiritual Life in Mediaeval Days

D. Mackenzie
H.R. Mackintosh
L.V. Gray
D.S. Adam
F.R. Tennant
W.A. Curtis
R.G. Parsons
F. Platt.
J. Dale
W.T. Davidson
W. Fulton
W. Fulton

F.C. Grant
James Moffatt
A.E.J. Rawlinson
A.E. Taylor
G.G. Coulton
R.L. Manning
Luther and the Reformation  H.B. Workman
Lutheranism  R.H. Murray
Calvin & The Reformed Churches  A. Main
Essential Features of Calvinism  H.R. Mackintosh
The Church of England and the Reformation  P. Dearmer
Anglicanism  Oliver Quick
The Roman Catholic Church since  Francis Mannhardt
the Reformation
Roman Catholicism  G.K. Chesterton
The Story of Methodism  H.R. Workman
The Genius of Methodism  A.S. Peake
Religion & Health  William Brown
Religion & Science  W.R. Inge
Anti-Religious Thought in the  G.K. Chesterton
18th Century  F.J. McConnell
Kant and the Great Idealists  
Tendencies of Contemporary  
Philosophy  
Ethical Aspects of Modern  
Philosophy  
Evolution and its Relation to  
Christianity  J. Arthur Thomson
Modern Psychology & Christianity  R.H. Thouless
Mysticism & The Inner Life  R.M. Jones
Immortality  A.E. Garvie
Christianity as a Way of Life  W. R. Maltby
### CHURCH HISTORY & HISTORY OF DOCTRINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A History of Creeds &amp; Confessions of Faith in Christendom.</td>
<td>W.A. Curtis</td>
<td>1911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studies in the Confessions of Augustine</td>
<td>R.L. Ottley</td>
<td>1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History of Dogma</td>
<td>A. Harnack</td>
<td>1894-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calvin's Institutes (English Edn.)</td>
<td>H. Beveridge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Reformation</td>
<td>W. Walker</td>
<td>1900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of Twenty Centuries</td>
<td>A.W. Harrison</td>
<td>1913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arminianism</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>1937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arminianism in History</td>
<td>Curtiss</td>
<td>1894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Teaching of Calvin</td>
<td>A.M. Hunter</td>
<td>1920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calvinism</td>
<td>A. Dakin</td>
<td>1941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Anabaptists</td>
<td>R.J. Smithson</td>
<td>1935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Evolution of the Christian Ministry</td>
<td>J.R. Cohu</td>
<td>1918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chalmers &amp; The Disruption</td>
<td>H. Watt</td>
<td>1943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heritage</td>
<td>G.D. Henderson</td>
<td>1943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Church &amp; State</td>
<td>P.C. Simpson</td>
<td>1929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridge Modern History (Vols. 5, 7, &amp; 8)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calvin and Calvinism</td>
<td>B.B. Warfield</td>
<td>1931</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Continued)

(Theological Works & Articles)

---ooo0oo---

The XXXIX Articles

The Westminster Confession of Faith (1647) 1846
The Larger Catechism (1648) 1846
The Shorter Catechism " "
The Sum of Saving Knowledge " "
The Solemn League & Covenant (1643) " 
Directory of Publick Worship of God (1645) " 
The Form of Presbyterial Church Government " 
The Directory for Family Worship (1647) " 
The Christian Faith T. Haering (translated by Dickie & Ferries) 1913
The Progress of Dogma James Orr 1901
A Study of Calvin & Other Papers Allan Menzies 1918
Nature & Destiny of Man R. Niebuhr 1941
Jesus and His Church R.N. Flew 1938
Manual of Theology J. A. Beet 1908
Compendium of Theology (3 vls.) W.B. Pope 1880
The Spiritual Principle of The Atonement J.S. Lidgett 1897
The Fatherhood of God do 1902
The Christian Religion 1908
The Rule of Faith W.P. Paterson 1932
Philosophy of Christian Religion A.M. Fairbairn 1902
A Neglected Page in Anglican Theology ("Theology") H.A. Hodges 1945 (May)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christ in Modern Theology</td>
<td>A.M. Fairbairn</td>
<td>1904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Theology in Outline</td>
<td>A. Brown</td>
<td>1906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Christian Hope</td>
<td>A. Brown</td>
<td>1912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Knowledge of God</td>
<td>J. Baillie</td>
<td>1941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And the Life Everlasting</td>
<td>J. Baillie</td>
<td>1941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Christian Answer to the Problem of Evil</td>
<td>J.S. Whale</td>
<td>1936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Doctrine</td>
<td>J.S. Whale</td>
<td>1942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Idea of Perfection</td>
<td>R.N. Flew</td>
<td>1934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodism &amp; The Catholic Tradition</td>
<td>R.N. Flew</td>
<td>1933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Article in &quot;Northern Catholicism&quot;)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Findings After Fifty Years</td>
<td>F. Ballard</td>
<td>1929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is Sin our Fault</td>
<td>S.A. McDougall</td>
<td>1932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is Salvation?</td>
<td>E.S. Waterhouse</td>
<td>1932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Theism &amp; a Spiritual Monism</td>
<td>W.L. Walker</td>
<td>1906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief in God</td>
<td>G. Gore</td>
<td>1939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Vision of God</td>
<td>K.E. Kirk</td>
<td>1931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studies in Theology</td>
<td>J. Denney</td>
<td>1895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Atonement and the Modern Mind</td>
<td>J. Denney</td>
<td>1903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Teaching of Karl Barth</td>
<td>R.B. Hoyle</td>
<td>1930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Barthian Theology and the Man of Today</td>
<td>J. McConnachie</td>
<td>1933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Handbook of Christian Apologetics</td>
<td>A.E. Garvie</td>
<td>1923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was Wesley A Calvinist? (Article in &quot;Peace &amp; Truth&quot;)</td>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>1938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Christian Doctrine of Immortality</td>
<td>S.D.F. Salmond</td>
<td>1901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Last Things</td>
<td>J.A. Beet</td>
<td>1905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Meaning of Paul for Today</td>
<td>C.H. Dodd</td>
<td>1922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Theology of the Gospels</td>
<td>J. Moffatt</td>
<td>1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Theology of the Epistles</td>
<td>H.A. Kennedy</td>
<td>1923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personality, Human and Divine</td>
<td>J.R. Illingworth</td>
<td>1923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divine Immanence (Cheap Edition)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Doctrine of the Person of Christ</td>
<td>H.R. Mackintosh</td>
<td>1913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Christian Experience of Forgiveness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apologetics: or Christianity Defensively Stated</td>
<td>A.B. Bruce</td>
<td>1892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christianity &amp; Sin</td>
<td>R. Mackintosh</td>
<td>1913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Doctrine of the Incarnation</td>
<td>R.L. Ottley</td>
<td>1902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immanence &amp; Christian Thought</td>
<td>F. Platt</td>
<td>1915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Doctrine of Man</td>
<td>H.W. Robinson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Origin &amp; Propagation of Sin</td>
<td>F.R. Tennant</td>
<td>1908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Fall and Original Sin</td>
<td>F.R. Tennant</td>
<td>1903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theomonism True</td>
<td>F. Ballard</td>
<td>1906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haeckel's Monism False</td>
<td>D.S. Cairns</td>
<td>1933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Faith that Rebell's</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revelation through History and Experience</td>
<td>A.E. Garvie</td>
<td>1934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Idea of God</td>
<td>A.S. Pringle-Pattison</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Idea of Immortality</td>
<td>A.S. Pringle-Pattison</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Doctrine of Christian Perfection</td>
<td>H.W. Perkins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Christian Doctrine of God</td>
<td>W.F. Clarke</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Path to Perfection</td>
<td>W.E. Sangster</td>
<td>1942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Experience of Salvation</td>
<td>F.J. Powicke</td>
<td>Jan. 1923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Atonement &amp; Modern Thought</td>
<td>W.T. Davison</td>
<td>Apl. 1920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theology &amp; Progress</td>
<td>H. Bett</td>
<td>Oct. 1924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Catholic Conscience of History</td>
<td>J. Telford</td>
<td>July 1922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Catholics &amp; Church Reunion</td>
<td>J.G. Tasker</td>
<td>Jan. 1925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sin &amp; the Mind of Today</td>
<td>V. Taylor</td>
<td>Jan. 1925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Catholic Church of the Future</td>
<td>A.E. Garvie</td>
<td>July 1918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divine Providence</td>
<td>E. Grubb</td>
<td>July 1918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology &amp; Christian Experience</td>
<td>W.J. Moulton</td>
<td>July 1921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luther's Tractate on Faith and Freedom</td>
<td>J.G. Tasker</td>
<td>Oct. 1925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psycho-Analysis and Sin</td>
<td>A. Clyne</td>
<td>Apl. 1926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Creed of the Apostolic Church</td>
<td>A. Macinnes</td>
<td>Apl. 1926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Place of the Lord's Supper in Early Methodism</td>
<td>T.M. Barrett</td>
<td>Jul. 1923</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Psychology of the Methodist Revival
S.G. Dimond

Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego
S. Freud

The Ego & The Id
S. Freud

Collected Papers on Analytical Psychology
C.G. Jung

An Introduction to Christian Psychotherapy
J.A.C. Murray

Psychology & Pastoral Work
E.S. Waterhouse

Psychology & Pastoral Practice
W.L. Northbridge

Motives & Mechanisms of the Mind
E. G. Howe

Psychology & The Christian Life
T.W. Pym

Psychology & Religion
F.S. Waterhouse

An Outline of Psychology
Wm. McDougall

Manual of Psychology
G.F. Stout

Talks on Psychology &c
W. James

Varieties of Christian Experience
W. James

Conflict & Dream
W.H. R. Rivers

Psycho-Analysis
R.H. Hingley

Psycho-Analysis as Science
H.P. Weld

Psychology as Science
G. Coster

Psycho-Analysis for Normal People
J.A. Hadfield

Psychology & Morals
D.F. Wilson

Child Psychology & Religious Education
L.T. Hobhouse.

E. Westemerarck

The Origin and Development of Moral Ideals
G.E. Moore

Principia Ethica
W.R. Inge

Christian Ethics & Modern Problems
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guide to Modern Thought</td>
<td>C.E. M. Joad</td>
<td>1931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Philosophy of Religion</td>
<td>Rudolf Otto</td>
<td>1913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naturalism &amp; Religion</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Analogy of Religion</td>
<td>J. Butler</td>
<td>1834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Discourse on Method (Everyman's Edn.)</td>
<td>R. Descartes</td>
<td>1934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Introduction to the Republic of Plato</td>
<td>Wm. Boyd</td>
<td>1922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evolution &amp; The Spirit of Man</td>
<td>J. P. Milum</td>
<td>1928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Story of Social Christianity</td>
<td>F.H. Stead</td>
<td>1924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rise &amp; Influence of Rationalism in Europe</td>
<td>W.E.H. Lecky</td>
<td>1910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilitarianism (Universal Library)</td>
<td>J.S. Mill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is Conscience an Emotion?</td>
<td>Hastings Rashdall</td>
<td>1914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Theory of Good &amp; Evil (2 vols)</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>1907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History of Ethics</td>
<td>H. Sidgwick</td>
<td>1886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sermons</td>
<td>J. Butler</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral Values &amp; The Idea of God</td>
<td>W.R. Sorley</td>
<td>1924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics and Atonement</td>
<td>W.F. Lofthouse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>