

Joh. 5. 22, 27, 28, 29. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgement unto the Son, And hath given him authority to execute Judgement also, because he is the Son of man. Marvail not at this : for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth. They that have Done Good unto the Resurrection of Life, and they that have done Evil to the Resurrection of Damnation.

1 Pet. 1. 16, 17. Be Holy, for I am Holy : And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons Judgeth According to every mans Works, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.

Phil. 4. 17. I desire fruit that may abound to your Account.

Mat. 16. 27. For the Son of man shall come in the Glory of his Father with his Angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

Act. 17. 30, 31. But now commandeth all men every where to Repent, because he hath appointed a day, in which he will Judge the world in Righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained.

Mat. 13. 49. So shall it be at the end of the world, the Angels shall come forth, and sever the Wicked from among the Iust, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire. 43. Then shall the righteous shine as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father.

2 Cor. 9. 6. But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly : and he which soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully.

Verf. 9. As it is written, he hath dispersed abroad, he hath given to the poor ; his Righteousness remaineth for ever.

Gal. 6. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoycing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden. Let him that is taught in the Word communicate to him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived ; God is not mocked : For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap Corruption : but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap Life everlasting. And let us not be weary of well-doing : for in due season we shall Reap, if we faint not. As we have opportunity therefore, let us do good to all men, &c.

Pfal. 58. 11. So that a man shall say, Verily there is a Reward for the Righteous : verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.

2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my Course,

Course, I have kept the Faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the Righteous Judge shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but to them also that love his appearing.

Heb. 6. 10. God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour, &c. Col. 3. 23, 24. Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord, not to men: knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the Inheritance.

Heb. 11. 26. For he had respect to the Recompence of Reward, (viz. in choosing affliction with the people of God, &c.)

2 Thes. 1. 5, 6. Which is a manifest token of the Righteous Judgement of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the Kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer. Seeing it is a Righteous thing with God to recompence tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you who are troubled, Rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, &c.

Mat. 5. 12, 46. Rejoyce, for great is your Reward in Heaven: If ye love them that love you, what Reward have you?

Mat. 10. 41, 42. He that Receiveth a Prophet in the name of a Prophet, shall receive a Prophets Reward: and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous mans Reward: And whosoever shall give to drink to one of these little Ones, a cup of cold water only in the name of a Disciple, Verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his Reward.

Mat. 6. 1, 2, 4, 6. That thine Alms may be in secret: and thy father which seeth in secret, himself shall Reward thee openly. When thou hast shut thy door, Pray to thy father which is in secret: and thy father which seeth in secret, shall Reward thee openly.

1 Cor. 9. 17. If I do this willingly, I have a Reward.

Col. 2. 18. Let no man beguile you of your Reward.

Mat. 19. 29. Every one that hath forsaken houses or Brethren; &c. for my Names sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting Life.

Luke 16. 9. And I say unto you, Make to your selves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

So all those texts that promise pardon, or Glory on condition of mans Actions.

Isa. 1. 16, 17, 18. Wash you: make you clean: put away the Evil of

of your doings from before mine eyes: cease to do evil, Learn to do well, seek Judgement, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow; Come now and let us Reason together saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like Crimson, they shall be like wool.

Isa. 55, 6 7. Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, Call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

Act. 7. 38. Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the Remissions of sins.

Acts 3. 19. Repent ye therefore and be Converted, that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come, &c.

Mark 1. 4. John did baptize, and preach the baptism of Repentance for the Remission of sins.

Luke 13. 3, 5. Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. So Rev. 2. 5 16, 22. & 3. 19 Act. 8. 22. With many the like.

1 Joh. 1. 9. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Rom. 10. 8, 9, 10, 13. The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that is, the word of faith which we preach: that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: For with the heart man believeth unto Righteousness, and with the mouth Confession is made unto salvation. For whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved.

Mat. 6. 14, 15. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Act. 10. 35. But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh Righteousness, is Accepted with him.

Rev. 22. 14. Blessed are they that do his Commandments, that they may have Right to the tree of Life, and may enter in by the gate into the City.

Joh. 12. 26. If any man serve me, let him follow me; and Where I am, there shall also my servant be; If any man serve me, him will my father honour.

Rom. 8 13. If ye live after the flesh ye shall dye: but if ye by
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Luke 11. 11.
Pr v 16. 6.
& 10. 16.
2 Cor. 4. 17.
Heb. 6. 12.
James 1. 25.

the Spirit do morafise the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

Mat. 5. 20. Except your Righteousness exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of heaven. Read all that Chapter.

Ezek. 33. 11. 16. As I live saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die O house of Israel! 14. 16. If he turn from his sin and do that which is lawful and right, &c. None of his sins that he hath committed, shall be mentioned to him, &c.

Ezek. 18. 28, 29, 30, 31, 32. When the Wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive; because he considereth and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live he shall not dye, &c. Repent and turn your selves from all your transgressions, so Iniquity shall not be your ruine, &c.

Rom. 2. 5, 6, 7, 10. — Revelation of the Righteous judgement of God, who will render to every man According to his Deeds: To them who by patient Continuance in well-doing, seek for Glory and Honour, and Immortality, Eternal Life; Glory, Honour and Peace, to every man that worketh good, &c.

1 Tim. 4. 8. But Godliness is profitable to all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

1 Joh. 3. 7. Little children, let no man deceive you: He that doth Righteousness, is righteous, even as he is righteous.

Rev. 14. 13. Wait; Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth yea saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.

Heb. 5. 9. He became the Author of eternal Salvation to all them that obey him.

Joh. 14. 21. He that Loveth me, shall be loved of my father, and I will love him, &c.

Mat. 10. 37, 38. He that loveth Father or Mother more then me, is not worthy of me, &c.

1 Cor. 16. 22. If any man Love not the Lord Iesus Christ, let him be Anathema, Maranatha.

Prov. 28. 13. He that confesseth and forsaketh his sins, shall have mercy.

Mat. 7. 21, 24. Not everie one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall

shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the will of my father, &c. Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them, I will liken him to a wise man that built his house on a Rock, &c.

Luke 11. 28. 1 Tim. 6. 18, 19. That they may do good, be rich in good works, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

1 Cor. 9. 24, 25, 26, 27. Mat. 11. 12. Luke 13. 24 Phil. 2. 12. Psal. 2. 12. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, &c.

Mat. 11. 28, 29, 30. Come to me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest: Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls.

So those texts that describe the contrary damning sin.

Luke 19. 27. Those mine enemies that would not I should reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me.

Joh. 3. 19. This is the condemnation that Light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil, See vers. 20.

See James 1. 12. Mat. 10. 22. Rev. 2. 7, 11, 17, 26. He that overcometh and keepeth my works to the end, &c. And 3, 5, 12, 21.

I will add no more: but intreat the Reader to lay by the prejudicing Comments of each partie while he impartially weighs these words of God; and then let him judge as the Lord shall direct him.

excellent
advice

Thus

THus I have given the offended part of my brethren a true and full account of my judgement, how much I give to Works, and how much I deny to them in this matter of Justification. Which yet I do with this protestation. 1. That I intend not all this as the Articles of my Creed, or as being all of it of necessity to Salvation to be believed, nor would I obtrude it on others, if I had power, nor is it all of equal moment. 2. That I do not peremptorily fix upon any part of it that is doubtful or controvertible among learned Godly men, so as not to hear any reason against it; but am ready to lay it by, when I can by my utmost industry and Gods illumination procure so much more light as to discern my mistakes. 3. That if there be ever a word in this contrary to that General Creed or Confession which I made in the beginning, or contrary to the Scripture, I do now in the general and implicitly disclaim it; and when I see it particularly, I will particularly Renounce it, and Correct it.

And the Reasons of my being so large on this Point, are these two.

1. Because Mr. Crandon doth so frequently and uncharitably accuse me of subtile reserves, and dissimulation, and hiding the worst, and meaning one thing, when I write another; I have therefore opened my mind to the full, reserving nothing that I can remember, of moment, as to the point in hand, but shewing how much I give to man; Yea, I have studied to say the very utmost for Holiness and Obedience, that was in my thoughts, that they who account this Popery, may see the worst.

2. Also many do follow me with importunity to Reprint my Aphorisms, whilst others do hold my hands. To satisfy these in the mean time, I have Anticipated much of them in these Conclusions, and given them the summ of what I mean to say on this point more largely (though I be put to repeat much of this again:) Or if God will not let me live to do that work, and publish my thoughts more fully, yet these conclusions have discovered so much of them, as may acquaint men with my meaning in the main, in this point, that they mistake me not so grossly as some formerly have done.

But yet I have something more to add: For though this be the summ of my thoughts on this point, as to the matter, and I will not differ to contending, with any that agree with me in the thing, and disagree in words only; and though I verily think that it is most in meer words that I differ from those Reverend brethren who have given me their Animadversions on these points; Yet because even verbal

mistakes may introduce real, or the Verbal and the Real are not by all discerned asunder, and lest any think I make a greater matter of any terms or Notions of my own, then indeed I do, I will say something of my judgement about the very terms which there is so much strife about in the Churches.

S E C T. IV.

Of the Verbal Differences.

S. 4.

I. **T**Here is so great Ambiguity in the term *Works*, that I think it occasioneth much of our contentions. 1. By *works* may be meant in general, any good action : or 2. More specially, such actions as a Workman doth for his wages, making it Debt, for the benefit that may redound thereby to another, by way of commutative Justice. 3. Or else for perfect obedience according to the Law of Nature as made to perfect man in innocency 4. Or for the doing of the task of services in *Moses* Law, in themselves considered ; which was specially called Works. 1. Because of the laborious, external, endless task of duty which it contained : and 2. Because of the costliness of the Sacrifices, in whose value they much trusted. 3. Because of Gods own institution of them, which (mistaking the end) they the more confided in. 5. For Actions which are conceited Meritorious (when indeed they are not,) though not upon the terms of commutative Justice, yet of distributive. 6. For any action which is done more for anothers good then our own : Either, when men conceit they advantage God, or when they help men. Especially when they are costly actions : as giving to the poor, building Almes-houses, Colledges, Churches, &c. 7. For sincere obedience to the Lord that bought us, according to the gracious terms of the Gospel 8. For the External part of this obedience, distinct from Love, Trust, &c. And perhaps there may yet more senses be remembered. Concerning this I lay down these Propositions.

1. *Paul* never took Works in the first sense, so as to exclude them from being conditions of Justification : For then he should have excluded Faith and Repentance.

2. Nor

2. Nor did he so take them in the seventh or eighth sence, excluding them from being conditions of our final Justification.

3. *James* took not Works in the same sence as *Paul*: For the Works that *James* speaks of were necessary, but the Works that *Paul* mentions might not be attempted or imagined, which make the reward to be not of Grace but of debt; and the Works of Jewish Ceremonies cease.

4. Because it is the Scripture Phrase to call Evangelical obedience by the name of Works, therefore no man is to be blamed simply for so doing.

5. Yet is there so great a difference between Gospel-obedience, and both Mosaical Ceremonies, and the perfect fulfilling of the first Law, or any conceited Merits, that we should keep that difference as apparent as we can; and therefore not use the term *Works*, (which *Paul* so appropriates to the other sorts) when there is any jealousy whether you mean not one of the other sort of works; unless you explain your self in the use. And therefore ordinarily the terms *Obedience, or Repentance, Love, &c.* are fitter then the term *Works*.

6. For though no creature can Merit of God in Commutative Justice, yet *Adams* works were, 1. As much in weight and number as God in Justice could require of perfect man. 2. And they were to be more in giving out to the honor of God, and less in direct receiving: though yet he did receive in all. Our works are nothing to what is due for number or weight; and they are all so purely receptive, that though we must aim at Gods Glory, yet it is at the Glorifying of Free-Grace, wherein we are receivers. Faith is the acceptance of Christ and life freely given: Love is but the mode or nature of that acceptance, respecting the goodness of the Object. Repentance is but an emptying our hands of dung, that they may be fit to receive Gold. Lamentation, Humiliation, and open confession of sin, are but proclaimings of the freeness of Grace, and telling God and men how much we are unworthy of it, and deserve the contrary: or else preparations to make our hearts fit to tast and value the freeness of Grace.

SECT. V.

S. 5.

* Meriti enim
est actus iusti-
tiae commutati-
vae: ideo aquali-
tatem operis &
mercedis requi-
rit. Paræus in
Math. 25, 20.

2. **T**He word Merit also is very ambiguous. 1. Sometime it is ma-
terially taken for that which by the proportion of its worth
to another deserveth somewhat answerable in Commutative
Justice. In this sence our Divines use the word, against the Papists
commonly, * when they say that which Meriteth, must not be due
to the other, must advantage him, must be proportioned to the
Reward, &c. 2. Sometime it is taken for some desert by eminent
service for the Commonwealth, above what the Law of that
Commonwealth imposeth: as *Dauids* killing *Goliath*; the acts of
his worthies, *Sampsons* exploits, &c. which a Rector, as such,
among men, is obliged in Justice to Reward, both for the com-
mon good thereby advanced, and for encouraging of gallant men.
3. Sometime it is taken for desert by so perfect obedience to the
Rector as is very eminent and exemplary, or as perfect as he can
require: Such as *Adams* in Paradise should have been. 4. Some-
time it is taken for an act of meer love, supposed to deserve a re-
turn of love, though the party beloved receive no benefit by it.
5. Sometime for some eminent expression of that love, as by ven-
turing ones life, or losing limbs or life in anothers cause, and for
his sake, though he receive no benefit by it. 6. Sometime for
very great sufferings or losses sustained in the execution of some
commands, which it is supposed deserve some reparation, or bene-
fit from the Commander: as maimed Souldiers deserve to be
maintained. 7. Sometime it is improperly taken, for the perfor-
mance of any condition to which a Reward is promised by the
Rector, though it advantage him not, and have no proportion to
the Reward, and were it self due; yet because the work pleaseth
him, as being a thing he loveth, therefore he promiseth the Reward,
and upon these two grounds conjunct the vertuousness of the
work, and the Obligation of the promise, they call the performance
of the condition, Merit: much more, if any of the former concur.
8. Sometime it is taken for any performance of the condition of a
Promise or Gift, though the nature of the condition be not so
much positively to please, as negatively not to displease. As in
a free gift, where naturally among all men these three conditions
are

are supposed. 1. That you reject not, nor despise the gift, but accept it. 2. That you be not unthankfull. 3. That you abuse not him that gave it, as to spit in his face, or seek his dishonor or death. And though the acts may be positive, yet it is rather a not displeasing, then a positive pleasing, which they are required for. 9. Sometime it is taken for any duties of a Benefit or Right to a thing, though by absolute gift, or natural Inheritance, &c. 10. Sometime for a meer comparative worthiness: as when two men, who do neither of them properly deserve well, yet one is far better then the other, and is said to be more deserving then he, that is, less undeserving: Or if one of them must have the benefit, he is the fitter. 11. Sometime for any acquisition. 12. And sometime it is taken in *sensu forensi*, for the Merit of the cause, as to the judgement to be passed. And so Lawyers say that every cause hath Evidence and Merit: and they define Merit, thus, *Meritum causa est in quantum furi Congruit, quod recte estimatur ex sententia juris & equitate*, as Dr. Zouch saith. 13. Sometime it is taken for the fitness of any thing in Nature, Art or Morality, to be esteemed and denominated good, according to its Nature. As every good Work, or gracious inclination deserveth to be esteemed as it is. So he that performeth Christs conditions, deserveth to be esteemed or Judged a performer, and not a non-performer thereof. For every thing is worthy to be judged to be what it is. So Goodness or Amability is called Merit, because every thing deserves to be loved and accepted, so far as it is good and lovely: and consequently to be lovingly used. 14. Lastly, Merit is oft taken in an ill sence, commonly called Demerit, for the desert of some evil.

Now among all these senses, it is not fair to condemn any man of Error for the bare use of the word, till you know what sence he takes it in. Yet do Mr. E. and Mr. Cr. make me as bad or worse then any Papists, who own not the very word at all, in that whole book, which they write against; But only say, that improperly and largely it maybe thus taken, that is, will bear such a sence.

All these forementioned sorts of Merit are not properly called Merit. I was about setting down how many of them may be owned, and how many not, in our case, as to the matter, without looking to the propriety of the term Merit. But it would be too long, and you may partly gather it from what is said before, and it is not

hard to see it in the nature of the thing, for the most of them. And therefore leaving every one to judge of the Matter as they see cause, How far Man hath any of these things, by men called Meritorious? I shall only speak to the very *Word*, according to my intent. And I shall speak my thoughts in these two conclusions following.

1. *I do think it unfit to use the term Merit of any Actions of man, as to Gods Mercies or Rewards, and that Divines should agree together to disuse it, and reject it, and express their minds by some fitter terms.*

My Reasons are these. 1. Mans heart is proud enough without such Infigations: We have more need to contrive all the most effectual convenient means, for the destroying of this most dangerous Master sin: and even to fit the very terms of our Doctrine to this end. And though the matter that some intend by the term Merit, have no tendency in it self to our puffing up, and we must not disclaim obedience, for fear of being proud of it, yet the term doth so strongly favour of more then any sober Christian may arrogate to himself, that I think it unsafe.

2. Or if it should not be so to the judicious, yet it is to the vulgar, who will use the word in imitation of them, when they cannot imitate them in the Caution and Interpretation.

3. The holy Scripture useth this term sparingly (I mean the words of the same signification) if at all; which many learned men do question. And we have great reason to use it as sparingly.

4. In its most proper sence, as it signifieth that which is *Not due*; which is to the benefit of another; which hath any proportion to the Reward, &c. Yea, or but any one of these, it cannot be used by us but with arrogant presumption, and such, as if it be heartily done, is destructive to our Christianity, and inconsistent with sincerity. It is not fit therefore ordinarily to use a phrase, though improperly, which is so dangerous in the proper signification. We know how we speak it, but we know not how others will understand and receive it.

5. The estate of man since his fall is so depraved and miserable, that it beseems him to speak in answerable language. For the poor to speak proudly, a sinner to use Arrogant terms, is an unnatural and unexcusable Error.

6. It sounds as a contradiction to the very design of the Gospel. God hath contrived the abasing of man before he glorifie him, and the honoring of Christ and Free-Grace by mans humiliation: and to take men off all conceits and confidence of proper Meriting, before he ever give them a tast of Reconciling Grace. Now to use such arrogant words, how well soever we mean, is to cast a stumbling block in the way of our Brethren, and to make an appearance of resisting Christ, and sacrilegiously violating the Temple of his Glory. All Christs true friends and followers should be tender of his honor, and study the advancement of his blessed ends, especially being so sweetly suited to our Necessities, as the way of Love and Free-Grace is; and not causelessly to run into such foul appearances and occasions of evil.

7. The very Phrase of Merit (if I may judge of others by my self) hath somewhat in it that is ungrateful, and of a displeasing sound to a Christian ear. I never hear it applyed to mans actions towards God, but me thinks there is something within me that disliketh and abhorreth it. The very work of the spirit of God upon a Christians heart, abasing him in himself, and carrying him out to Christ, hath methinks a Reluctancy against, and a distast of such terms as these, and is offended at them, as the senses at that which doth annoy them. And how unfit and dangerous a course it is, for Ministers to use such words, which sound so ungratefully to every gracious soul, is not hard to Judge. For my own part, it never entered into my thoughts, to my remembrance, to approve either of the term or proper sence, how ever Mr. E. and Mr. C. unworthily wrest my words, quite contrary to the most evident sence of them, and the whole scope of the place.

The Lord and my own Conscience know, that my Iniquities are more before mine eyes, and a greater burden is upon my heart, then will suffer me to trust in any Merits of my own, or once to dream that I have such a thing. And though the desire of my soul is to walk with God, and I have tasted of his unspeakable love in his holy ways, and perceived that there only it is that he will be found, and by all the strivings of his spirit against my flesh, and all the workings of Grace upon any depraved heart, I well perceive how God loveth Holiness, and delighteth in Purity, and faithful obedience, and therefore by the Grace of God, I will never think or speak basely and contemptuously of the image of my Lord, to gain

*a Term
never apply
to either man
or even our
Savior in
the Scriptures*

gain the reputation of being Orthodox among the most honorable of the sons of men, much less with such as Mr. E. and Mr. Cr. Nor will I sin against the Holy Ghost, the Sanctifier of the Church, by sleighting his blessed work; Yet I seriously profess, that among all the temptations of my life, I have felt so little temptation to dream of Merit, or to take any boldness with God upon confidence of the worth of any thing in my self, or to be lifted up before him upon a conceit of my good deservings, that I know not the best work that ever I did in my life, which doth not more humble me then exalt me, when I review it. I am so Conscious that I have nothing but what I received, and that it is God that worketh both to Will and to Do, and that without Christ I can do nothing, and that my best Actions are so lamentably defective and corrupted, that without abundant pardoning Grace in Christ, they will sink me to Hell, that I look with shame and sorrow on the best of my Works: I know my heart hath pride in it as well as others, and too oft do I feel it stirring in respect to the judgement of man, and otherways against God; but should I glory or trust in any Merit of my works, I should even be brutish in contradicting such a Sun of Evidence, and such lively sence of my own heart. May I take leave to open my heart in this point, and to speak what I feel there, and to lay by all my other grounds that while? it is thus with me: When I review any duty or work that ever I did, I feel no consolation accrew to my soul from it, as a work, or in respect to its value, but meerly Negative: that is, I escape the disquiet and trouble which would follow the contrary: The comfort that I have in this respect is positively none at all: Only I find no reason to discomfort my self for those sins which I never committed, (so far:) Were I a Drunkard, Adulterer, Murderer, &c. I might from the demerit of these expect more sorrow then I have. But yet in other respects I find a positive comfort from Holiness, and Obedience: As conditions of Salvation, they are conditions or occasions of my positive comforts; but not the cause. But as Gods Image, and the things which he loves, & *sub quorum ratione*, he loveth the soul that hath them. (I am loth to say for them, lest it be mistaken,) so I finde them positively comfortable; as making me a capable object of his Love. And yet further, as they do encline the soul to God, and dispose it to Communion with him, in holy Desires, Prayers, Prayses, in the exercise of Faith, Love, Delight,

Delight, Confidence, Hope, &c. so I finde they are Causes of my Comforts. But I must needs say, that it is far harder to me in these kinds to take half that comfort in my Graces and Duties which I should take, then not to take too much: and I have no need of an Antinomian at my elbow to hinder these consolations, and to say to me, Take heed that you make not Holiness and Duty the Occasion, or cause of your comfort, lest you be a Papist: For I have *Satan* at my elbow, as it were pleading more effectually, diverting me from that Duty, diminishing the exercise of those Graces, without which God will not be enjoyed, nor my soul maintained in a comfortable frame. To have comfort and spiritual delights in God, from my Graces or Duties in any of these allowable ways, is no such easie matter with me, as that I should need such breath to cool my comforts. I think that were all one, as to say I have need of help to make me less holy, and to destroy my Graces and Communion with God. For the souls Delight and Complacency in God is the height of its Holiness, and the top of all its duties. I do not say that I have no temptation to Carnal confidence in Duties or that I am not guilty of any such sin; But sure I am, when I take all the helps of consolation together, the Love of God, the Blood of Christ, the Glory promised, the Evidences of my interest, &c. I have more adoe to reach to the thousandth part of that delight and satisfaction of mind which I should have, then to keep it under.

And in this my experience answereth my judgement of the interest of our own Works or Graces in our Comforts. For if we look to the value of them, and the matter of strict Merit, I ever took that which some call Merit to be but *A not Meriting the contrary*. Even *Adam* in innocency, had he so continued, had more fitly been said to have not deserved death, then to have deserved life. And they that believe and obey the Redeemer, may be said, *Not to have Merited the loss of Christ and life by a final Rejection of him* (though in other respects they might) then to have *Merited a part in Christ and life by believing and obeying*. Yet dare I not say that holiness and duty hath no positive interest in the pleasing of God, because it hath none by way of strict merit: Nor dare I think that it is but *Absentia contrarii*, and not to be unholy formally that he expecteth: for so a tree or a stone should please God as well as a Saint. And the state of the glorified Saints would

would soon confute me. So much against the use of the term *merit*, and in explication and confirmation of the Negative Proposition.

Prop. 2.

Prop. 2. Aff. *Yet where I meet with any sober Orthodox Christians, who use the word Merit as applyed to mans Actions towards God, meaning thereby, no more then is meet, though the term be unfit, I will not accuse such of Popery, or other false doctrine, nor alienate my self from them, nor defame them to the world, but will detest the practises of those that so do.*

My Reasons for this resolution are such, as I dare say, all moderate, judicious Divines will allow, what ever furious, factious firebrands may imagine of them.

Reas. 1. The Fathers, and the whole Church of Christ, so far as we are able to judge by their writings, did use the word *merit* (the Latine Writers) or one of like signification (as the Greek Writers did) for above a thousand years after Christ, for ought I finde, without so much as one contradicting voice. And what man that is a Christian doth not so much Reverence those ancient Worthies, and the whole Church, as to deal tenderly and honorably with them for a word, when they agree with us in sence? And what man that would seem to be a Protestant, dare make all these Fathers, and the whole Primitive Church to be Papists? that hath not a design hereby to set up Popery? For were that true, what sober man would not be strongly tempted to be a Papist?

Reas. 2. All our Protestant Divines that vindicate our Doctrine against the Papists, in this point (so far as I can remember) do unanimously endeavor to vindicate the Fathers & first Churches, from Doctrinal Popery herein, and do interpret the term *Merit*, as signifying no more then we confess: and so are tender of the honour of the Fathers and Church,

Reas. 3. The first Protestant Princes, Churches and Divines, from whom the Reformed Churches had the name of Protestants, in the *Augustane Confession* (which then was, and still is taken for the fullest test of the Protestant Doctrine among those Churches) do ordinarily use the word *Merit*. As, *Artic. fidei praecep. Art. 6. Semper igitur sentiendum est nos consequi Remissionem peccatorum & personam pronunciamur justam, id est, Acceptari gratis propter Christum, per fidem. Postea vero placere etiam obedientiam erga legem & reputari quandam justitiam, & mereri premia, &c.*

& de bonis operib: *Quaquam igitur hac nova obedientia procul abest à perfectione legis, tamen est iustitia, & meretur pramia, ideo quia persona reconciliata sunt: & postea, Debet ad hac dona accedere exercitatio nostra, qua & conferuat ea & meretur incrementum, juxta illud, habenti dabitur. Et Augustinus præclare dixit: Dilectio meretur incrementum Dilectionis, cum videlicet exercetur, &c. & de Confess. Monemus & illud: saepe puniri peccata etiam temporalibus pœni in hac vita; ut David, Manasse, & alii multi puniti sunt. Et has pœnas mitigari docemus bonis operibus, & universa pœnitentia: sicut docet, Paulus, si nos ipsos iudicavimus, non iudicavimus à domino. Et pœnitentia meruit ut Deus sententiam de delenda Nineve mutaret.*

Reas. 4. The Wittenberg Confession useth the word Merit in like manner: yet it is well known that the Lutherans were drawn by the Flaccian party, to run into the extrem, in detraeing from good works: as is too evident in many of their writings. *Lege Con. schlusselburg. Contra Majoristas & Vossii Thes. de bonis operibus, & Melchior. Adamum in vita Georgii Majoris.*

Reas. 5. Our most Renowned Protestant Divines do use the term Merit. Melancthon useth it in his Apology for the Augu-
stane Confession: He and Luther, with the rest of their party, used it in that Confession. Calvin, Bucer and others of chiefest eminency, who are esteemed as of another party, did subscribe to that Confession. As many of the rest did offer to do, and the Lutheran Churches do to this day. And I take the Churches in Denmark, Sweden, Saxonie, &c. to be Protestants.

Reas. 6. We have made the terms [*deserving, and merit*] somewhat less culpable, by using them familiarly in an improper sence our selves in our common speech. As is plain in the several instances given, when I opened the divers uses of this word. For example; First, *In sensu forensi*: we have so used the term *Meritum Cause*, that it is not very easie to find out another that shall sufficiently supply its place, and be well understood. And we call it *Meritum Cause*, and say, The cause deserves that the person be justified, even in case of a meer fall accusation brought against him; because every thing and cause deserveth to be Judged as it is. 2. In a legall sence, we have used to say, that an obedient subject deserveth protection, and a valiant souldier deserveth encouragement, &c. though perhaps the Prince were never the better

better for them, because the ends of his Government require this.
 3. In a domestical Government, we commonly say, when one child is loving, thankfull and obedient to the father, when others are disobedient, and contemn him, that he deserveth the love of the father, and consequently the benefits which are the fruits of that love. 4. In Ethical respect, we are wont to say, that goodness deserves our love. Good actions or good persons, or those that love us, or those that run any great hazzards, or suffered much in love to us, deserve to be loved again. 5. Yea, we give the praise of merit commonly to bruits themselves, for some excellencies of nature wherein they excel others. Yet there is so great a distance between God and us, that we should be less bold in our expressions.

Reas. 7. The Scripture useth these words, which we well translate *Worthiness, Reward, &c.* And how much these are related to merit; and of how neer importance they are to [*merit*] I leave to consideration. Mr. *Eyre* saith, that the Scripture useth these improperly; and then why should I censure that man as erroneous, that useth a word of so neer signification or importance improperly?

Reas. 8. Yet neerer; Whether the Scripture contain not those terms applied to mans actions, which may be translated *meriting, or merit, &c.* some doubt upon these grounds. 1. $\alpha\epsilon\iota\omicron\varsigma$ and $\alpha\epsilon\iota\alpha$ are found in Scripture: whether these signifie *meriting and merit*, as well as *worthy and worthiness*, needs not much enquiry, if we stand to the common Iudgement of Lexicons and Authors. *Vid. Math. Martinium Lexic. in verbo Mereor. Perottus, Merere & Mereri significat Dignum esse, cum post se accusandi casum habet, &c.* But $\alpha\epsilon\iota\omicron\varsigma$ is commonly translated *Dignus*. *Vid. etiam Martinium in adverbio Merito, et nomine Meritum. Perot. Dignum dicimus quod Meretur, Scalig. l. 4. Poet. c. 10. Graci $\alpha\epsilon\iota\omicron\upsilon$ dicunt unde $\alpha\epsilon\iota\omicron\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$ sententia qua omnium consensu digna sunt ut suapte natura sine ulla probatione vera credantur. Erit igitur Dignitas conditio persone, qua putatur aut ab omnibus, aut a pluribus, aut a melioribus Digna vel laude vel premio. And meritum is commonly defined (as *Martin*. noteth) *Actio qua Justum est ut agenti aliquid detur*. It is a Righteous thing with God to recompence tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you that are troubled, Rest with us, when, &c. 2. *Thef. 1. 6, 7, 8.* As a Righteous Judge he shall give the*

Crown of Righteousness to all that love his appearing, 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. He is not unjust to forget your work and labour of love, *Heb.* 6. 10. saith *Martin.* *Meritò est secundum Jus; ex Justa ratione seu causa:* How commonly do Philosophers, *Zabarel*, *Zuingerus*, *Scheggius*, and others, saith *Goclevius*, *Lexic. Philosop.* in Merito, use the word *Merito* even for *Per* or *Gratia*, and all Latine Authors use *meritissimè* & *meritissimo*, pro optimo Jure. *Αξιου* saith *Beza*, *proprie de eo dicitur quod equalis est ponderis ac momenti, translatione à ponderandi ratione sumpta.* And from the Apostles *ὅτι ἐν ἀξια τὰ παθήματα*, *Rom.* 8. 18. He concludeth, *Sophiste multa de Merito congrui & condigni nugantur; quorum tamen doctrina vel ex hoc loco optimè refellitur.* And if à negatione *ἀξιας*, Merit may be directly confuted; then they think that from those Texts that assert it, and use that word, the use of the term meriting will be justified. And *Beza* renders it *ibid. Minime Pares*, and saith, *Itaq̃ ἀξια recte & proprie usurpavit quod nomen testantur Gramatici de iis dici quæ appensa ejusdem ponderis inveniuntur, παρὰ τὸ ἀγειν quod preponderant lancem attrahant.* If so, then *ἀξιος* and *ἀξια* are words of as high a signification as *Meritum*, and need as much an acknowledgement of impropriety, when applied to mans actions towards God. *Tho. Grotius* saith, in *Mat.* 10. 10. that *ἀξιος Græcis & quæ huic respondent Hebræis ac Latinis non semper τὸ ἴσον sed qualemcumq̃ rei convenientiam notat ut liquet*, *Eph.* 4. 1. *Phil.* 1. 27. *Col.* 1. 10. *1 Thef.* 2. 20. *3 Joh.* 6. But whether the word be taken largely or strictly, if it signifie *Meritum*, the word *Merit* may seem to be as fitly used, either more largely or strictly. Now that this word is so used of us, and our actions in the New Testament, is plain, 2 *Thef.* 1. 5. *eis τὸ καὶ ἀξιοθωῆαι υμῶς τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ Θεοῦ ὅτι ἡμεῖς καὶ πάσχετε.* That ye may be counted worthy of the Kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer. And next follows, *for it is a Righteous thing with God, to recompence, &c.* *Luk.* 20. 35. *οἱ δὲ καὶ ἀξιοθῶντες τὸ αἰῶνος εὐεῖν τοῦ χεῖν.* They that shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, *Luk.* 21. 36. *ὡς καὶ ἀξιοθῆναι ἐκφυγεῖν*, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape, *Rev.* 3. 4. *ὅτι ἀξιοὶ εἰπὺν:* for they are worthy, *Luk.* 10. 7. *ἀξιος ὁ ἐργάτης τὸ μισθὸν αὐτοῦ ὅτι.* The labourer is worthy of his wages. So on the evil part, *Rom.* 1. 32. *ἀξιος θανάτου:* worthy of death, and in *Job* 11. 6 the septuagint have *ὅτι ἀξία σοὶ ἀπέβη ἀπὸ κελου ὡν ἠμαρτησας*, that God exacteth of thee less then thine iniquity deserveth; at

our translation hath it. It seemeth then that there are words in Scripture used as to mans actions Godward, which signifie properly Merit, and therefore must be taken improperly; and so may the word *Merit*, on the same ground, as well as the word *Worthy*, which we use in our translation. The same may be said of *μισθός* which is oft used, *1 Tim. 1. 18.* the same with that in *Luke* before cited, *ἄξιός ἐστιν ἵνα μισθὸς αὐτοῦ.* And *Heb. 11. 6.* God is called *τοῖς ἐκζητοῦσιν αὐτὸν μισθὸν ποδοσίου,* A Rewarder of them that diligently seek him. And his action in rewarding is called *μισθωποδοσίαν μεγάλην*: Great Recompence of Reward; or giving the Reward by way of recompence. And its said of *Moses, Heb. 11. 26.* *ἀπέβλεπε γὰρ εἰς τὴν μισθωποδοσίαν*; he had respect to the Recompence of Reward. Many times is the like word used by Christ and his Apostles. Its true as *Grotius* saith, that the Hebrew and Greek words, *Promiscue Mercedis & Doni habent significationem: quo magis apparet non eam esse vim hujus vocis ut equalitatem inter factum & rem desideret.* But then he addeth withall: *sed neque Latina vox id exigit. Est quidem Merces, ut Varro vult, à merendo: at Merere aut Mereri Latinis veteribus erat consequi. Merces ea quam Deus rependit obedientie nostrae fundamentum habet in liberali & misericordii ipsius promissione. Alioqui non digna sunt quae hic patimur, glorioso premio quod nobis obventurum est.* *Grot. in Mat. 6. 3.* And on *Jam. 2 p. 14.* he saith also, (mentioning that of *Cyprian*, *preceptis ejus & monitis obtemperandum est, ut accipiant Merita nostra Mercedem*) *Quo in loco, & veterum aliis, vox Meriti, sic sumenda est, sicut vox Mercedis, non apud ipsos tantum sed & in sacris literis, Mat. 5. 12. & 10. 42. Luk. 6. 35. 1 Cor. 3. 14. nimirum non ex equalitate operis & retributionis, quae hic certè nulla est. Sed ex liberalissima promissione quae laborantibus nobis Jus dat; ita ut hoc negotium ad Donationem sub conditione, quam ad proprie dictam locutionem & conditionem, cui contractui agnate Mercedis & Merendi vocer, propius accedat: quo sensu etiam Paulus dicit redditurum Deum piis secundum ipsorum opera, Rom. 2. 6. quorum operum explicatio convendo, non per complexione est, Mat. 25. circa finem, redditurum scilicet iudicio non rigido, sed mira quadam clementia temperato, & directo ad naturam benignissimi foederis per & propter Christum facti.* Moreover, our Divines take the Latin word *Merces*, not onely to be tollerable, but to be Scripture sence, for they oft retain it in our translations

of the Scripture: But it seems the word *Meritum* hath nothing in it, which should make it much more improper then *Mercēs*: for they are both Relatives: and they come both from *Mereor*.

I must intreat the judicious Reader not to mistake my end in all this, nor to suppose me to conclude contrary to my former Proposition, I stand between two extreams, and therefore must speak against both. I onely hence conclude, that therefore we should not too much quarrell about the bare word, when we agree in sense: nor should we censure any for the bare use of the word *Merit*, as erring in Doctrine, when it seems to him to be a term warranted by Scripture: But yet where Scripture it self useth a term improperly, we should in our disputes lay by such terms usually, if we have more proper; and where use hath made a term dangerous to the souls of men, it may be fit to forbear it, without necessity, or explication. I have said the more also of this, that it may appear to all impartial Readers, on what grounds, and with what Truth and Modesty Mr. E. and Mr. Cr. charge me with Error, and flat Popery; because that when I was speaking against Merit, I yielded that improperly, and in a larger sense, as Promise is an Obligation, and the thing promised is called Debt or Due, to the performers of the Condition are called worthy, and their performance Merit, though properly it is all of Grace and not of Debt. I appeal to any competent Judge, whether these men do not hereby make all the Fathers and Churches of Christ to be Papists, till about *Istebius* his daies; or at least for above 1000. years after Christ (and I think between that and *Luthers* time, the doctrine of Merits was not much decayed)? Yea, some will doubt whether they make not Christ and his Apostles Papists? and then no wonder if they make *Luther*, *Melanchon*, and all the Protestants that subscribed the *Augustane* Confession, to be Papists: yea, *Buoer*, *Calvin*, and many of the most eminent Divines of his Judgement, who also subscribed, and offered to subscribe the same Confession. I had as live be a Papist with all these, as an Antinomian, calling my self a Protestant. And I think I have said enough to manifest that the Spirit of these two Brethrens writings, is not so like the Spirit of Christ, that covereth his peoples failings, but never accuseth them for truth and duty, as to the Spirit of that professed Accuser of the Brethren, and enemy to the Truth.

SECT. VI.

S. 6.

I Will adde these two things concerning the Matter of Merit, having said all this about the Name. 1. All the duties and graces of a Believer are so far from meriting of God properly, and according to Commutative Justice, as we did God any good by it which should oblige him to a Retribution, that they do oblige us much more to God then we were before. For that which is a duty in one respect and a grace in another, is indeed a choice part of our mercy; and the more we do for God, the more we receive; not only by way of Reward, but in the very Duty: nay Doing it self is but in some respect a receiving from God, and in some respect, a means to further Receiving. When ever the soul is moved to Love, Humility, Thankfulness, Desire, &c. it receives this grace, and a pretious mercy it is: and in the exercise it receiveth more: To Love God is some degree of enjoying him: Even to give all we have for him at his Call, is a receiving from him. Honest hearers do understand this mysterie, though Hypocrites and Pharisees do not.

2. Though I say that no Angel is capable of such proper meriting of God, yet I do not intend, that sinful man can merit as far as Angels or *Adam* in innocency might have been said to do: No nor that our working now, is in the main parts, of that nature as *Adams* then was. His was, *the perfect obedience of a perfect Creature, from the power of nature and that Grace which was without proper Merit, for the continuance of that perfection, and the attainment of more.* Ours is *the imperfect Obedience of a sinner freely pardoned upon his believing and repenting which obedience mainly consisteth in the Accepting of mercy, and using it for Recovery, and it is performed and accepted by Gospel grace, which is against or contrary to merit, and not only without it.* I will explain all by this familiar comparision. A Father hath one son at full age, who having the full use of Reason and strength, is able and fit to do him answerable service. He will give the inheritance to this son, because he is a son, out of meer Paternal Love, and not of merit of the son: yet because he is an honest vertuous man, he loveth not his son as a son so dearly, but that he would reject him if he were