dash down hope, and surpass patience; but  
*we know better concerning them*.   
**Moreover**   
(or, **but**; and if so, it seems most   
naturally   
to apply to ver. 22, the groaning and  
travailing of all creation) **we know** (as a  
point of the assurance of faith) **that, to  
those who love God** (a stronger   
designation than   
any yet used for believers), **all  
things** (every event of life, but especially,  
as the context requires, those which are  
adverse. To include, with Augustine, the  
*sins* of believers in this **all things**, as  
making them “humbler and wiser,” is  
manifestly to introduce an element which  
did not enter into the Apostle’s   
consideration;   
for he is here already viewing the  
believer as *justified by faith, dwelt in by  
the Spirit, dead* to sin) **work together** (in  
the sense of all things *co-operating one  
with another*) **for** (towards, to bring  
about) **good** (their eternal welfare ;—the  
fulfilment of the purpose of the “love of  
God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord,”  
ver. 39),—**to those who are called** (not  
only *invited*, but effectually called——see  
below) **according to** [**His**] (the possessive  
pronoun is not expressed in the original)  
**purpose**.—In this further description the  
Apostle designates the believers as not  
merely *loving God*, but being *beloved by  
God*. The *divine side* of their security  
from harm is brought out, as combining  
with and ensuring the other. They are  
sure that all things work for their good,  
not only because *they love Him who  
worketh all things*, but also because *He  
who worketh all things hath loved and  
chosen them*, and carried them through the  
successive steps of their spiritual life. The  
*calling* here and elsewhere spoken of by  
the Apostle (comp. especially ch. ix. 11) is  
the working, in men, of “the everlasting  
purpose of God whereby before the foundations   
of the world were laid, He hath   
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.” Art. X. of the Church of England.  
To specify the various ways in which this  
calling has been understood, would far   
exceed the limits of a general commentary.  
It may suffice to say, that on the one hand,  
Scripture bears constant testimony to the  
fact that all believers are chosen and called  
by God,—their whole spiritual life in its  
origin, progress, and completion, being *from  
Him* :—while on the other hand its testimony   
is no less precise that He willeth all  
to be saved, and that none shall perish   
except by *wilful rejection* of the truth. So  
that, on the one side, GOD’S SOVEREIGNTY,  
—on the other, MAN’S FREE WILL,—is  
plainly declared to us. *To receive, believe,  
and act on both these, is our duty, and  
our wisdom*. They belong, as truths, no  
less to *natural* than to revealed religion :  
and every one who believes in a God must  
acknowledge both. But all attempts to  
*bridge over the gulf between the two* are  
*futile*, in the present imperfect condition of  
man. The very reasonings used for this  
purpose are clothed in language framed on  
the analogies of this lower world,and wholly  
inadequate to describe God regarded as He  
is in Himself. Hence arises confusion,   
misapprehension of God, and unbelief. I have  
therefore simply, in this commentary,   
endeavoured to enter into the full meaning  
of the sacred text, whenever one or other  
of these great truths is brought forward ;  
not explaining either of them away on  
account of possible difficulties arising from  
the recognition of the other, but   
recognizing as fully the *elective and   
predestinating decree of God*,   
where it is treated  
of, as I have done, in other places, *the free  
will of man*. If there be an inconsistency  
in this course, it is at least one in which  
the nature of things, the conditions of  
human thought, and Scripture itself,   
participate, and from which no Commentator  
that I have seen, however anxious to  
avoid it by extreme views one way or the  
other, has been able to escape.  
  
  
**29, 30.**] The Apostle now goes backward  
from the word **called**, to explain *how this*CALLING *came about*. It sprung from  
God’s *fore-knowledge*, co-ordinate with  
His *fore-determination* of certain persons  
to be conformed to the image of His Son,  
that Christ might be exalted as the Head  
of the great Family of God. These persons,  
thus foreknown and pre-determined, He,  
in the course of His Providence actually,  
but in His eternal decree implicitly, called,  
bringing them through justification to  
glory ;—and all this is spoken of *as past*,  
because *to Him who sees the end from the  
beginning,—past, present, and future,* ARE