These words are slightly altered from Isa.  
xxix. 16, “*Shall the work say of him that  
made it, He made me not? or shall the  
thing framed say of him that framed it,  
He had no understanding?*” —**Or** (intro-  
duces a new objection, or fresh ground of  
rebuke, see ch. ii. 4; iii. 29; vi. 3; xi. 2)  
**hath not the potter power over the clay**(the similitude from Isa. xlv.9. In Ecclus.  
xxiii. 13, we have a very similar sentiment  
“*As the clay is in the potter's hand, to  
fashion it at his pleasure, so man is in  
the hand of him that made him, to render  
to them as liketh him best.*”—And even  
more strikingly so, Wisd. xv. 7: “*For  
the potter, tempering soft earth, fashioneth  
every vessel with much labour for our service: yea, of the same clay he maketh both  
the vessels that serve for clean uses, and  
likewise also all such as serve to the contrary: but what is the use of either sort,  
the potter himself is the judge.*” See also  
Jer. xviii. 6), **out of the same lump to  
make one vessel unto honour** (honourable  
uses), **and another unto dishonour** (dis-  
honourable uses. See 2 Tim., in the reff.  
—The honour and dishonour are not here  
the *moral purity* or *impurity* of the human  
vessels, but their *ultimate glorification* or  
*perdition*. The Apostle, in asking this question, rather aims at striking dumb the  
objector by a statement of God’s undoubted  
right, against which it does not become us  
men to murmur, than at unfolding to us  
the actual state of the case. This he does  
in the succeeding verses; see above)?

**22.**] **What if** (1) **God, purposing to shew  
forth His wrath, and to make His power**(that which He could do) **known, endured  
with much longsuffering vessels of wrath  
fitted** (prepared, made complete and ready)  
**for destruction: and** (what if this took  
place) (2) **to the end that He might make  
known the riches of His glory on** (i.e.  
*‘toward*,’ ‘with regard to’) **the vessels  
of mercy, which He before prepared for  
glory** (I have given the whole, that my  
view of the construction might be evident:  
viz. that (1) and (2) are parallel clauses,  
both dependent on **what if; purposing**giving the intent of the first, and **to the  
end that he might make known** that of the  
second.—The argument is, ‘What if God,  
in the case of the vessels of wrath prepared  
for destruction, has, in willing to manifest  
His power and wrath, also exhibited towards  
them longsuffering (to lead them to repentance, ch. ii. 4,—a mystery which we cannot  
fathom), and in having mercy on the vessels of mercy prepared for glory, has also  
made manifest the riches of His glory?”  
Then in both these dispensations will appear, not the arbitrary power, but the rich  
goodness of God.—The theological difficulties in the words **fitted for destruction,  
and which he before prepared for glory**  
(mind, in both cases God is the agent:  
He fits the one for destruction, and prepares the other for glory), are but such as  
have occurred repeatedly before, and are  
inherent, not in the Apostle’s argument,  
nor even in revelation, but in *any consistent belief of an omnipotent and omniscient God*. See remarks on ver. 18.—  
**Vessels of wrath** and **vessels of mercy** are  
*vessels prepared to subserve*, as it were to  
hold, His wrath and mercy: hardly, as  
Calvin, *instruments to shew them forth*:  
that is *done*, over and above their being  
vessels, but is not necessary to it.—These  
vessels of wrath and vessels of mercy are  
not to be, with a view to evade the general