fail, after we have otherwiſe done our utmoſt towards the fulfilling of God’s ſacred laws, towards the performing of all the conditions required.

“ That good works, internal and external, are according as opportunities offer and circumſtances permit, *conditions* pro­perly ſo called, is clear from the whole tenor of Scripture, as hath been often and abundantly proved by our own divines @@(m), and is admitted by the moſt judicious among the fo­reign Reformed @@(n). Yet ſome have been very ſcrupulous as to this innocent name, even while they allow the abſolute neceſſity of good works as indiſpenſable qualifications for fu­ture bleſſedneſs. Why not conditions therefore as well as qualifications ? Perhaps becauſe that name might appear to ſtrike at abſolute predeſtination, or unconditional election ; and there may lie the ſcruple : otherwiſe the difference ap­pears to lie rather in words than in things.

“ Some will have them called not conditions, but *fruits* or c*onsequents* of juſtification. If they mean by juſtification the same as the grace of the Holy Spirit, and the firſt grace of faith ſpringing from it, they say true ; and then there is no­thing more in it than an improper uſe of the word justification*,* except that from abuſe of words very frequently ariſes ſome corruption of doctrine. If they mean only, that out­ward acts of righteouſneſs are fruits of inward habits or diſpoſitions ; that alſo is undoubtedly true ; but that is no reaſon why internal acts, virtues, graces (good works of the mind), ſhould not be called conditions of juſtification ; or why the outward acts ſhould not be juſtly thought condi­tions of preſerving it. But if they mean that juſtification is ordinarily given to adults, without any preparative or pre­vious conditions of faith and repentance, that indeed is very new doctrine and dangerous, and opens a wide door to car­nal ſecurity and to all ungodlineſs.”

Such is the doctrine of Chriſtian juſtification as it has been taught by the followers of Calvin, and by ſome of the moſt eminent Arminians who flouriſhed in the end of the laſt and beginning of the preſent century. They appear not, from this view of their opinions, to differ ſo widely as ſome of them have wiſhed the world to believe. It is evident that Dr Waterland, though he rejects ſome of the diſtinguiſhing tenets of Calviniſm, lays greater ſtreſs upon faith in his ſcheme of juſtification than Dr Gill himſelf ; and that they both consider it as the *instrument* by which the adult Chri­ſtian muſt receive the imputed righteouſneſs of Chriſt. The greater part of modern Arminians, however, exclaim againſt the imputation of Chriſt’s righteouſneſs, as a doctrine falſe in itſelf, and fraught with the moſt pernicious conſequences ; and they would be ready to tell Dr Gill, in his own words, that of his ſcheme every article is wrong. It is not true (ſay they) that God exacts of man, or ever did exact of him, an obedience abſolutely perfect ; for under every diſpenſation man was in a ſtate of diſcipline, and had habits of vir­tue and piety to acquire ; and it is probable that his progreſs in piety, virtue, and wiſdom, will continue for ever, as none but God is perfect and ſtationary, and incapable of de­viating from the line of rectitude. Moſt of them, after Biſhop Bull, diſlike the uſe of ſuch unſcriptural phraſes as *the instrument of justification,* applied either to faith or to works ; and think, that by considering God as the ſole juſtifier of man, upon certain conditions, they can more preciſely aſcertain the diſtinct provinces of faith and obedience in the ſcheme of juſtification, than either their brethren of the old ſchool of Arminius, or their rivals of the ſchool of Calvin.

By the very conſtitution of man, piety and virtue are duties which, if he do not ſincerely perform, he muſt of courſe forfeit the favour of his Maker ; but the moſt perfect performance of his natural duties would not entitle him to a ſupernatural and eternal reward. Eternal life is the *gift* of God through Jeſus Chriſt ; and it is ſurely reaſonable that we ſhould acknowledge it to be ſo, and not claim it as a debt due to our merits. The pious and virtuous man has a natural claim to more happiness than miſery during the period of his exiſtence, a claim founded on the attributes of that God who called him into being ; but he has no natural claim to a future life, and ſtill less to a perpetuity of exiſt­ence. This is a truth not more clearly taught in the holy ſcripture than conſonant to the ſoundeſt philoſophy : and yet, by not attending to it, have St Paul and St James been ſet at variance, and the moſt oppoſite doctrines taught re­specting the juſtification of Chriſtians.

Becauſe faith in Chriſt cannot entitle a wicked man to eternal *happiness,* one claſs of divines ſeem to infer that ſuch faith is not necessary to Chriſtian *justification,* and that “ his faith cannot be wrong whoſe life is in the right.” They proceed upon the ſupposition that man is naturally immor­tal ; that piety and virtue are entitled to reward ; and that therefore the pious and virtuous man whatever be his be­lief, muſt undoubtedly inherit an eternal reward. But this is very fallacious reaſoning. That piety and virtue are through the divine juſtice and benevolence entitled to re­ward, is indeed a truth incontrovertible ; but that man who is of yeſterday is naturally immortal ; that a being who be­gan to exiſt by the mere good will of his Maker, has in him­ſelf a principle of perpetual exiſtence independent of that will—is a direct contradiction. Whatever began to be, can be continued in being only by the power, and according to the pleaſure, of the infinite Creator ; but it pleaſed the Creator of his free grace at firſt to promiſe mankind eternal life, on the ſingle condition of their firſt father’s obſerving one positive precept. That precept was violated, and the free gift loſt : but the covenant was renewed in Chriſt, who “ by his death hath aboliſhed death, and by his reſurrection hath brought to light life and immortality.” The condi­tion annexed to the gift thus reſtored was faith ; for “ being Juſtified by faith@@\*, we have peace with God through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt ; by whom alſo we have acceſs by faith into this grace wherein we ſtand, and rejoice in the hope of the Glory of God.” Faith therefore in the Son of God and Saviour of the world, is not only a condition, but the s*ole* condition, of that juſtification which is peculiarly Chriſtian ; for since Chriſt, without any cooperation of ours, hath purchaſed for us the free gift of eternal life, we ſhall be guilty of the groſſeſt ingratitude to our Divine Benefactor, and impiously claim an independence on God, if we look upon that gift either as a right inherent in our nature, or as a debt due to our meritorious deeds.

But though faith be the condition of Chriſtian juſtifica­tion, as that implies the inheritance of *eternal life,* there are other conditions to be performed before a man can be put in posseſſion of *eternal felicity.* By a law long prior to the pro­mulgation oſ the goſpel—a law interwoven with our very being—no man can enjoy the favour of his Maker, who does not make it his confiant endeavour “ to do juſtly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with his God.” This law was in force before man fell ; it continues to be in force now that he is redeemed ; and it will not be abrogated even at

@@@[m]\* Rom. v. 1, 2.

@@@(m) Bull *Op. Latin.* p. 412, 414, 415, 430, 434, 514, 516, 544, 583, 645, 668. *Edit.ult.—*Stillingfleet’s Works, vol. HI. p. 367, 380, 393, 398.—Tillotſon’s Poſthumous Sermons, vol. II. p. 484,487.

@@@(n) Vossius *de Bonis Operibus,* Theſ. x. p. 370. —Op. tom. VI. *Frid, Spanhem. fil.* Op. tom. III. p. 141, 159.