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Remarks On A Tract Circulated By The Irvingites Entitled, “A Word Of Instruction”

The tract on which the following remarks have been made was actually circulated by the Irvingite teachers amongst those for whose sakes they have been written. Although therefore they would elude the responsibility flowing from it by saying that it is not put out by authority, they may justly be held answerable for its contents. It is perhaps right it should be known, that the only thing which has such authority among them, which they call the record, is kept carefully from the knowledge and hearing of any but themselves. If their individual teachers say anything, they are not answerable for it, for they are not the Holy Ghost. If the Spirit said plain things early in their course, it was before the ordinances were set up; though one of their angels has asserted, that, if he taught palpable error, no one was to call it in question, for the sin it might occasion would rest upon him; yet, when any one might shew the unscripturalness of the statement, then an individual was not the Church nor the Holy Ghost. And if the Spirit spoke things which actually failed, then it was said no one. had a right to interpret what was said, for no prophecy was of private interpretation. This, connected with the denial of the competency of individuals to use scripture with profit alone, or any way but through their ordinances, gives a character to this matter with which we are but too familiar in this country.

This has gone so far as for their teachers to assert, in their stating what has been mentioned and being questioned, that if they taught that God was not manifest in the flesh at all, a Christian ought not to look to the scriptures to see if it was right, and that if he did, he would get no good out of it, for he had not the Spirit so as to be able, and none had but they. And, in another instance of a person in illness, they were reproved on being found reading the bible, and saying it was their only comfort there alone, for that the Church was between their soul and God; and they have gone so far as to desire some poor disciples not to pray for anything they were not taught by the angel to pray for, for it was making God a familiar spirit. They would commend the bible perhaps highly; but take it as the rule of faith which a believer is capable of using for himself, however he may benefit by others, and by which he is always bound to judge others when the occasion arises; and they will—perhaps I should not say they will— but they have constantly denied such competency, and reproved such use. The authority of the Church and the voice with them is the paramount thing.

It is a painful thing to be mingled up with evil, even in contention against it; but it is sometimes the duty of, because needful for, the saints.

The people called Irvingites have been plainly convicted elsewhere of so much false doctrine, false practice, and false prophecy, and that by many of the Church of God, as to make it, when known, a question only of preserving God’s children against the deceits and crafts of Satan. Here they are as strangers less known. It is not my intention to go over at length in this what has been already often taken notice of. They have here circulated

one of their most plausible tracts; and therefore there is a plain ground to take up with them—and I do this the rather for this reason—they have been often charged with holding the sinful humanity of Christ, and many of their teachers and disciples have, to the writer of this and to other persons, avowed it—that He had the carnal mind, but kept it down or dead. Mr. Irving, bold and fearless in the statement of what he held, declared that his nature bristled with sin like quills upon a porcupine; and that the nature with which the Son of man was clothed poured forth from the centre of its inmost will streams as black as hell; and that the Augean stable of this nature was given Him to cleanse; and, what was most material, the spirit which they profess to be the Holy Ghost, though it might not sanction the language, expressly sanctioned the doctrine, the doctrine to which it gave its sanction being, that the law of sin was there all-present.

Now this was so plainly wicked and evil, and contrary to God's word and Spirit, that they have, since they have been pressed with it, taken great pains, at least the subtler ones amongst them, to disclaim and deny this. I say the subtler ones; because it has been not long since avowed by some of their teachers to the writer of this. The way they have got over the Spirit's having sanctioned it is, that they were not answerable for what was said, that is, in utterance by the Spirit, before the ordinances were set up. One of these very ordinances said to the writer of this, that the Spirit might have said it through prejudice to please Mr. Irving. I only mention this to shew the unhappy degradation to which men may be reduced by giving way to the leadings of an evil spirit. Another of their teachers confessed that

damnable errors and blasphemous heresies had been taught by them at Cork and elsewhere. But few are aware of these, and many other, wretched inconsistencies which pass among them, and often tear the mind of those who are sincere among them: but who, having once given credit to the voice amongst them as the Holy Ghost, and submitted implicitly to the ordinances among them as the Church, are powerless in their hands, unless and until God, in His sovereign mercy, break the bands. And derangement and heart-breaking more than once have I known the fruit, while the testimony of those freed has been at once most sad and humbling as to what was there, though at first there may have been great form of joy and holiness. I say form; for, while there was that, it has never been heavenly or holy in its character or effects, where I have met with it, but the contrary: though I believe some holy persons have fallen into it. Deceit, worldliness, the sanction of evil tempers in those whose persons are held in admiration among them, along with the pretence of infallibility and the evil connected with that, are what I have met amongst them; nor, I may say, have I ever in any body of persons found such an entire want of truth, and so much subtlety and deceivableness. These may seem hard sayings, but I say them soberly, after painful and sorrowful discovery of it; for there are individuals among them whom I feel bound to believe are, and to love, and whom I do love dearly as, Christ’s sheep.

Now the tract which I have here noticed is one which most anxiously denies, and guards itself against, the evil doctrine noticed above; and having been actually circulated by them, there can be no charge of aggravation or prejudice, if subtlety, deceit, and real

dishonour to our blessed Lord, be found to characterize it. But the real value of their attempt to screen themselves from the charge of this unholy and wicked doctrine may be seen, and what the value of their most direct and plausible denial of it is. To those who are acquainted with their teaching, as one of the pillars of their angels (such is his title) said to the writer—"a totally different gospel," which it surely is, and another foundation. There are many passages in the tract whose evil and subtlety would be most plain, but I can notice only such here as would be plain to a stranger on the face of it; and I say that those who really know Christ must at once reject them altogether. The Lord keep others from the subtlety and power of Satan in them, or working by them.

I will state their own words, to give them the full value of their denial of the doctrine. For though several have confessed it to me and others, they do often openly deny it when charged with it.

"In His [Christ's] human nature there was no inclination to sin, no stirring, no motion towards it, for He was dead to sin, being in humanity, as entirely and absolutely holy as Godhead is holy, and pure as Godhead is pure, so that, in the fullest sense in which the words can be taken, He could not sin." "But," the tract justly adds, "in knowing this we are not knowing all."

Who would not say to this, What can be more satisfactory? So it might seem at first sight to the unwary, and those who knew not with whom they had to deal.

But first you must remark the terms, "He was dead to sin." It is not in that He died, He died to sin once;

therefore reckon yourselves, who have it in your nature, to be dead indeed unto sin. But while alive in the flesh He was so. Where was the sin He was dead to? They will tell you, at least they have told and written, in the nature He took, but not in His person.

Again, who would say that being holy in humanity did not mean His humanity being holy—or think in so plain a statement of so subtle a distinction? Hear their own words in this very tract. “All holiness since the fall has been a thing not according to,1but against, nature… Now this is what I mean, by regeneration holiness—not a holiness of humanity, but a holiness in humanity by the Holy Ghost. Such has been the holiness of all the saints of” God—of Abel, Enoch, Noah, &c, Samuel, and the prophets. And such was the holiness of Him who is not ashamed to call those saints His brethren. I know that our beloved Lord was holy from the beginning, but this by no means alters the matter.” It was then a holiness not according to, but against nature. We can now understand what His being dead to sin means, and in humanity holy.

This might be sufficient to shew their exceeding subtlety; and how little those not acquainted with their teaching can trust apparently satisfactory statements; but as it is wrought out through all the tract I will follow it through some of the passages it contains. And I only ask, whether this subtlety is the least like the guilelessness of the Spirit of Christ.

The consequences they draw in this very tract are most plain. It is a difference in degree merely, that of Chirst’s holiness and ours, not in kind. It can be realized in the members as in the head. The difference between the

head and members existed between the members, but not to the same degree. Dwelling in the Father and the Father in Him meant abiding ever in the Father by faith, and having the Father abiding in Him by the Holy Ghost, and that He had not the fulness of the Spirit without a correspondent waiting on the Father, and we are to do likewise: and consequently, as the prince of this world came and found nothing in our head, he would find nothing in us either, if we only were, as our head desires to see us, filled with all the fulness of God.

Now all this really sets aside the person of Christ, and states sin to be in Christ in the flesh, or asserts that it may be out of ours, and both these latter points have been expressly taught to the writer, and Mr. Irving's printed doctrine was that Christ's work was not reconciling individuals, but human nature.

"If His human nature," says Mr. Irving in another place, "differed by however so little from ours in its alienation and guiltiness, then the reducing it into eternal harmony with God hath no bearing whatever upon our nature, with which it is not the same."

And that it was "of the substance and essence of the orthodox faith that Chirst could say, till the resurrection, Not I but sin that tempteth me in my flesh."

He said also, that Christ suffered because He was in the condition of a sinner: and that if He were not, and God treated Him as if He had been so, God was a make-believe God.

And again, that Christ was made by His human nature inclined to all those things which the law interdicted.

One other passage of Mr. Irving's writings I will advert to. He says, "I hold it to be the surrender of the whole question to say that He was not conscious of, engaged with, and troubled by, every evil disposition which inheriteth in the fallen manhood."

Accordingly, their teachers still teach, that the life of the flesh may be put out of the flesh, and the life of Christ put into it; so that we may be perfect as Christ Himself. And some of their tracts state, that this is the only ground on which we stand in the judgment. Such is, in fact, the doctrine of this tract, which in page 23 states that the fallen nature, which, if left to follow its own propensities, could do nothing good, was in Christ proved capable of perfect goodness; and that the prince of this world would find nothing in us either if we were what our head desires to see us. Accordingly, though they speak of the blood, and justification by the blood, on examination they are found to hold that all the world are justified in it, and righteousness (as was stated to the writer by one of their chief teachers) imputed to the vilest unbeliever as much as to himself or any believer. The Christian will know how contrary to scripture all this is.

As regards likeness to Christ, the diligent reader of scripture will see that our likeness to Christ, when applied to this life, is always of walk, not of nature, or in Himself; and likeness to Himself is stated to take place when He appears, and, we being risen, sin is no more a part of our state at all.

I shall now follow each material page of the tract, and notice enough of its subtleties to shew its character.

Page 2. “In all things it behoved Jesus to be made like unto his brethren.”

“His brethren.” There is concealment here, and of a point on which the whole hangs.

“We His brethren.”

Who are we? The Church or men? Here again the point is like His brethren, and it is said “of the same Spirit of which we are born again was He born in humanity holy.”

What likeness is here? Were we born in humanity holy or sinful? Likeness to His brethren in His being born holy, and they being born again because they were born in sin? Or is our old nature born again? If we His brethren are the Church, this likeness does not affect the character of our old nature which was not born of the Spirit.

In setting forth Jesus as a man, how excluded is God manifest in the flesh! Surely this had something to do with setting forth Jesus as a man. How excluded that the Word was made flesh!

“Jesus abides in His Almighty Father by faith.”

Where does the scripture make such a statement as that? and “having the Father abiding in him by the Holy Ghost?”

Where is this in scripture? or where is divine union here? I read the Lord saying, “the Father is in me, and I in the Father.” The Holy Ghost is not the Father.

Page 3. The, scripture makes no such statement as this; but I reserve any remark till we come to the place where it is made use of. I will only remark, that to avoid the consequence that (to use the expression of this tract)

“He inherited the poison” of the stock, their teachers have stated that Christ had not the life of a man in Him at all, and at least one of them, in terms, that God died.

He was by His mother surely in a certain sense sprung of man’s race; but He was conceived sinless of the Holy Ghost in human nature, and we clearly opposite. When scripture speaks in this wise, Adam is represented as one head and the second Adam another.

Though a branch of Jesse, and sprung of Judah, as to purpose and dispensation, He did not spring of it naturally, as every Christian knows.

Page 4. “We are all branches,” &c.

“His lovely holiness.” “Of this holiness we may be made partakers.”

Now the question is as to His humanity.

How can we be partakers of the holiness of His humanity? Is our manhood born of the Holy Ghost? What treachery of doctrine is it, under the plea of urging our being like Him in holiness, to conceal the difference that we are as branches born in sin? Our human nature is not born of the Holy Ghost; His was. His was “that holy thing which shall be born of thee;” ours is not. And we are to observe, that this is the whole point on such a subject as being a branch, and our being a branch, so that of this holiness we may be partakers. Can we, in the sinlessness of our human nature in its conception and birth? Is ours born a holy thing?

Page 5. Second proposition: “He sprang sinless, &c, by the Holy Ghost.”

Do we do so in our humanity?

“In His human nature,” &c.

Is that our case?

“Whence came this lovely holiness?”

This is the point.

“We are called to be like Him.”

In nature as to manhood? How so, when we are born in sin; He not?

“Unless we can tell how Christ was holy, we cannot tell how His holiness may be found in us.”

In flesh, in nature, or else it is quite different; or else it is the denial of the holiness of His nature.

“Do you ask me what it is to assign a false cause for the holiness of Jesus? I answer, to trace it to something which, in the very nature of things, can never be true of us.”

It never can be true of us that our human nature was born of the Holy Ghost; and that that which is born of our mother is sinless. This is the whole question.

“The holiness of Jesus a holiness to be realized in us.”

Is it in nature, in the flesh, not victory? or else, was His victory over sin in Himself? For ours is.

Page 6. “For when we are taught to believe,” &c.

“Holiness which God commands to be realized in us the members, in the same way as it was realized in Him the head.”

Had it not its source in something which never can be true of us? Was not the manhood born through the Holy

Ghost? Are we God-men? It was realized in the head by sin's never existing: is that the way it is realized in us?

"Common to say Jesus was holy because He was born of a virgin?"

No; but because He was born through the power of the Holy Ghost, which is left out here. What wickedness this is!

Again I say, it never can be true that they were born through the operation of the Holy Ghost. How is the great truth of the incarnation merged here!

These two pages, while they apparently deny in terms, most fully teach this most unholy doctrine in fact.

Page 7. "It behoved our Lord not to descend from Adam by ordinary generation."

Do not we? Is not this a distinct source of holiness?

"The lovely holiness of the man Christ Jesus came from His birth in humanity of the Holy Ghost."

Is not this a different source from us?

How is likeness to us first insisted on, and the truth kept back; and here the truth stated, and the necessary difference kept back! This is the subtlety and deceit of Satan.

"Therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee."

Could this be said of us? Is not the manner and source of holiness different? The Holy Ghost is not the source of our human nature as to birth; He was of Christ's. This is all the difference. He was a man born of God as to His

human nature. I am not: and this, I say, is all the difference. See the consequence, pages 11, 19.

“Because conceived and born of the Holy Ghost.”

Is not again this a different cause from us? Are we so? Could this “therefore” be used of us?

“The human nature of our beloved Lord was impeccable.”

Is this “to be realized in us as it was realized in Him the head?”

Page 8. “Cannot sin, because He is born of God.”

“These words have a partial fulfilment in every child of God.”

How as to His manhood?

“Evil resulting from the doctrine which leads us to trace the holiness of Jesus in humanity, either to His birth of a virgin, or to His having been in His other nature more than man.”

Again is left out His birth in human nature of the Holy Ghost. Then, as if this point was brought in, it “traces that holiness to His birth of the Holy Ghost.”

“This inspires us with the blessed hope of realizing conformity to Jesus. Because birth of the Holy Ghost is common to the members with the head, and so if the holiness of the head can be traced to this source, it is a holiness in which the members may hope to share.” Is birth of the Holy Ghost common to the members with the head in their human nature? Is there any community really of the members with the head as to their birth of the Holy Ghost, as to the question of their human nature, or of holiness in humanity?

“Because they have no miraculous birth, it by no means follows they have no birth.”

They have no birth as to their flesh, but death by the Holy Ghost; and there is just the opposition, “if Christ be in you, the body is dead.”

“There was a real work of the Holy Ghost upon Him conceiving Him holy.”

“Now the very same work is done upon the members!”

As to the body, is this true? “When we know that the lovely holiness of our head came from something which is also true of us.” Is it?

Page 9. “Be found holy branches.”

As to flesh is the question.

“The Father abiding in Him by the Holy Ghost.”

Where is this in scripture, or such a thought?

“In like manner, as we His members live by Him.”

“AS”—“SO.”

There is no emphasis in this. These words are not in the original.

“The life which we, whom Jesus hath sent, receive of Him; He whom the Father had sent received also of the Father.”

Where is this in scripture? It is not receiving but sustaining is spoken of.

“Oneness also in the manner of receiving it, as, so.”

There is no such thing really meant in the words.—Christ was speaking of eating His flesh and drinking His

blood. How was this manner like, or one with the manner He received it of the Father?

Page 10. “Jesus abiding ever in the Father by faith, and having the Father abiding in Him by the Holy Ghost.”

But there was much more than this (the latter part is not in scripture), even eternal union, which is not in us at all. This is the point of christian faith, which is here set aside. This tract is a denial of Christianity in my mind altogether. Is “I am in the Father” merely abiding by faith? If not, why say it is the same, yea, one thing? Is it alike true?

Page ii. “He hath promised to us the same.”

Nay. He leaned on the living Father, we on the flesh and blood, that is, on death for us. The blood being shed out of the body and therefore spoken of as drunk. This is shocking perversion.

“This was the staff on which Jesus leant,” &c.

Is John 15 and John 6 the same thing? Did He live by eating the flesh and drinking the blood? Is it not the contrast that we lean as sinners. He in the same life in holiness?

“Nothing should be too hard for us that was not too hard for Him.”

Can we raise ourselves from the dead? What a comparison with Christ is this!

“Shut your doors, bow your knees to the Lamb.”

Why not to the Father in the Son’s name? The contrary of this is just what He means by “In that day ye shall ask me nothing; whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will do it.”

“Leaning on the same strength,” &c.

This is not the passage. Eating flesh and drinking blood is not the same as living by the Father.

Page 12. “For He had proved them all.”

Has He proved my sorrows under sin as to conflict? He did on the cross, where I wanted it. Had He sin dwelling in Him? I have. Had He sin dwelling in Him? Did birth by the Holy Ghost make no difference?

“Found in this estate.”

What estate? Sin in the flesh?

“Its weakness.”

But its sin, its sin, that is the question. His leaning on God in trial was perfection, and not sin.

Page 13, “Holy human nature, which God had prepared for Him.”

Is that true of us? Or, on the other side, being God-man?

“He had gotten pure from the Father’s hands.”

Is this true of us? Neither indeed is it scriptural in itself.

What follows is all shirking the point.

Page 14. Who questions all these testimonies of the word?

Page 15 I cannot acquiesce in, but it is immaterial.

Page 16. “It was a prayer for wisdom.”

Where is this in scripture?

It is common to say Jesus prayed as a man, but this is exceedingly incorrect language, and much calculated to

mislead. “You do not imagine that the humanity of Jesus ever prayed of itself? “No, but it was not God prayed.

“The God-man prayed.”

Where is this in scripture?

How do men darken counsel by words without knowledge! If it were the God-man, it was all from a source of which I am devoid, for I am not a God-man. Perhaps we should remember, in setting forth Jesus as a man, pages 2, 3, we have merely the Father dwelling in Him by the Spirit, and thus He did the Father’s will. There is no part of the glory of Christ’s person which is not confused and set aside here.

The difference as to Arianism is much simpler and plainer. Arianism says, that Jesus our Lord was not the true God: and Christianity or the scripture says He was. The question in Arianism was not about trusting at all.

Page 17. As to justification and example, this is not the point at all: but raising, not the true objection, but a quite distinct question, and answering it, this is mere Jesuitry.

Page 18. “Having put away our sins in His blood; and as our representative, fulfilled all righteousness.”

Whose sins? Whose representative?

Page 19. “He was conceived and born holy, whereas we are conceived and born in sin.”

Is this a difference only in degree?

“He hath the pre-eminence.”

Was He in sin? Is that only in degree?

“A difference not in kind, but only in degree.”

Here is the point.

“For of the same Spirit of which He was sanctified in humanity” “His members are sanctified.”

What subtlety! Sanctified in humanity—was He born in sin?

“In this respect, there is no difference between Jesus and us, who are children of the Spirit.”

There is the difference of the flesh lusting against it in us, which was not in Him. This is not in degree, but in kind.

“But He was sanctified from the beginning, &c; but it is only a difference in degree,” &c.

How is the question of sin in the flesh dropped here! Could it have been said to Christ, “mortify therefore your members which are on the earth?” Was it not said to them to whom it was said, “ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God”?

Page 20. “If we cannot be expected to be like Christ, it makes useless all example together. I say this, because I am prepared to shew that the same difference, which we have now seen to exist between the head and the members, exists among the members themselves, though not to the same extent.”

Was not sin in the nature of all the members? Is it in the head? What abominable perversion and wickedness of Satan is this!

Were any of the members conceived in human nature of the Holy Ghost? What comes of the assertion, “that in His human nature there was no inclination to sin,” if

difference be only in degree, and that there is the same difference between the members?

“It is said of John, that he was filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother’s womb,” &c.

What has being filled with the Holy Ghost officially, and as to prophetic calling, to do with having his human nature conceived of the Holy Ghost?

“Any example will fall to the ground if the principle be admitted, that if He whom we are called to follow had more of the Spirit than we have, we cannot be expected to be like Him.”

Is that all the difference in Christ? The tract says it is difference only in extent. Is not this denying the sinlessness of Christ in nature?

Page 21. “‘Go thou and do likewise.’ But if the principle we are thus exposing be unsound when applied to holy men, it is equally unsound when applied to the holiest of men, the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Is not this making sin in Christ or none in us? “In Jesus of Nazareth you see the bright example of what manhood can be, and can do, by the grace of God anointing it, and the Holy Ghost dwelling in it.”

Is this sinful manhood as ours? if not, to what purpose is this evil subtlety? And what comes of Christ’s person? Was Christ an exhibition of what sinful manhood governed and mortified by the Holy Ghost is?

“If you say that He had a fulness of the Spirit which you have not, remember that He had not that fulness without a corresponding instant waiting on the Father.”

“When, therefore, at any time you are disposed to complain that God does not fill you with the Spirit whereas Jesus was always filled with Him, look on the Lamb spending nights in prayer; look on it, I say, and when you have looked on it, go you and do you likewise.”

Is any comment needed to shew the wickedness of this? Before Jesus entered on service at all, and was publicly anointed with the Holy Ghost, was there no difference between us and Him; not only as to the fulness of the Godhead in Him, but the sinless-ness of His human nature?

Page 22. “The tree having become corrupt, every branch springing from it inherits the poison, and, left alone, bears nothing but evil fruit.”

Every branch inherits the poison. Page 4 says, Jesus, His holy one, was a branch of Adam’s withered tree; and again, page 22, “for of this withered tree He sprang a branch. Nothing can be simpler, if men desire to know.”

Nothing, indeed. Every branch inherits the poison, and He sprang a branch—but was not left alone, and therefore did not bear nought but evil fruit.

“Holiness, since the fall, has been a thing not according to, but against, nature.”

Is that true of Christ?

“Such was the holiness of Him who is not ashamed to call these saints His brethren.”

What plainer?

“The holiness that was found in Him, He borrowed not from nature.”

What Jesuitry! Had He not it in nature? Have we? Was it not the native character of His humanity? Is it of ours?

“He sprang out of our common fallen stock.”

As we do?

We get now the worth of the earlier statements. The sting is in the tail; so ever with Satan’s deceit.

Page 23. “Last, but chief of all” “He sprang a branch.”

Did He inherit the poison? The rest did, though by the Holy Ghost they kept the power down.

“A fallen nature is one, which, left to follow its own propensities, will never do any good.”

Is that true of Christ’s nature? That is just the point.

“That it is capable of much goodness, Enoch and Elijah, Abraham and Moses, testify; that it is capable of perfect goodness, our beloved Lord testifies.”

Does He? St. Paul did not, but the clear contrary. He says, No good was in it, and it could not be subject to the law of God. No! What was in the saints was a new nature, not born of the flesh. Their fallen nature was born of the flesh, and was flesh; this was a new nature from God, through Christ, contrary to the old as scripture teaches. It lusted against the Spirit in them: could that be said of Christ? What Christ was in principle and character, the new nature is of itself, for it is Christ our life. There is the old besides in us.

Page 24. “Jesus, the branch, sprang of it sinless by the Spirit.”

Do we? If not, what folly do they mean?

“The Son of God could not have taken humanity save by the Holy Ghost.”

Do we?

“No humanity that was not conceived by the Spirit holy…could ever have been the humanity of the Father’s Holy One.”

Is that our humanity? Is there no difference in kind?

“You will be taught to look upon the purity of the Lamb, and the holiness which ever adorned Him, as a purity to which you might be conscious.”

That is, absolutely in nature without sin. It is not then distinctively true of Him that He knew no sin. We do not deceive ourselves if we say we have none!

“For, surely, as the prince of this world came and found nothing in your head, He would find nothing in you either, if you only were as your head desires to see you, ‘filled with all the fulness of God.’”

This is a worthy finishing to set aside the whole work and person of Christ; for we should be accepted on the same ground as He was, each in ourselves, according to this being what He was; and why not then?

For my own part, I do not see a single truth of Christianity connected with the person of Christ, our acceptance, and the character of our sanctification, which this tract does not deny. Though circulated to screen them from the charge of calling Christ’s humanity sinful, they cannot, without setting aside their whole system, set aside this, though they may deny it. It is (as one of their chief authorized teachers said) the hinge of the whole matter; and if we do not believe that, we believe nothing of their system—that is, that the

carnal mind was in Christ, but that He kept it dead. That is the character of our holiness; and, as this tract states, it is realized the same way in the head and in the members.

1 The italics are not mine, but the tract's.

A Letter To A Clergyman On The Claims And Doctrines Of Newman Street

My Dear F——,

I comply with your request, in writing down some of the principles and statements which deter my mind from at all receiving or acknowledging the teaching of the missionaries who have lately come from Newman Street to this place. It requires me to set aside all the teaching which I have received from God, before I can recognize their teaching to be true. This I cannot do. I have invariably found it to be the effect of receiving their teaching; but, if this be the case, it is clear I have no ground to judge of them or of anything else. If I have learned nothing from the word of God, how can I know of the Church, be interested in the Church, hope or fear anything for the Church? If I am to I try them, it must be by the word: if I receive them without trying them, I set out in disobedience, and am a necessary and helpess prey to whatever they state, having given up the only means of judging whether they are of God or not.

The relinquishment of previous knowledge of scripture I have found to be the invariable effect of receiving their teaching and mission. Now I cannot deny the grace of God given to me in order to assume that all spiritual teaching is in them. I am well aware that they talk of reading scripture in the flesh; that previous knowledge of it has been in the flesh; and that we must not come critically to hear them, but willing to receive their doctrine. I cannot be willing to receive it, till I know

what it is. Now do they mean by critical judging everything they say by the word? They themselves assume that I cannot do this, as knowing nothing except in the flesh. But if they do mean this, then I confess at once that it is precisely the spirit in which I do come to hear persons professing such an authoritative mission as they do: and I confess that it makes a very strong prima facie argument against their claims, that they do not like people so to come. If I am spiritual, it is clearly my part; if not so, still I must search the scriptures daily to see whether these things are so. Surely the Bereans knowledge of the scriptures was just what they call fleshly knowledge; but it is a remarkable thing, that precisely what they call knowing the scriptures in the flesh is made the guard against delusion in the perilous times of the last days. “Continue thou,” says the blessed apostle to his son Timothy, “in the things which thou hast learned, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith, which is in Christ Jesus.”

Now we have here precisely what they call fleshly knowledge of the scriptures, the guard against the delusions of the last perilous times; which guard they throw down; it is wrested out of the hand of those that give heed to them. They say, the guard against the dangers of the last days is the possession of the Spirit which they bring or are sent by. I find that the fleshly knowledge as they call it of the scriptures, which they reject and discard, is the guard given by the apostle, that is, by the Spirit of God, against the delusions and deceptions of the latter day. The word is the stability and security of the Church of God. It is quite true, we cannot

use it really but by the Spirit; but that which the Spirit uses, for the comfort and keeping of the children of God, is His word.

And now I will mention some of the interpretations which they have produced as being the authentic interpretations of the mind of God in the scriptures. In the first place, Isaiah 40. The former chapter had left the church in Babylon; this chapter speaks of them as actually brought out, no information being given of their state while staying there: this, according to these teachers, is the restoration of the church! “Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people,” means the restoration of apostles. “The voice of one crying in the wilderness” is the restoration of prophets to the church. “O Zion, which bringest glad tidings,” is the restoration of evangelists; and “He shall feed his flock like a shepherd,” is the restoration of pastors. “Keep silence before me, O islands,” (chap. 41) is a command addressed here by the Spirit to the little isolated bodies of Christians. Then, after referring to previous deliverance, the words “I will give thee a new sharp threshing instrument with teeth, and with it thou shalt thresh the mountains,” mean that the poor despised people that have the Lord among them in the gifts shall thresh and break down all the systems of churches and religion. “I will open rivers in high places:” these are the gifts and presence of the Spirit restored in Newman Street and elsewhere.

I give this merely as a specimen of their interpretation; I leave the judgment of it to others. The two latter interpretations are important, because the threshing of systems, or Babylon which they avow these systems to be, seems directly contrary to the statement concerning

Babylon given in the Revelation, and in the latter they directly contradict themselves. It is stated, on the one hand, that the rivers opened in the restoration of the Comforter to the church, known in these gifts, were not flowing in the intermediate time from their exercise in the early days of the church; that heaven had been shut; that they did not exist, but are now restored; so that now, if the poor and needy seek water, then it is in unexpected places thus restored, but, till now so restored, not existing in all the interval. Now it is also stated by them that the energizings of the Father, the ministries of the Lord, and the operations of the Spirit, are as identified as their persons, and one cannot be without the other, that, if one fail in any measure, the other proportionately fails; and they also state that it is the energizing of the Father which quickens souls, even as Christ was raised from the dead, which last, doubtless, they are quite right in. Now they conclude, and justly, from this ground, that if the gifts and operations of the Spirit in them ceased, then the energizing of the Father must have ceased also; but this, coupled with the other part of their doctrine, that these gifts' did cease, and that there were no rivers but that they are now restored, would simply prove that there never was a soul born to God until these gifts arose and were restored in the Church.

Thus the very principles of their system do not hang together. They boast of the restoration of the gifts for themselves. The thing that they announce is, that they are evangelists of the restoration of them; so that if we do not join them we shall, to say the least, not escape the coming judgments; for they do not venture to say we shall be lost, and yet we are told, if they did not

continue, the energizing of the Father did not, so that no soul was born to God at all; and they press the necessary continuance of the gifts in the Church all through.

Again, though they would now admit that the Spirit dwelt in every believer, at least in some sort or sometimes, but not that the Comforter was in them, their language varies. They sometimes compare it to the difference of dwelling with them as in Jesus, and being in them as subsequently after the day of Pentecost. In this latter sense of the Comforter thus being in them, they say we have not the Spirit; and so much so that, if we do not join them as having this in whatever measure, we are in danger of the judgments coming. If we have it, all their pretensions and warnings are but idle bombast and terror. But I read that the Comforter, so promised as taking the place of Christ, should abide with them for ever. Which am I to believe? Let God be true. I admit our unfaithfulness; but while God's faithfulness cannot justify my unfaithfulness, my unfaithfulness cannot make that word of none effect: "He shall abide with you for ever." I do not find the consistency with themselves or with scripture, which the Spirit of God would give and manifest. The word condemns them: they deny themselves.

Again, one point they are very fond of is this, that they are the hundred and forty four thousand in Revelation 14, and that afterwards the harvest will be: but that those in it will not be able to sing the song which the hundred and forty four thousand do. But, again, they will take the parable in Mark, and teach us that first there is corn sown, then the long stalk of apostasy, producing nothing, and then the full ear like the grain sown. These

are themselves, not indeed in their present state, but when fully ripened, baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire, and thus perfected to meet the Lord: and then, when they are ripened, immediately He will put in His sickle, because the harvest is come. Now, it is clear, they change the whole structure and statement of the parable; but both cannot be true: for one identifies them and the harvest, the other makes the very point of their importance, that they are quite distinct from the harvest, and that the harvest is not then come at all, but many most important things between it and them. I do not agree with their interpretations; but the Spirit of God clearly cannot teach opposite and discordant things.

Thus far upon the face of their teaching. Many things I am well aware they would answer, as, that they may err, but they are not the Spirit. But what then is their teaching, and why receive their extraordinary mission? They may state the gospel, for aught I know, and state it clearly: others state that they have done so. I am ready to believe them: one of those who are here ought at least to have known it. But we are here only where we were before. The question is, Do they, besides the gospel, state things inconsistent with the truth and Spirit of God? Besides, do they privily bring in (whether deceived themselves, or doing it wilfully, is not the question, though concerning one at least I am satisfied he is doing it without wilfulness)—do they privily bring in heresy? When I have heard them, they preached what I judged very contrary to the gospel. They taught, as to forgiveness of sins, on Paslm 32, that the love of God led us to judge sin as He did, and to confess it to Him and to man, searching it out till we found none, and so we had peace; and Christ and His blood-shedding were not

mentioned in connection with it, nor Christ's name, save requiring in one sentence conformity to Him.

I confess, to me this was not preaching the gospel, nor the forgiveness of sins in Christ's name, and therefore I heard what I believe not to be the gospel. But be it that they have at other times preached the gospel: what else have they taught? Certainly, they preach themselves; and the joining them as the way of security, not Christ. They say they were sent by a spirit, the presence of which among them is the only security in the evil day. And I must therefore judge them by that which the Spirit has done and said, if this is offered as any security in the evil. They preach the gospel; they explain many things; and I must say that the multiplied variety of the way in which they state things, the very great difference of their statements to different people, their extreme guardedness in the presence of those informed so as to know the contradictoriness of their statements, their refusal to reason the matter when opposed, or unless received as teachers, which is their habit, all to my mind, and specially the want of openness as to what they do hold, contradict that character of the Spirit's truth —"We use great plainness of speech."

I have observed even that, where evil is brought in, it is brought in privily—when truth, the house-top is the suitable place for its announcement. "Ask them which heard me" (when a nation had been taught), was the righteous appeal. Ask them, Do they hold that the humanity of our blessed Lord was sinful humanity?—a principle originally boasted of by the great instrument and leader in all this work, Mr. Irving, as the very ground of the introduction of the gifts, that these could not be given till this truth was brought in; and to one

they will deny it, to another explain it, to another modify it, and fall back upon scripture words, but saving the point really by something; to another they will acknowledge it to be there, but dead; but that it is really the hinge of the matter, which it really is. If charged with Mr. Irving's views on the subject, they disclaim him and his doctrines, and say that they are not bound by them although sent by the church over which he presided as angel, the teacher and expounder of truth or doctrine in it. Let any one able to see the bearing of an answer, or capable of insisting on a direct one, ask them the question, Do they hold the sinful humanity of the Redeemer? and judge of this. Now I confess all this want of openness I hold to be one of the strongest marks that the teaching is not the known truth of God; and in connection with this, the secrecy of their own meetings (not for discipline or correction, in which it might be fit, but in which the initiated take a part) does speak most loudly against the spirit which guides them.

But I would press upon your mind that, while I have stated here as to teaching merely what has passed in this country, coming as they do we cannot confine ourselves to their own account of themselves. They are sent by a spirit which has already expressed itself elsewhere: this spirit is their authority for coming; the gifts connected with it are the very subjects brought before us by their mission. The gospel we have had, feebly perhaps, before. The Spirit, or, as they would say, the restored Comforter, is the great point they present— its presence the security they propose— its sending them the authority with which they come. That spirit pronounced young Napoleon to be the man of sin: it stated that an American Indian Chief, then in London,

would be converted there, and receive the work and return to America, and lead back his countrymen, who were the ten tribes, to Palestine; but he went back unconverted. And there are many other things not verified as declared; but I pass by all this. Signs and wonders may be wrought; things that happen may have been spoken of beforehand; this we know is quite possible, though it is impossible that the Spirit of God could give an untruth.

They have attempted to explain these failures in many ways, which a little attention shews to be utterly futile. Such is the prophecy of conferring apostolic gifts on Air. Baxter, and the then promised baptism by fire. They have attempted to explain it, which is the admission of its failure, by the case of Nineveh. But the Lord has expressly declared that a pronounced judgment He will turn from, if they against whom it is pronounced repent. They have attempted to explain it by saying, that Satan had used the person as his instrument, and that what was true was of God— what failed of the enemy, though the utterances had declared this should never be. They have, in the support of one utterance given to another by acknowledged prophets, really subverted what was given by a former. They have sometimes got over this by declaring that no individual had any right to interpret the prophecies at all (they were not of private interpretation): the Church only could do it. Thus the whole tenor of the matter strongly bears against it in my mind.

But the fact is, which to me is determining, they do clearly hold the sinful humanity of the Lord Jesus. Mr. Irving was honest enough to own it openly; they are more guarded in their statements—their present manner

is to reject him; they say that the Spirit declared he had said unguarded things, and declare that they will merely use scripture statements; as, that “Christ was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin;” and that the latter clause does not qualify the former. To me that is quite sufficient; for the latter clause not qualifying the former just means, that sin is not excepted as to temptation. This is the whole point in question; but the fact is, they do hold the sinful humanity, and have acknowledged that it is the hinge of their whole scheme of doctrine. Nay, more; the spirit which has sent them has borne witness to it in its worst form; and this is the whole question. Let them deny, or modify, or perplex any as they will: the spirit on whose authority they act has expressly sanctioned Mr. living’s doctrine on the subject —what this is I shall state to you.

Mr. Irving says, “It is an heretical doctrine that Christ’s generation was something more than the implantation of that Holy-Ghost-life in the members of His human nature which is implanted in us by regeneration.

“If Christ was made under the law, He must have been made by His human nature liable to, yea, and inclined to all those things which the law interdicted.

“If His human nature differed, by however little, from ours in its alienation and guiltiness, then the work of reducing it into eternal harmony with God hath no bearing whatever upon our nature with which it is not the same.

“Was He conscious then to the motions of the flesh and of the fleshly mind? In so far as any regenerate man, when under the operation of the Holy Ghost, is conscious of them.

“I hold it to be the surrender of the whole question to say, that he was not conscious of, engaged with, and troubled by, every evil disposition which inheriteth in the fallen manhood, which overpowereth every man that is not born of God, which overpowereth not Christ only because He was born or generated of God.”

Many passages more openly revolting could be added—none I think more distinct in their meaning. I add but one more: “I believe it to be most orthodox, and of the substance and essence of the orthodox faith, to hold that Christ could say until His resurrection, Not I, but sin that tempteth me in my flesh.”

What is the answer attempted to this? First, it is said, that Mr. Irving wrote this before the spirit came amongst them; just as it is said, when some of the obvious weaknesses and mistakes of one of the evangelists now here are quoted, and the term “the fiction of imputed righteousness” is quoted from his pamphlet, he had not joined them then. The answer at once is, they are the principles which made him join them. But Mr. Irving has stated subsequently, and on the point in question, equally decided things; for, on being condemned for these things by the General Assembly, he desires the Scotch to go to the ministers of their parishes, and ask them to their face if they believe that Christ came in the flesh, and had the law of the flesh and the temptations of flesh to struggle with and overcome; and, if they confess not to this doctrine, to denounce them as denying the Lord that bought them, “as wolves in sheep’s clothing;” so that he held the doctrine after the spirit was amongst them, as well and as strongly as before. But, as the matter stands, his holding it before was the more important, because the

spirit came as the seal to it. And, not only so, but on the question being raised, the spirit which sent these two missionaries gave its express sanction to the doctrine. I am well aware that they allege that the spirit said that Mr. Irving had used unguarded expressions. This may be so; and they may be consequently much more guarded in their expressions, more careful not to alarm people, which he honestly did; but the spirit which sent them confirmed the doctrine as taught by him.

Mr. Baxter, once designated as their apostle, wrote to Mr. Irving, stating fully his error in conceiving the law of sin to be in Christ's flesh, &c. Mr. Irving warmly supported his own views, and tells him the spirit came upon Miss E. C. and (after speaking in a very grieved tone and spirit in a tongue) she was made to declare that Mr. Baxter had been snared by departing from the word and the testimony; that Mr. Irving had maintained the truth, and the Lord was well pleased with him for it; which was followed by a similar utterance from Mrs. C. and a renewed utterance to the same effect from Miss E. C. Thus Mr. Irving's previous statements just give occasion to our knowing the express sanction of them by the spirit which has sent the missionaries here; and they believe it. It is (and they know it to be so) the hinge of the whole question; or, as Mr. Irving stated it of old, "The way for the promise of the Comforter had to be prepared by the preaching of the full coming of Christ in our flesh, and His coming again in glory, the two great divisions of christian doctrine which had gone down into the earth, out of sight and out of mind, and which must be revived by preaching before the Holy Spirit could have anything to witness unto."

That Christ came in the flesh, in the ordinary sense of the word, has ever been held save by the Docetæ. The doctrine which Mr. I. alludes to, therefore, is coming in our (that is, in sinful) flesh. This it was which, as we have afterwards seen, the spirit amongst them explicitly witnessed to. It is then a shame for any to come here from the Newman Street church, sent by the spirit which has so expressly borne witness to it, and cloak, or hide, or garble the doctrine. Let them deny the spirit that sent them, if they deny the doctrine; or own the doctrine honestly, if they claim and terrify people with the authority of the spirit. I say, terrify; for while they do not state openly their doctrine in intercourse with strangers, they use the most imposing and frightening terms of responsibility to make people come and hear them where they teach; then for a long time perhaps, unless of spiritual discernment, they hear nothing to shock them of open avowal of their doctrines, and they are gradually prepared for the full reception of them and denial of others. The “fiction of imputed righteousness”2 is too hard, too unguarded an expression to state; when this was used, they had not the spirit: at least, if they had not, they had honesty; and where they have opportunity of boldness, they mock at it and the idea of substitution.

Let us read the simple effect of the doctrine of the sinful nature, as stated by Mr. Irving. “The man who will put a fiction, whether legal or theological—a make-believe, into his idea of God, I have done with. He who will make God consider a person that which he is not, and act towards him as that which he is not, I have done with. Either Christ was in the condition of the sinner—was in that form of being towards which it is God’s eternal law

to act as He acted towards Christ, or He was not. If He was, then the point at issue is ceded, for that is what I am contending for. If He was not, and God treated Him as if He had been so; if that is the meaning of their imputation and substitution, or, by whatever name they call it, away with it from my theology for ever."

These are Mr. Irving's words, and shew the identity of the doctrine of the sinful humanity with the denial of the doctrine of substitution, and therefore with the denial of any reality in the blessed truth of scripture—"he suffered, the just for the unjust." "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

If Christ had a sinful nature, that is the thing that must be reconciled, not we. He is not, as knowing no sin, to be made sin for us, but, as conscious of every evil disposition, to reconcile this nature to God; or as Mr. Irving expresses it, "It is no reconciliation of individuals, but a reconciliation of human nature. It is not thine, it is not mine, it is not Christ's, but it is the common unity of our being." It is ridiculous to talk of unguarded expressions. Either sin was in Christ's nature or it was not: if it was, then it had to be reconciled; if not, then we had, by a sinless, spotless offering. I have not quoted the revolting language in which it is often conveyed: the doctrine is the thing in question.

I shall merely here give one statement to shew its effect upon the view of the atonement, and how distinctly contrasted it is. "The atonement," says Mr. Irving, "upon this popular scheme, is made to consist in suffering; and the amount of the suffering is cried up to infinity. Well, let these preachers—for I will not call them divines or

theologians—broker-like, cry up their article; it will not do; it is but the suffering of a perfectly holy man treated by God and by men as if He were a transgressor.” Would any person taught by God in the matter, or under the influence of the Spirit of God, so speak of the death of Christ? The language may be rash, but it is explicit. It shuts out the value of the person of Christ in His sufferings most explicitly.

The system is consistent with neither scripture nor itself; but so it ever is with error. It is consistent only in affirming sin to have been in the nature of Christ; and, consequently, in denying the value of the atonement in its common popular sense. Christ was treated as He was, because of the condition He was actually and really in Himself, not because of the sins of others— that would have made a make-believe God. And, now, what does it come to? If this sinful nature was in Christ, this carnal mind, the frovnhma sarkoV", this nature that needed to be reconciled, what do I find concerning it in scripture? “It is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” So that the moral reconciliation of the nature was impossible; nor could Christ fulfil the law in its intrinsic requisitions. And, according to Mr. Irving himself, instead of being reconciled, God had to deal with Him according to the eternal law, by which He must act towards one in that condition—the condition of a sinner, and dealt with’ Him because in it. When was the reconciliation? That He was treated as a transgressor by God, Mr. Irving himself tells us, and it was no “make-believe.”

Is this the gospel of the grace of God? It all hangs together on the foundation of the whole system to which the spirit had to witness, that Christ took and had a

sinful nature. If so, it is clear it must be reconciled; not He make reconciliation [or, rather propitiation] for the sins of others; and to this doctrine, the spirit which the teachers here profess to be sent by, has borne explicit witness, is the seal of it, identified with it—first, teaching it, then sanctioning it; and these persons come here under the special character of being sent by that spirit, after it has sanctioned this very doctrine. They may guard their expressions, but they have not guarded them so as not to be quite clear to those aware of the difference. But they are the servants of that spirit; and my inquiry in judging of them is, what is that spirit the sanction of? It is the sanction of this doctrine (and in their case of the promulgators of it), therefore, that Christ took sinful human nature.

And now, one word as to “temptation.” The poor tried soul is easily, when undiscerningly, led to desire the sympathy of Christ in its temptations and trials. Who that knows himself, as a poor, weak, sinful creature (but observe, renewed to love and holiness), does not feel this?

But a moment’s reflection on one’s self will shew one the fallacy of their use of this. Does the renewed soul want sympathy of Christ in its sinful feelings? No, it has learnt to hate them itself —to say, “Not I.” It wants the sympathy of Christ’s strength with its new man to judge them, to put them down. It does not desire sympathy in the sin: that is not what we mean or want by sympathy; we want strength against that. It is in our new man, in mind, we are one with Christ; it is by Christ risen we are quickened. His sympathy is with us in our new man, and what is that in us? Hating sin, condemning sin, saying, “Not I,” &c, and bearing trials of opposition from

without, which press upon us as holy persons and in proportion as we are holy persons.

The sufferings of Christ in us are the sufferings of a holy loving nature in the midst of evil: our giving way to sin in us is not the sufferings of Christ in us. Our remedy for sin is the atonement of Christ, in what He suffered for us; the entire absence of sin in Him who represents us is the comfort and remedy for this, and, sins being known to be forgiven, having our feet washed, we seek to walk in the strength of that new life, in the conflicts of which we have His full sympathy; and, as has been justly remarked, we should want sympathy in the sorrow of actual trangression, if He were to sympathise with us as to sin. And, I say, we have this sympathy; but how? where? In His having borne the penalty for them —"bruised for our iniquities, wounded for our trangressions." It is precisely in the discovery that He did bear our transgressions, and so has justified us—in knowing that He hath "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself"—that we have comfort under all sense of sin—not by His having been conscious of the evil disposition; or He could not, as "knowing no sin," be made sin for me. And this then I take in its full, unlimited sense, according to my whole need, as believing in Him.

It is not partial subdued sin—a mind kept always dead—a consciousness of what a regenerate man is conscious of. This would not do for me; for I am and have been much more. This would be no real adequate sympathy for me, or for any sinner. He must be atoned for in all his sins. He is atoned for in them by Jesus, made sin for him. And here is the sympathy of Christ as to this; that is, here it is he gets comfort, either originally, as by the work typified in the day of atonement, or by the Spirits

witness (as in the type of the red heifer) that Christ had entirely put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself—access to God by the blood upon the mercy-seat,—knowledge of all our transgressions being laid upon Christ in the scape-goat; and in the kept ashes of the red heifer, sprinkled by the running water, the continual witness that sin is put away by the sacrifice. To these the apostle refers in Hebrews 9 and refers as purging the conscience: and this is what we want as to sin—not sympathy3 (save this great, immense, invaluable sympathy, that Christ has put it away, having borne our transgressions).

But we do want actual sympathy in a godly life; for we are living under effects and trials of evil and sin in the world, though belonging to a higher scene spiritually. I suffer pain for Christ —reproach and shame enough to break my heart; it is no sin to feel this, but quite the contrary—contradiction, desertion, want of sympathy, and like-mindedness. For my love I have hatred, misrepresentation, my words daily mistaken, snares laid for me, efforts to entrap me and dishonour the name of God in my person. Supposing even I do not fall into them, they are utter pain to me—the insensibility of those around me to the love of God, the evil estate of the church of God’s planting, the little fruits of grace in those who receive the Lord, the insensibility to the hopes He sets before us, the blindness to His testimony on many important points, the prevailing of Satan’s power over so many. The more I am like God, the more grace I have, the more holy I am, the greater sense I have of His love, the greater love I have to men and the Church, the more and greater will be my sufferings: and if drawn into the activity of love, the more endurance of

the contradition of sinners against myself. But these are not sin in me, but just the contrary. Christ was quite perfect in spirit and thought; and therefore He perfectly felt the evil. Had there been any one evil in His nature, He could not have felt as He did the perfect evil of all that was around Him; nor, therefore, have any perfect sympathy with the trials of the godly; for, when we read of being “tempted like as we are,” the apostle is speaking for the comfort of saints in trials—calling them to consider Him who endured the contradiction, lest they be weary and faint in their minds. This is the sympathy the saint wants, not sympathy in sin. That Christ met in atonement and sacrifice; and now, in the judging power of His Spirit, revealing in that the power of His sacrifice.

And now as to the word “temptation,” to be tempted is another thing from having a lust to sin, the carnal mind. Temptation is used in scripture, not for internal sin at all, nor in connection with it, save where it is the actual giving way to the temptation by reason of the sin —“drawn away of our own lusts, and enticed.” This will not be affirmed (I suppose) of Christ if it be, then let it be said so, and the name of Christian given up; for then He was a sinner indeed. Tempted, there, is the giving way to the trial. But temptation otherwise is just the trial of what is in the person so tried; and this may be very various. God in this sense may be tempted; yet, we know from His very nature and from the word, He cannot be tempted of evil. But “they tempted God in the desert.” They tempted and were destroyed of the destroyer. God was put to trial—what He was, which was just their sin. In Him, it need not be said, absolute essential perfection was found. Neither can God tempt

any man in the way of evil or lust. Yet God did tempt Abraham; He put Abraham to trial, and proved the grace which He had given him, saying, thereon, “Now I know:” exhibition of grace was the result of the trial of the temptation here. So we pray, “Lead us not into temptation”—clearly not into lust or evil, but into a place of trial of what is in us—we knowing our weakness, and therefore adding, “But deliver us from evil,” or the evil one.

But the Spirit of God did lead Christ into temptation (we are expressly told in Matt. 4 and Luke 4), not surely into any exercise of a sinful nature, but into Satan’s trial of what He was. So the first Adam, confessedly innocent and having no sin (that we may turn to man), yet was tempted, and so tempted that he fell into sin. So that clearly here temptation does not imply existing evil, or a sinful nature; for there may be temptation, so as to fall into sin, where there was no evil nature at all. He was tried and fell; weakness and fallibility being there, though not sin. We are tempted—what is in us is tried; and in our case evil continually is found. The old sinful nature is found: there may be cases where, through divine grace, we get the victory, “are more than conquerors,” glorying in tribulations, happy as enduring. The sinful nature is distinct from the temptation, though discovered by it. So Christ was tempted, tried in all points, according to the likeness of His brethren; but the result was, that nothing was found in Him but perfectness. Adam was tried and fell; we are tried, and often evil is found in us, and we are led away and enticed. Christ was tried, and neither fell nor was led away, nor evil found in Him.

If sin was needful to temptation, then would sin be justified in every temptation we were in, for we could not, they say, be tempted without it. Now temptation coming from an enemy without, and sin being needful to this, it is justified if we are so tempted. This is exactly what it is not. “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man”—a human temptation—and God is faithful, who “will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”

Thus, though we often do give way, it is shewn to be sin when we do, and unjustifiable; and this, as to its source, is what is meant by condemning sin in the flesh. Christ, having placed Himself in our circumstances (which as to trial He fully did), and having never, in any sort or sense, given way, has proved that what does give way (the lusts that entice us, and make us yield to the temptation) is sin; for perfect human nature, and thorough temptation was in Him, cwriV" aJmartiva"—everything except sin; and so has condemned sin, not in His flesh but in the flesh, being without sin, and passing through all the temptations, and so made a sacrifice for sin. Thus, concerning it, He has proved it all to be sin in us; He has condemned sin in the flesh, though He gives us peace concerning and in spite of it, because He is a sacrifice for sin, periV aJmartiva"

Thus His being tempted in all points apart from sin is precisely the way in which He condemned it; not in its acts but in its source—the very difference of a believer taught by the Spirit and having the Spirit of Christ. He knows not only transgression, but. sin as an evil, sin dwelling in him. More correctly, God condemned sin in the flesh, by the exhibition of a tempted man, in every

point without it. It was not actual sin that He thus condemned (that had been done, and would be done in due time), but “sin in the flesh.” The law could not do this (it only called it out into knowledge, and even action); but God has “effectually done it, sending His own Son, free from every spot, stain, or motion of it—from it in His nature; so that it is all condemned as mere sin in me, not in its effects, but “in the flesh.” Had it been in Christ, I could not condemn it as sin, or I must have charged Christ with it as sin; so that the absence of it from Him is the very means of my condemning it as such. The thing wanted was to shew this as judged, condemned sin by God. The law could not do this, but found sin everywhere; it was weak through the flesh. Law connected itself with men as they were, leaving it; and though therefore it might prove they had sin, it only therefore condemned them. But God, sending His own Son in the likeness of this sinful flesh and for sin, has condemned (in propitiation withal) this in the flesh: and the life which we have of Him, strengthened in His might by His Spirit in the inner man, judges and condemns it in us, as not according to the power of the inner life in Christ. This is the force of the passage, hanging upon the absence of sin from Christ’s nature: the sinlessness of His nature, and consequent perfectness through temptation, proves that what yields in us is sin. It is that in us which was not in Christ, and yields to the trials of Satan, which He, not having, never did; it is sin, it is condemned.

And this as to the fact is the express doctrine of scripture. He was in all points tempted like as we are, according to the likeness He was in, except sin. The English passage does not convey the meaning properly,

specially the latter clause; for “yet” might imply that it might mean actual sin resulting; though, I admit, a simple scripture-taught mind would take the sense aright. The statement of the teachers from Newman Street is, that the latter clause is not meant to qualify the former. What then is it for? this is just the difference —He was tempted in all points, according to the likeness [He took], except (or, apart from) sin; that is, that which is connected, or continually so in us, with temptation, was not so in Him. It is the revelation of that difference precisely: He was tempted apart from sin—we are tempted in connection with that which has been condemned as sin, not being in Him. It is sin which is in our nature, which makes us give way.

The “yet without sin,” which I translated “apart from sin,” is the same word as in the passage, “He shall appear the second time without sin.” As free as He then will be from it, so free was He in the temptations He went through. Thus, we have the express testimony of scripture on the point. Every trial, every sorrow, every circumstance, in which the enemy of our souls could try Him, He was tempted with kaq* oJmoiovthta. Everything which sin had caused as an effect He bore; in His nature He was sinless. He sympathizes with us in every trial of ours as new creatures. He judges—God has judged—and strengthens us against the suggestions of our old man, with which He can have no sympathy, but which is all condemned, we being received because He has willingly died for us as to it all, which was the sympathy we wanted for it, and which He could not have given if He had been in any way or sort sinful Himself. He could not then have been made sin.

But while scripture is thus express on the point, the contrary doctrine, their doctrine, really destroys the incarnation. Christ's generation, to use Air. Irving's words, is no more than the implantation of that Holy Ghost life in the members of His human nature, which is implanted in us by regeneration. This is denial of the incarnation; for we must not take what they merely allege, but what the spirit which authorizes their mission sanctions. Now, God the Son being manifest in the flesh— flesh not conceived in sin (that which was of His mother being a holy thing), maintained it a holy thing; and there never was anything which defiled the incarnate Son in suggestion, act, or otherwise, through everything that tried and wearied Him without; and this having been proved through years of trial, the prince of this world came at the end; and, though He shewed His love to His Father, and therein also obeyed His commandment in laying down His life, the enemy found nothing. He offered Himself without spot to God. If the human nature which was born of His mother was a holy thing—if the person of the Lord was sinless in its generation—then, when did sin enter? If ever there was failure—if in that which was born of His mother there was sin—then, as born, it was not a holy thing. Consequently, when speaking of the nature of our Lord, Mr. Irving speaks not of "the Word made flesh," or the like, but the human nature He was clothed with, thus destroying the incarnation.

I cannot see, therefore, a single doctrine of the gospel left untouched by this destruction of the person of our blessed Lord. The incarnation, the substitution of a sinless offering, the fact and condemnation of the sin

that dwells in us, and that it is sin— our judgment of it as such—all are struck at by this doctrine.

It appears to me that the real truth of the Comforter's presence is also denied, saying that it is restored, when God said it should abide for ever, and consequently the power of judging them taken out of the Christian's hands; for if He has not the Spirit, it is clear He is incapable of it. The word is rendered of no avail; because, as they speak, we have read it in the flesh, and therefore can use no previous knowledge of it against them. All this is the crafty subversion of the great truth on which the soul rests. God is for me, is already with me, and by His help and word I must judge of all that is presented to me; and this, with fundamentally false doctrine and no sign of authority about them, we are called upon to believe what they say, under pain of being in awful, perhaps fatal, judgments. Their great instrument is terror. If a man knows his peace with God, knows he is taught of God, and that he has the Spirit of God; and if he is not unsound on the sinfulness of the Lord's nature, and holds to the word of God, their persuasions—however subtle, and full of gorgeous promises when listened to, promises often falsified by facts— are without effect. Thus, if false prophecies, and false doctrine as to the foundations of Christianity, and the spirit of concealment, and the slighting of the word, and the terrifying with false fears those to whom the Lord has given peace, be not the way of the Spirit of our blessed God, their way we safely reject, and are bound to reject, however we may pity the immense pretensions of those who assume to be sent by divine authority, without sign or scripture to warrant them.

2 Hardman's Tract on 1 Cor. 12-14.

3 I cannot want sympathy as to sin, till I am conscious of it. If I have sympathy in this, by similar trial, then was Christ conscious of it too; and this would destroy every ground of hope.

Observations On A Tract Entitled “Remarks On The Sufferings Of The Lord Jesus:

A Letter Addressed To Certain Brethren And Sisters In Christ, By B. W. Newton.”

Introduction

The more the question treated in the following tract is weighed, the more important it will be found; and the doctrine taught in Mr. Newton’s “Remarks” to be the destruction of the gospel of truth, and to subvert the foundations of Christianity. The denial that it is meant so to do is nothing to the purpose. Mr. Irving denied it just as stoutly; but a man’s teaching is to be judged by what he teaches, not by his own opinion about it. What Mr. Newton teaches subverts the truth as to Christ. If he says it does not, it only proves that he does not know the truth which it clearly does subvert. The largest expressions of piety and holiness prove nothing. They were found in Mr. Irving’s writings, and much most blessed and precious truth too: few writings could be named where there is so much. It is well known how widely Mr. Prince’s books were circulated, how highly they were appreciated, and how many were supposed to be converted by him. Now all acquainted with the circumstances know the horrible blasphemies in which it all has ended. And now persons who examine the books judge that they find all through them the germ of the present horrors.

Now, as to the doctrine of the writer of the “Remarks,” he states that Christ, associating Himself with man in

the flesh at a distance from God, had to find His way to a point where God could meet Him, and which point was death under the wrath of God. Now if Christ was “obnoxious” to this wrath (“exposed” to it) from the place He was in, He could not bear it besides in a vicarious way for us. A man that has not himself incurred debts, but, being partner with one who has, is liable to them, cannot as surety in the way of kindness take them upon him. That is, vicarious suffering is set aside. If it be said that death under the wrath of God consequent on the distance man was at from God was wrath of chastisement, not vengeance, it is clear the whole truth of God as to man is set aside altogether. Was wrath of chastisement man’s place in his distance from God? Was not condemnation, utter condemnation, his place? And what was death under the wrath of God as needful because in man’s place? Is that only chastisement? But if Christ had this due to Him from His position, He could not also bear it for others.4 As to the nature of Christ’s sufferings, there is another passage I would refer to.

The apostle desires that he might know the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable to His death. Now we have here the nature of the sufferings of Christ even to death, not in the sense of vicarious sufferings. The apostle clearly could not desire to be obnoxious and exposed to wrath because of the position he was in at a distance from God. But in the devotedness of service in which, in denial of all will of his own, he found himself as acting for God, and manifesting Him in life and in word in opposition to the whole wickedness of man and power and malice of Satan, and in the suffering of that

devotedness in love to them that were God's, he did desire to be made conformable to Christ by His grace. Now this came upon him from without, but it was weighed and realized in the Spirit of Christ beforehand within, so that all this suffering without was understood, and took its place in his mind from what was already spiritually there. Thus he was "pressed out of measure, above strength, so that he despaired even of life; but he had the sentence of death in himself, that he should not trust in himself but in God which raiseth the dead;" so, "always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus may be manifested in his mortal body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus may be. manifested in our mortal body." Here Christ's sufferings were not vicarious,5 and such as we can seek fellowship with in the power of the Spirit of God according to our measure. That is not exposure to wrath from which a man by faith preserves himself. We get a clear view of what the sufferings of Christ are as in the world other than what was vicarious, and this even unto death itself.

As regards the statement from Mr. Bonar, it is obscure enough, as is also that on the application of the same type to the church, and in some respects certainly inaccurate. Such as it is, Mr. Newton's tract is much borrowed from it, and it is sufficiently obscure to furnish a handle to his doctrine. What the nature of it was, Mr. B. does not explain. But he does subsequently guard his statements, so as to secure himself from meaning what Mr. N. means. He says, "Chastisement6 supposes sin; suffering does not, for Jesus suffered—nay, learned obedience by the things which he suffered." But chastisement does. "Some have, indeed, applied the

word chastisement to Jesus also, for He was made perfect through suffering, and in the sense of passing through discipline, that He might know by experience our condition here, and be seen as the doer of the Father's will— the man that pleased not Himself, in this sense His sorrows might be called by that name; yet in no other." Now it is altogether another, to say that He was obnoxious and exposed to wrath in His relation to God as associated with us in the position we were in. That He experienced our condition here, every true Christian believes. But this is what Mr. N. says it was not; and that we never are in the position He was in under Israel's curse. Our discipline is in love; His under wrath and the curse.

The quotations from the "Words of Truth" are exactly the opposite of Mr. N.'s doctrine. Christ's being obnoxious to wrath along with the people, and so being glad at John's message, is precisely the opposite to His identifying Himself entirely with the condition of His people: His being baptized was taking their place. So in His really entering into the circumstances of man's condition. Blessed be God, He did. But Mr. N. distinguishes this from what he means, namely, inflictions by reason of the relation of God to Him who did so enter! Mr. Bonar, speaking of his knowing by experience our condition here, says, "in no other;" though he does speak so obscurely that Mr. N. himself says he could not use his expressions without defining them his own way. So defined, I have discussed their value in this tract. That is what we have to do with here. As to Mr. Bonar, I avow I do not understand, and therefore I do not condemn, him; I much doubt whether he understands himself, or ever defined to his own mind

the sentiment he is expressing, and expressing in a way which is certainly not scriptural in its form; but he has entirely guarded himself against Mr. Newton's view. I may add, that other teachers of the school of the writer of the "Remarks," in borrowing also the expressions and sentiments of Mr. Bonar, have applied it to Christ Himself in a way that Mr. Bonar declares to be impossible. I refer to the chapter on purifying. The way in which statements of truth are made to sanction the teaching of error is shewn in page 25:—"If He was made to realize the distance into which man had wandered out of the presence of God," is sought to be sanctioned by "He must really enter into the circumstances of man's condition, into the misery and desolation in which man is, as wandering, yea, as departed from God" —two things as different as can well be.

It is important that the saints should well notice that the writer of the "Remarks" is speaking of actual inflictions from God due to man's sin but not vicarious; not of suffering, into the depths of which Christ surely entered. But these were "superadded inflictions from the hand of God." He shared "the fearful inflictions of God's broken law"—"inflictions in displeasure"— "inflictions because He was a man." These are often confounded, as in the last case, with the outward condition of man, as labouring in the sweat of his brow. But this is not all. "They depended upon His (God's) appointment." If He came under the special inflictions that had come on His own peculiar nation, He saw Israel's standing with all the terrors of that mountain arrayed against it. "God pressed these things on the apprehensions of his soul according to His own power and holiness." He is "speaking of the exercises of his heart from God; … not

the spontaneous actings of His soul, but of the manner in which He was directly exercised of God." Thus, "in the Psalms … we find … not only the sufferings and reproach that pertained to Him as the appointed servant of God; but sufferings also which pertained to Him because He was a man, and because He was an Israelite;" and these, inflicted of God. He was "chastened by the hand of God," but not vicariously. That it is not vicarious, he says, "is very evident." Sufferings and direct infliction are often entirely confounded; but the reader must remember, while noticing the confusion, that that which the writer teaches is inflictions in wrath (as the curse of a broken law) directly from the hand of God—which are not vicarious but arising from His own relation to God—not by personal sin indeed, but by personal position.

How very remarkably is this contradicted by the word of God! This is the language of the godly remnant when they look on Him whom they pierced, as the truth of it is believed by the saint now. "Surely he hath borne our griefs [here He is associated with the people] and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem him striken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." How very plain and how very sure is the word of God, God be praised for it!

The writer's notion is the notion of Jewish unbelief. It did please Jehovah to bruise Him. There were sufferings by His appointment. He hath put Him to grief —"when thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin." The whole chapter is an instructive commentary on, and reply to, the doctrine of the tract. He subverts the work of Christ.

I have yet another remark to make.

Mr. Newton has been sought to be justified by some of his friends, by citing a paper of his in the “Christian Witness.” From having been so much abroad, I do not know who are the authors of several papers; but I take for granted this is his as stated. I have in consequence looked into it. It is a paper written against Irvingism. I judge that the germ of his present doctrine is clearly to be found there, and escaped the eye or the judgment of the editor.

The germ of the doctrine is clearly found in volume ii. page 113. But I can quite understand its being overlooked,7 as it was a paper exposing a more evident and glaring heresy, and the subtlety of a new one was not expected to be found there; and it is stated in the form of insisting on Christ’s personal holiness, and expressed in a general way so as easily to escape observation and be construed in a good sense, as being in the form of urging Christ’s excellency against the horrible doctrine of Irvingism; and thus value for Christ carried the editor along with the statement, the evil being merely introduced in general terms by the by. Now that we have the heresy full blown, it is quite evident that the germ of it was there, and the writer unsound in the faith from the outset, though undetected. Often, indeed, strange and painful expressions were heard, but what is called charity told us not to make a man an offender for a word. They were rash.

And oft while Wisdom wakes, Suspicion sleeps

At Wisdom’s gate, and to Simplicity

Resigns her charge, while Goodness thinks no ill

Where no ill seems.

But the citation of this paper in the “Christian Witness” is the proof that it is no rash expression which ought to be forgotten, or which is distorted by want of charity. Those who cite it avow that it was taught as a principle when none suspected, and none opposed, nearly ten years ago. And so it was. No one can doubt it who reads the paper in question; and we can understand now the value of all the private teaching meetings at which other brethren who laboured in the word were not allowed to be present. It was at one of these, when, from peculiar circumstances visiting the house where it was held, I heard it taught that Christ had to be judged after His death like another man: a teaching which has been again recently propagated among the poor elsewhere. But no remarks questioning what was taught were allowed at these meetings; and hence other brethren of independent spiritual judgment were excluded.

But there is another very important point which results from this paper of the “Christian Witness,” and shews the subtle and guarded way in which heresy and the work of Satan grow up. The doctrines of Mr. Newton were then checked by the presence of men sound in the faith, and he was obliged, therefore, to ally his doctrine with that sound faith. And in saying this, I dare say that the heresy which he has now put forth had not ripened in his mind; for Satan is behind all this, and does not alarm those he deceives and uses. In doctrine as in practice a man might say “Am I a dog that I should do this?” Deceivers are deceived by one cleverer than they. They are but tools in the enemy’s hand.

Now, while the germ of the doctrine is very clearly in the paper in the “Christian Witness,” the possibility of such an error as Mr. N. now holds is denied, and the doctrine which he repudiates now is stated to guard what he had said, so that suspicion would be further lulled; just as he had sought in the second tract, since his views have been exposed, to lull suspicion by expatiating on the cross. But he does not here in the least return to the statements of the “Christian Witness,” but maintains the substance of his heresy in worse and stronger terms than before. Further, remark that, by quoting this paper, Mr. N.’s friends confirm and establish very distinctly and positively, that there is a special doctrine deliberately taught by Mr. N., and what that doctrine is, being already discoverable in his writings ten years ago.

I now quote from the “Christian Witness” to shew the way in which he then identified the sufferings in question with vicarious sufferings.

“All that the soul of a saint recognizes as true in the writings of Mr. Irving, respecting Christ being in ‘that condition of being and region of existence which is proper to a sinner,’ will be found to be altogether comprised in the fact of His being born under the curse of the exiled family vicariously incurred. But He rose out of this ‘region’ through the power of His own inherent holiness; and, therefore never would have come ‘into that experience into [read, of] God’s action which is proper for a sinner,’ unless He had chosen to abide it8 for the sake of others; and when He had chosen this, then it pleased the Lord to bruise Him, and to lay upon Him iniquity; a burden which He felt just as if it had been His own iniquity. Without having any sin, He was made to feel the consequences of sin, even so as to say,

‘Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of my head, therefore my heart faileth me.’ But this was not because ‘He was in our region of existence,’ but because He was pleased, whilst being there, to become the sin-bearer for others.”

Now this might well lead an unsuspecting mind to suppose that he was opposing the truth of Christ’s vicarious suffering to Mr. Irving’s heresy of sin in Christ’s nature. Now, however, Mr. Newton declares positively that this was not vicarious. Not that He never would have come into that experience into God’s action which is proper for a sinner, unless He had chosen to abide in it for the sake of others; and that when He had chosen this, it pleased the Lord to bruise Him, and to lay iniquity upon Him, applying the passages in the Psalms to this. It is not this that he teaches now; but that He did come, was exposed to it all, that is, to experience God’s action proper to a sinner without being one, not vicariously; and that He preserved Himself from it by faith, prayer, and obedience.

The doctrine of the vicariousness of these sufferings was taught in the “Christian Witness,” is denied in the recent tract. What he, still ten years ago, said never would have come, he now says He was exposed to.

The doctrine in the “Christian Witness” is absurd: born under a curse vicariously incurred is itself nonsense. Rising out of this region, that is, vicarious suffering, through the powers of His own inherent holiness, is far worse than nonsense, nonsense though it be; and then choosing to abide there for others, and then having iniquity laid upon Him. But the writer has relieved

himself from the contradiction of His being born subject to the penalties of Adam's guilt, as a member of the family and yet vicariously incurring them; not by holding fast the truth he had associated with this, but by denying it, and leaving the pure unmingled heresy of wrath on Christ, which was not vicarious. But nothing can make clearer what the heresy is than this reference to the "Christian Witness"—guarded there by truth so as to make nonsense—now taught in its naked evil. It may be seen by this how accurately I have stated it, in comparing it in a note with Irvingism, page 53. The doctrine of the "Christian Witness "ought to have been detected perhaps by a discerning eye. For it is this: that Christ was obnoxious to wrath, "penalties to which He had become subject on account of Adam's guilt"—"born under the curse of the exiled family"—"God's action proper to a sinner"—"but He rose out of this region through the power of His own inherent holiness;" "He might have entered into life by Himself alone;" "He was able to enter into life by keeping the commandments"—"able to fulfil the law, and so rise above the penalties to which He had become subject on account of Adam's guilt." This is, we know, death under guilt and wrath, though He rose out of it,9 the law being strong unto him— it was "unto him life"—as it is written, "If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily, righteousness should have been by the law." But He "preferred to lay down His life that He might take it again"—"He had chosen to abide it [God's action which is proper to a sinner] for the sake of others. When He had chosen this, then it pleased the Lord to bruise Him." He was then there, rose out of it, but chose to abide it. Now this ought to have been seen; it was covered by the word vicariously. This last is now denied.

But the doctrine that Christ was obnoxious to the wrath due to Adam's guilt is most plain; the curse of the exiled family vicariously incurred is not earning His bread in the sweat of His brow, nor are sinless penalties vicariously incurred.

Further, the article distinguishes three particulars which mark our condition as sinners:—

"First, Original or vicarious guilt imputed (or reckoned) to us on account of the transgression of our first parent.

"Secondly, Original sin or indwelling corruption.

"Thirdly, Actual transgression."

"The Lord Jesus was as free from indwelling sin as from actual transgression; yet, nevertheless, He was a member (so to speak) of the exiled family, and therefore was born subject to their penalties"—called lower down "the curse of the exiled family vicariously incurred." Under this "He was born," but He was able to rise above these penalties—He rose out of it. Now He was not, and did not, as regards labour and toil, and hunger and thirst, and weariness, which are called the sinless penalties. I repeat, the doctrine taught is perfectly clear. The recent tract only takes away the vicariousness.

I believe that what has been the instrument of ripening this terrible doctrine as to Christ, subversive as it is of the truth, is really the prophetic system of the writer. And in this way: he does not admit the existence of a Jewish remnant which has life, and which is consequently within the reach, and the immediate object, of the sympathies of Christ. Hence he is obliged to associate Christ in His condition with the sinful and rebellious nation, (and the consequence follows

immediately,) instead of His being the gracious vessel of feeling, thought, and faith, for the believing remnant, in the position of which He did put Himself, and sympathy with which He perfectly has; though it must indeed, in its application, be based upon that in which He was alone—the atoning work which He wrought for them as for us. Psalm 16 shews this association. All their sorrow was His, and He enters into and associates Himself with it. He had that which was His own, whether bearing or feeling and anticipating the curse and the sin of others. But the means of falling into the error, though important as a guard to the saints are nothing to the error itself, because the person, relation with God, and condition and work of Christ Himself, are concerned in it, and have been lightly sacrificed to these notions. The paper in the “Witness” shews that the principle has long been adopted by the writer of the tract.

4 Irvingism taught that there was no personal sin in Christ, but that there was in the nature He took, so that He was exposed and liable to death.

Mr. N. teaches that there was no personal sin in Christ; and not that there was in His nature, but that He was liable to the consequences of it from His position in relation to God from the time He was born into die world. Both alike set aside the atonement.

5 So he speaks of filling up that which was behind of the sufferings of Christ for His body’s sake, which is the church j the fruit of devoted love which brought him into them, not the effect of his relation to God inflicted by God upon him.

6 This is the word chosen by Mr. N. to apply to Christ—wrath of chastisement, not of vengeance.

7 Alas! I have discovered, since sending this to the press, that the true account of this is quite different. The matter containing this doctrine was not at all in the first edition, superintended by Mr. Harris. It was introduced into the second edition issued from the tract shop under the control of Mr. N., so that the “Witness “was made to accredit the doctrine unknown to the person originally responsible. The fact of the long time Mr. N. has held the doctrine remains unaffected, proving its systematised character.

8 Note particularly here, that it is expressly stated that what Christ incurred as born was the curse of the exiled family, which He had to abide, as making atonement, when He was Himself risen out of it.

9 This teaches that He saved Himself from the curse of the broken law, to which He was subject, by keeping it Himself.

Observations

I have now to turn to the publications on the sufferings of Christ; and first, of notes of a lecture by one of the teachers of Ebrington Street. Indignation at the destruction of everything that is precious in the truth and the glory of Christ Himself, and poignant sorrow that those I once knew well should be agents in it, contend in one's heart. But the very essence of the glory of the Lord and the foundation-truth of God, and mischief and ruin to souls, claim imperiously the warning that this teaching is the worst deceit and craft of Satan. The second publication, by Mr. Newton himself, only seriously aggravates the matter. It is not that there are not many truths, and precious truths, long taught by others; and, no doubt, he has corrected the gross outrage on truth found in the expressions of the first part. But precious truths put forward carefully for the purpose of introducing what undermines foundation-truth for the soul, without being suspected, is one of the surest marks of Satan's direct work. Such is the case here. Mr. N. declares he cares for the cross, that it is the sacrifice for sin; but he refers in doing so directly to the matter of the tract Mr. Harris has printed. So that he does not, as he knows he cannot, deny that tract as to the doctrine taught in it (which came, indeed, from his own family, and was circulated by his friends) in Exeter, London, &c. The person from whom it came, residing in the house with him, was apprised that it would be kept, and stated that it was the substance of Mr. N.'s lecture correctly given. One can understand that he could not disown it, and that he dared not own it.

And now, one word as to the general principle of publishing such documents. I can understand that an honourable mind may shrink from the detection and exposure of evil and dishonourable means employed by evil men for propagating error. It is hard to touch pitch and not be defiled: I am glad to be spared it. But, for my part, I judge that the courage which is bold enough to do it is more to be respected than silence. A man manufactures poison and distributes it without avowing his name, and disseminates it assiduously in secret to destroy and ruin. It comes to the very house and family of those able to detect it. Is it evil, if the proof is clear of its character and origin, to shew what it is, and whence it comes? Is it not to be labelled because the poisoner, in order to facilitate his mischief, will not do it? Is not the character of what he produces to be made known, that people may be on their guard? Because he acts secretiy and subtilly, am I to keep his secret, if, without any art or even seeking it, I have discovered it by the providence of God? No; I publish plainly what it is, and who it is.

I trust no one will seek to get at it by any art, but that every one will publish, or communicate to those capable of dealing with it, what falls into their hands by the providence of God, inculcated (as their doctrines are) in a way which itself demonstrates that the light is hated because the deeds are evil.

Let all be brought into the light. That which is upright will not fear it.

And now, to take up the doctrine. Any of us may err. Any of us much occupied by one side of a question may exaggerate it, and so fail in just truth. But there are

certain things—a certain knowledge of Christ, which is a part of our life, our salvation, the glory of Him we love—touch it, the whole soul is up in arms. If it be not, life is not there. The soul cannot, would not, dare not, bear that certain points should be touched. The soul is livingly roused, as if itself were touched and more. A surgeon may dissect and pull to pieces a dead body, but if a living one he may make mistakes—turn his knife wrong; but if he be a surgeon and knows what vital parts are, he dares not approach the danger of touching them, let his plans of operation be what they may. If he do, it is a proof he does not know what the vital parts are, or else that he means to kill. The ignorance of some things proves there is no knowledge of God. The woman that could quietly acquiesce in the division of the infant was plainly, to the eye of one taught of divine wisdom, not its mother: the tie of a mother's heart was not there. The first tract shews this in the things of God; the second still more (in the effort to save the writer's credit)— entire indifference to the truth and glory of Christ. He declares his value for things which not to value would discredit him; but fatal error is slurred and glossed over without a regard for the Christ it denies, and fatal ignorance of essential truth displayed. This I shall now shew, as a solemn warning to brethren, not to give heed to this seducing spirit. Had the second not been published, I might have left it simply to Mr. Harris's notes. But God has taken care that the second should come out, and that I should know nothing till it did, so as to be free to comment on what is authorized by the writer himself.

The system of the tract published by Mr. Harris is an elaborate and complete system, and undoubtedly, for the substance and system of it, Mr. Newton's.

This has been acknowledged by those to whom the notes belonged, when apprised that they would be kept.

Now, the system and principle of this is to present a third kind of suffering of Christ not vicarious—not His soul's entering into the condition of those amongst whom He was, and whose cause He had taken up, but suffering arising from God's relation to Him, and His relation to God, as being one of them:—"For it was not merely the sufferings He had because His soul entered into the condition of things around Him, but there was quite another question, the relation of God to Him while thus suffering. For a person to be suffering here because He serves God is one thing, but the relation of that person to God is another." "We there see [in the Psalms] what His relations to God were during those thirty years which passed before His baptism." "So Jesus became a part of an accursed people; a people who had earned God's wrath by transgression… so Jesus became obnoxious to the wrath of God the moment He came into the world. Accordingly we find many of the Psalms speaking of this."

Note here, it is not taking wrath nor being made sin: that the writer distinguishes: but God's relation to Him and His to God, not for personal sin, but as part of an accursed people. He was, in relative position, a child of wrath even as others. Mr. N. to clear himself may cite Hawker, and Hervey, and Witsius, as speaking of Christ being always vicariously subject to wrath. They may be wrong in this notion, but it is nothing to the purpose;

they never dreamt of His being obnoxious to it otherwise than vicariously. Error as to the period of vicariousness has nothing to do with fundamental error as to the position of Christ Himself— His relation to God. They had no such thought as the writer whatever. Their names are a mere blind. “I do not refer,” says the writer, “to what were called His vicarious sufferings.” “He came to be baptized because He was one with Israel, was in their condition, one of wrath from God”—not, mark, His soul entering into the condition of things around Him, but His relation to God, and God’s to Him. This was so much so, that “consequently, when He was baptized, He took new ground;” and “the moment He took that ground the Holy Spirit was sent down—God’s seal was set upon Him. ‘This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.’” “He found a new character of affliction as the servant of God.”

“Observe, this is chastening in displeasure, not that which comes now on a child of God, which is never in wrath, but this rebuking in wrath to which He was amenable, because He was part of an accursed people: so the hand of God was continually stretched out against Him in various ways.” “He felt the hand of the Lord rebuking Him in hot displeasure.” “We do not read of such chastening after He began His rninistry.” “He was able to cure sicknesses and heal diseases, so that the last three and a half years were by far the happiest in His life, for He was not afflicted by the hand of God as before.” All this is very distinct as a system; it is not a casual expression liable to be misconceived, but a well-matured system. In the new tract, the whole of which refers directly to the one published by Mr. Harris (p. 26), we find these two periods noticed among five into which

the writer divides Qirist's life, and he says, "It is the second and third of these divisions that I have been seeking to contrast."10 All this is very clear: that He suffered during thirty years as part of a cursed people, and changed this position at John's baptism.

The next point is Gethsemane: "What gives the character to Gethsemane is weak humanity, and all the power of Satan allowed to be brought upon Him."

"I should regard this as the most terrible hour He ever passed through; we shrink from this more than from any other part of His history… He dreaded not the cross as He did Gethsemane!"

What, I ask in passing, made Gethsemane terrible? What was the cup He had to drink? "When it was over, so conscious was He that the difficulty was surmounted, that He said to them, 'Sleep on now, and take your rest.' That is His word to the Church now: we may rest; the difficulties are over, and we may sleep on undisturbed in blessed and happy security and rest, for all is over now." What! before the atonement and the cross? "He dreaded not the cross as He did Gethsemane. The cross was the place where He was made distinctly the sacrifice for sin." The reader will see the contrast here between Gethsemane and the cross. They were two distinct objects of dread—Gethsemane the worst. They are distinguished as periods in the division into five (p. 26 of the second tract). Now, that Mr. Newton really owns this paragraph, is evident (p. 37 of the second tract). He there says, "But because I say that the end was virtually reached when Jesus delivered Himself up and was led unresistingly away, I do not on that account depreciate or undervalue that which remained actually to be done."

I shall just now consider why that, namely, humanity in weakness on the cross, was, in the garden, “firmness inconceivable to us, because perfect, such as can be found only11 in God.” But the question of the value of the passage I have quoted from the first tract, glossed over in the second, is discussed in the second, as that which Mr. N. recognizes as his. As again in (p. 33), the second tract, “It was the most terrible hour through which He had ever yet passed.” Can any one doubt to what this alludes, adding the word “yet” to do away the effect? Now I say that no person taught of God in the foundation-principles of God’s truth could say, that though the cross was the place where He was made distinctly the sacrifice for sin, Christ dreaded not the cross as He dreaded Gethsemane; for, though he may be forced to say the cross was a sacrifice for sin, such a statement makes it clear that the idea of the wrath of God does not exist in his mind, and that, having suffered what was not a sacrifice for sin, but a distinct character of suffering not vicarious, but weak humanity under the power of Satan allowed to be brought upon Him; that” Sleep on, take your rest” was His word to the Church now: “we may rest, the difficulties are over; and we may sleep on undisturbed in blessed and happy security and rest, for all is over now”—I say it is impossible one taught of God could say so, because it is not a question of difficulties but of atonement. The forsaking of God was not come; the subject of dread according to the writer was a distinct and more terrible one. The sacrifice for sin was not yet in accomplishment. Nothing vicarious was touched as yet. It was not anticipation of the cup according to the writer, but a distinct thing which Jesus dreaded, and which was over when Gethsemane was finished; and yet all was over, so that the Church was

secure and at rest when the vicarious work of atonement was not begun! I say, no person to whom the faith of God's elect is precious, to whom the atonement of Christ is a reality and the centre of hope, could possibly have had such a thought, or (unless blinded of Satan) not have recognized that it was of Satan.

Further, that Christ was obnoxious to wrath from His coming into the world as part of a cursed people, and changed His relationship to God at John's baptism, because he preached repentance and remission of sins, and the new economy of grace was introduced, and that He found relief in his message, so that, from the moment He took that ground, God's seal was set upon Him, "This is my beloved Son," and He ceased to afflict Him as obnoxious to wrath—is doctrine so destructive of the real human relationship of the blessed Jesus to God, so ruinous to His person, motives, and the path of Him who grew in favour with God, that no one who knows Christ could receive it for a moment.

That the writer means the relation Jesus was in is clear, for he speaks of His escaping much of it by prayer, faith, and obedience (p. 8, second tract), and extricated Himself out of it by His own12 perfect obedience (p. 12); and, moreover, contrasts it in the first with His soul entering into the condition of others.

The writer talks of the privilege of suffering. There is no privilege in suffering under a curse not vicarious.

These statements, of which I can only give the briefest outline, would be impossible to any one to whom the reality of atonement was known, or the essence of truth dear. Being put out with pretension to entering deeply into the sufferings of Christ, and the literal

acknowledgment of many truths which they undermine, they are evidently the work of Satan himself to destroy the truth, and to deny the Lord in His special work. The aim is evident; to set up service and sorrow in conflict in man above the great fact of atonement, in which we can have no part whatever (save our sins and the fruit in salvation).

But I shall now take up the second tract more directly, though briefly. For while glossing over many of the grosser statements13 of the first, they save them for those who have received them, while they seek to save the writer's credit with those who have not. This is always the way with a seducing spirit. The first tract had gone too fast, had been seen and detected, and then, not withdrawn, but, while it worked, the credit of the system was to be saved, and confidence (ruined by the first) sought to be regained. But it could not be attempted to deny directly the first, nor has it been done in the second: some things it must be sought to back out of.

Whereas in the former the periods were doctrinally distinguished in the nature of their sufferings, now His sufferings, because He was an Israelite, cannot be restricted to the years of His public service. Thus the grosser form of the error is obviated, for he does not, in this expression, get on to a new ground and position by John's baptism of repentance and remission, so as to be sealed; but the substance of the error rests, and though thus apparently set aside by the word "restricted," it is fully set up again (p. 23), where it is declared, that the difference of Christ's dispensational relation is illustrated by that of Sinai and Zion (the place of the Church of the firstborn). I have not attempted to go through the tortuous contradictions of error. They

abound in the tract. They are convenient for partisans; because, while error is propagated by one statement, if detected, it can be denied by the other. (See the quotation also from p. 22, in a previous note.) He is obnoxious to wrath which is not vicarious, by reason of His own relation to God, such as He was, born part of an accursed people. Now how did being obnoxious to wrath in His own relation to God shew His perfectness? His conduct under it we may suppose did—were such a thing possible. It is the obnoxious-ness to wrath in Him as soon as He was born into the world, a position out of which He had to extricate Himself, that is the point pressed by the writer of the tract.

And here let me notice what is believed by all.

Not only are the vicarious sufferings of Christ owned by every true Christian, but that He suffered also as the righteous One on the earth. The reproaches of those that reproached Jehovah fell on Him. He suffered being tempted, having come in grace, the sinless One, into our position. His holy nature, sinless and untouched by Satan; still as a man, suffered being tempted. His soul entered in the fullest way into the condition of sorrow and distress in which sin had plunged man, and Israel too, especially. In all their affliction, in this sense also, He was afflicted. His heart, fully feeling, entered into the fullest depths of it, so that under the sense of it He could groan deeply in spirit. Not only so: it is evident that He anticipated the trial and suffering of death to which He was to be subject. By the grace of God He tasted death, and we know that He felt it beforehand, not only from the Psalms and the solemn sufferings of Gethsemane, but from His own words, “I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be

accomplished!" He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And here note, Christ, because it was His soul entering into it, could go to the full depths of all this, unspared, and unsparing Himself. It was sinless grace and perfectness of love, which, having brought Him into this condition, made Him enter into it in all its fulness, and shrink from none of it. It became the divine majesty, seeing He had placed Himself there, to lead Him through the sufferings suited to this position; that is, it was fitting He should suffer.

Hence our souls, though unable to estimate it, can understand its perfectness, and in spirit pass adoringly with Jesus into the midst of His sorrow: nay, it is our privilege to enter into that part of His sorrow—His holy sorrow—which flowed from sinless-ness and love, from service in spirit and knowledge of the mind of God in the midst of sin, to have the fellowship of His sufferings. His death itself can and is to be viewed in this light also, looked at as coming from man, and even Satan, however far this may be from being all that is found there, as indeed it is.

But the writer takes entirely different ground—ground which bases the sufferings of Christ on an entirely different principle. He speaks of sufferings, not into the depths of which He entered as the holy One, but of wrath, to which He was obnoxious by reason of the position He was in, from which God interfered to deliver Him, from which He extricated Himself by perfect obedience, so that He never felt the whole of it. It was the curse of a broken law He was under by position, not vicariously, without conflict with wicked men, not by the contradiction of sinners endured in grief by a holy soul, which it is our privilege to endure too for His and

righteousness' sake, but what it was no privilege to endure, and no profit either; for if it was to be endured for the profit of others, how could He extricate Himself from it, and be preserved from suffering it all by the interference of God in comforting Him? It lay upon Him, and not vicariously, as that which it was well for Him to get out of as a curse not vicarious. Is it not sufficient to present this to the soul of a saint, for him to see that it subverts the faith of God's elect? It is not the true Christ of God, the Holy Thing born of Mary, that we have here, but one' who participates, not by grace but by birth, in the curse, the fruitless curse which is fallen on man by reason of sin—not One who has taken the place in grace, for He extricates Himself from it, but one who is in it under the curse of the law by dire necessity of position. The substance of the truth of Christ's holy person is set aside, and His taking the curse on Himself is set aside, the two cardinal truths of the gospel of grace; and hence we shall find that all is confusion on these subjects, as it must be where the substance of the truth is lost, and the use of the Psalms as untrue and unfounded as possible. Under pretence of presenting the sufferings of Christ in a new and important point of view, the whole grace of them is lost; and, instead of in grace entering into the depths of the sorrows and suffering, whether of man or of Israel in their position before God—His soul entering into all the full depth of it in full purpose of soul without the least sparing, that, His soul knowing all, our souls might know His love had entered into all, and find its power there—it is a condition He is in necessarily by position as under a curse which He prays against, extricates Himself from, and is saved from enduring the full extent of, God interfering to deliver Him. I have already given the quotations which expressly teach this.

14 It is in vain to present other truths to make good the writer's orthodoxy. It is a mere blind. They are not the truths in question. On the point which the tracts teach, the truth of God is subverted. It is not a true Christ which is taught there. Nor does Christ enter fully into our sorrow, for He is spared it, and extricates Himself from it.

I now refer to some points in the second tract, shewing the entire confusion on the subject of suffering and wrath, whether from intention or ignorance I do not pretend to say, but which, at any rate shew, if it be ignorance, fatal ignorance as to Christ Himself, (pp. 3, 4.) "Had He been a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, having drunk of that cup which Job and Jeremiah had tasted before." What cup was Jeremiah (though suffering, as Christ Himself did, under the outward consequences of Israel's evil), as a prophet in his Lamentations by the Spirit of Christ drinking? The cup of sorrow in sympathy. His soul entered into Israel's sorrow in love by the Spirit of Christ. But this the writer of the tract says is quite another question from Christ's sufferings from God's relation to Him. But what were Job's sorrows? Were they not personal discipline—Satan let loose at himself? It was no suffering on account of others: he was the occasion of his own sorrow (I do not speak of any type now), and confessed himself, when he saw God, a sinner, and repented in dust and ashes. Was "the interpreter, one among a thousand," shewing to man his uprightness, so that God restored him, saying, "I have found a ransom," to be applied to Christ as one who needed a ransom? or could Elihu speak to Christ in any sense as he did to Job? and did not Elihu much more represent Christ than Job? That Christ voluntarily took

Job's case, looked at as a typical sufferer, may be also admitted, His soul entering into it; but this is distinguished as another thing by the writer—it is His own relation to God.

Again, what was the nature of the wrath? In the first tract it is left as but displeasure and terror, quoting Psalms which evidently do go as far as possible in the wrath of God, as Psalm 88. Here it is attempted to be distinguished as wrath, as chastisement from wrath in vengeance. It is not chastisement in love15 as we have it; it is not vicarious suffering; it is wrath on Israel, the consequence of sin. Now what is it the writer refers to as that which had fallen upon Israel? Not the process of government which accompanied the law, and formed terms under which Israel held certain blessings. They were already Lo-ammi indeed under that. Messiah could be presented to them according to the promise of Deuteronomy in grace, if indeed their hearts, under whatever affliction, turned back to the Lord and to obedience; but in this respect Christ presented Himself to them as a witness and a prophet, and their heart was as the nether millstone. But what is the position of Israel to which the writer refers? "They had earned, by their disobedience, the fearful inflictions of God's broken law."16 Mark that. Did Christ take that not vicariously? And what is meant is clearly stated enough: "for it had been said, Cursed is he that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them (Gal. 3:10)"!! I repeat: Did Christ take this place otherwise than vicariously?

In Galatians 3 there is not a semblance of security, not an appearance of reference to Christ's life or identification as obnoxious to God's wrath with Israel

from the moment of His birth, a position changed by His taking the place Israel ought to have taken under John's repentance and remission. "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Nothing can be simpler, or more blessed for us in grace, perfect grace. It is the simplicity that is in Christ. But what becomes of the distinction of vengeance and chastisement, or what the meaning of the inflictions of God's broken law according to Galatians 3:10? Was what they had earned by disobedience under the curse of God's broken law inflictions of chastisement? The writer adds: "Inflictions consequent upon this [this follows immediately the citation of Gal. 3:10] had long begun to operate both on individuals in Israel, and upon the nation as a whole." "Consider the sufferings of the prophets: the chastenings and sorrow of Ezekiel." It is then added, "One thing at least in this list of woe—He must be allowed to have experienced in no ordinary degree—toil un-recompensed by results." Was this—the curse of the broken law according to Galatians 3:10? It is sorrow in service, which the writer has distinguished, as he has the soul entering into the condition of the people, from Christ's relation to God as identified with them. Sinless penalties have nothing to do here: no one questions Christ underwent them; but that is not the sense of Galatians 3:10.

I will now refer to some of the Psalms which are quoted to shew Christ's sufferings in them, and we shall see if they are not connected with the contradiction of sinners, that is, with His service in respect of them and suffering from them; not His relation to God as being in the same place with them; ending (after faithfulness through it

all) with their outwardly getting the mastery over Him, and therein (because making atonement) being left to them and forsaken of God. Whereas, the remnant of Israel in the latter days, to which much refers in the sympathy of Christ, will for the most part be delivered as others had before. They had trusted in God and been delivered; whilst the enemy could taunt Him with trusting in God, and not being delivered.

In Psalm 6 itself, we find the contradiction of sinners, and reaching onward in spirit to death, not a common relationship along with them to God, of wrath to which He was obnoxious, and inward visitations of God in common with wicked Israel:17 only there is no present deliverance.

“Mine eye is consumed because of grief, it waxeth old because of all mine enemies. Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity, for Jehovah has heard the voice of my weeping. Let all mine enemies be ashamed and sore vexed.” Here the Lord, looked at in His connection with Israel, is oppressed by wicked enemies, and cries to Jehovah against them. Death staring Him in face, He prays, entering as He does in spirit into the deserts of Israel as identified with the saints in the earth, the excellent, not to be rebuked in anger; as elsewhere not to shut up His soul with the blood-thirsty; the providing, 18 having entered into it, for the comfort of the faithful of Israel in the latter day. So in Psalm 719 this contradiction of sinners is fully brought out. For thus it was. The Lord ordered20 that certain persons should be in trial and oppressed, that they might be fit vessels of Christ’s Spirit, who alone could enter into all sorrow. The expression of what was true perhaps of them as to sin became suited to Christ as entering in spirit, in

grace, into the condition of Israel in the remnant—fully and entirely entering into it, not escaping or extricating Himself from it as naturally under it by position—and thus providing most blessed instruction as to Him for us, and what shall instruct and sustain the remnant of Israel as of His spirit prophetically, when really in the circumstances and state and guilt which He entered into in spirit.

And here remark, that if it be not Christ entering into it in spirit, or vicariously, these Psalms go a great deal too far; for they do not merely speak of relationship to God, but of actual guilt and sin.

See one of the very psalms quoted by the writer of the tract as being Christ's condition—His relation to God: "There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger [this would be taken as a proof by the writer of His position, but it is added], neither is there rest in my bones because of my sin. For mine iniquities are gone over my head: as an heavy burden, they are too heavy for me." Now this is not relationship, nor position, nor sinless penalties. Either Christ is speaking as charging Himself with the iniquities, or His soul is entering into their condition, both of which the writer says it is not; or in some way Christ must be responsible for iniquities otherwise than vicariously. According to the writer Christ was not in this condition after His baptism, but often before, referring to this very Psalm. And mark, it is not what is earned in the way of punishment which is spoken of here (that may be understood); nor merely of the anger and hot displeasure (the same terms as in the sixth), but He speaks of Himself as involved in what earned it. That He can thus take it on Himself for the remnant, the full consequence of which was the cross, is

readily accepted and understood; but that it was a position out of which He extricated Himself, and God interfered to spare and relieve Him, is nonsense indeed, but nonsense which destroys the whole truth as to Christ. And note here further, that He is in the presence of active enemies seeking His life.

Many psalms answer to this. And as further explanation of this we have Psalm 40, where the testimony of Christ in the great congregation is declared to have been delivered in faithfulness on God's behalf; and after that He declares Himself in the very condition out of which He is said to have emerged on entering into this ministry, His whole state being changed from Sinai to Zion: "For innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head; therefore my heart faileth me." So also we find Him in presence of His enemies.

Cry there was—but it was well seen here, that it was a longer patience and a better deliverance than John's baptism—and a testimony which only made the clouds gather darker and darker around Him, till the forsaking of God upon the cross closed the scene that the Lord speaks of in this Psalm. Yet we have the very same elements as before and His heart failing Him.

In Psalm 18 the reader will find the way in which Christ, as in this trial, takes up the whole history of Israel from Egypt to their final deliverance, as based on this cry and suffering of His, just shewing Him in all their affliction afflicted—not under curse of law (for it begins before law); but as interested in the people who derive their deliverance from enemies, evil, and oppression, from the

cry of Him who was pleased in grace to identify Himself with them and undertake their cause—afflicted in all their affliction. That His perfect obedience was available to this—and this integrity He pleads often—that He went to the full depths of the consequences and cause in the sorrow of His heart (not escaping it, I repeat, for His own sake, as the writer states), is most true, and most blessed; but this is not what is allowed.

It is for the writer a personal suffering, though not personally deserved, to which He was obnoxious from position, which He was partly spared through obedience and from which He emerged by John's baptism. And note, this as a system, is fully confirmed by the second tract, though the expressions are modified, and the writer hardly knows what to say: for, in the second tract, it is illustrated by the change from Sinai to Zion. And yet he speaks to get rid of the abominableness of the system of its not being restricted to His ministry. How is a Sinai-state not restricted to a Zion-state illustrated by that of the Church of the firstborn? But it is the thing itself, restricted or not, which is the grand evil. Whatever Christ took of the curse of Sinai He neither escaped in part by prayer, obedience, and faith, nor extricated Himself from.

I turn now to the difference of Gethsemane and the cross, not to repeat any of the remarks of Mr. Harris, but to notice what is in the second tract. The first was too bad, too grossly offensive to every christian mind, too plain a proof that the idea of the curse and wrath Christ endured there was wholly wanting. To say that Christ was a sacrifice for sin, but that Gethsemane was more terrible though there He was not, was too open a denial of the reality of the atonement to be allowed to pass, or

not to discredit any one that wrote or even circulated it. Hence in the second tract all this is carefully modified and explained. To say, as some advocates of Mr. Newton do, that the second tract, does not refer to the first is too flagrant an imposition on common sense, and the direct and positive evidence of the tracts themselves, to do anything more than excite pity. But it is a part of the same system. The sorrows of Gethsemane are dwelt upon in the terms for the most part in which Christians sound in the faith have spoken of them, as if that was the full force of the statement of the first tract; and, instead of "the most terrible hour He ever passed through," we have "the most terrible hour through which He had ever yet passed;" and then we are told "that the unequalled hour of pressure was indeed still to come; for that was on the cross. Yet on the cross He seems to have manifested no feelings such as these. There was no such bloody sweat—no such development of agonized human sensibilities. Observe, I say, development. I know well that the hour of the cross was an unequalled hour," &c. Why then were there no such feelings? "And yet how peculiarly calmness and strength mark the whole period of the crucifixion. His care for His mother; His reply to the supplication of the thief;… all these… mark also the incarnate God. … In Himself alone power of sustainment was—for He was God, and therefore He endured…. The divine character of the human sufferer is thus made very prominent on the cross; just as the human character of the same Sufferer is made, I think, prominent in Gethsemane. Even that Psalm, which is so peculiarly the Psalm of the cross, and commences with the cry of His most bitter anguish, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' concludes with thanksgiving," &c.

Such is the attempt to undo the effect of the horrible statements of the first tract. It contradicts the statements of the first tract clearly enough, while referring plainly to them, and adopting the substance of the principle. But how low must that soul be fallen which can give garbled statements as to the cross itself, and the infinite and sacred sufferings of the Holy One there, when He made His soul an offering for sin, in order to save its own credit and character! Was there no shame, no pang in the writer's heart, when penning all this? Alas! alas! and alas! for those, that for the credit of a man, amiable as the feeling may be, can sacrifice, ay, one sorrow, or one feeling of the blessed and holy Jesus. I pity the man that is not revolted and indignant at these tracts.

The writer has changed "weak humanity and all the power of Satan allowed to be brought upon Him" into "the felt weakness of His humanity, with the terrors of the Almighty set in array against them." But in this even he is in error; for He was praying to His Father in full communion with Him, with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death. The hour was that of wicked man and the power of darkness. He anticipated death. The power of it was on His spirit in prospect, but the cup was not then drinking; it was His Father's ascertained will that He should drink it. In this sense it was not the time in which the terrors of the Almighty were in array against Him, that is, as from the Almighty Himself.

And hence it was, according to the system of the tract, what He had often suffered before, instead of being a distinct position (see pp. 10, 19), when through "many years of sorrowful experience" before the mission of

John Baptist, He could feel and say, “I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up; while I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted. Thy fierce wrath goeth over me; thy terrors have cut me off. They came round about me daily like water; they encompassed me about altogether.” So that the terrors of the Almighty set in array were not, according to the writer, peculiar to Gethsemane. Here, however, we are told that the experiences of Gethsemane were not assigned to Him by God till the great appointed time (p. 33).

But as to the cross, it was a time of calmness and strength, because the incarnate God was there. That Divine power and nature sustained Him everywhere, and there especially, yet so as to enable Him to endure not to screen Him, had been said, by those from whom the writer has borrowed it, long before him. But here it is used to put the cross as a place of “strength,” in contrast with Gethsemane as a place of weakness.

Frightful, really, is it to read their efforts—frightful almost thus to discuss the cross, instead of its awakening the adoring feelings of a heart that bows at the thought of the blessedness of Him who endured it. But let us turn to scripture. Blessed be God, it meets every error, let it be ever so guarded or subtilly put, or shrouded in beautiful forms of thought. Is the cross a place of strength according to scripture? “He was crucified through weakness, but he liveth by the power of God.” What is the statement of the first tract as to this very event? “For example the veil was rent.”—We know that was His flesh in death. “It was of purple, and scarlet, and fine linen; but nothing that could not be rent was intertwined in it, and this is strictly preserved

through all the types, that we may never mingle the thought of Divinity with the humanity of the Lord Jesus."

Now, He is so sustained by the Divinity, that there are no such agonized human sensibilities—sustained by the divine nature in Himself. It is the divine character of the human sufferer which is prominent, so that strength marks the whole period of the crucifixion. And when the thought, which would instantly suggest itself as the reply to every holy soul, comes into the mind, on recalling "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"— is that the divine character of the human sufferer, His saying that God has forsaken Him?—it is sought to elude it (I am ashamed to write the word) with, it "concludes with thanksgiving." This is really worse than error. What can one think of one who can reason thus?

Brethren, it is the cross, the atonement, the foundation of our faith—the sufferings of Jesus we are speaking of. Can you rest under or endure for a moment the work of Christ being thus trifled with? Did the thanksgivings come before the atonement and work of expiation was over? Could Christ declare God His Father's name to His brethren before the offering was accomplished which made it a declaration of righteous love? You know He could not. Was this declaration a testimony to Christ's being calm and full of strength on the cross as a divine character while enduring the wrath, so that there was no development of agonized human sensibilities similar to Gethsemane?

But I turn to the psalms which speak of His death—the psalm and psalms of the cross. First, Psalm 22—I shall

copy a large part of it; and it is well to refresh one's spirit with the truth, instead of contending against error.

"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent. But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel. Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them. They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded. But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people. All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted on Jehovah that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him. But thou art he that took me out of the womb… Be not far from me; for trouble is near; for there is none to help. Many bulls have compassed me; strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion. I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death. For dogs have compassed me; the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture. But be not thou far from me, O Jehovah: O my strength, haste thee to help me."

Is this the self-sustaining and divine character of the human Sufferer, giving calmness and strength, marking the whole period of the crucifixion: this which is indeed

so peculiarly the psalm of the cross? Is it not evident that the forsaking of God, as to the condition of His soul, crowned the sorrow and accomplished the holy dread of One whose soul was poured out already like water, His heart melted like wax in the midst of His bowels?

Take again Psalm 69, also a psalm of the cross.

When they gave Him gall for His meat, and in His thirst vinegar to drink:—"I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God. They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty." The Lord then refers to His zeal and faithfulness for God, and righteous and gracious dealings towards men, and continues, "Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink… Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." And afterwards, "But I am poor and sorrowful: let thy salvation, O God, set me up on high."

The Lord, as a man, did never indeed go out of the perfect position of dependence, not even on the cross. What distinguished that was, as we have seen, not only that men, His enemies, were lively, but that that dependence, while His soul was an offering for sin, was not, and could not be, answered. This was infinite sorrow as well as expiation.

Paslm 102 may also be referred to: “He weakened my strength in the way; he shortened my days.” But these amply suffice. Ought they to be needed?

There is another statement here also which really sets aside all the previous efforts to save the doctrine taught in these tracts from the charge of falsifying the very relationship of God with Christ, by distinguishing His being under the wrath of chastisement and the wrath of vengeance. The whole career of the Lord is thus described, page 31 (all being put together, the dispensational position of Christ and the wrath and curse of God in vengeance): “Man was yet in his distance from God… Jesus, as man, was associated with this place of distance in which man in the flesh was; and He had through obedience to find His way to that point where God could meet Him as having finished His appointed work—glorify Him, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places: and that point was death—death on the cross—death under the wrath of God.”

Now that Jesus as captain of our salvation, a place He had taken in voluntary grace, was exposed to suffering and trial, arising from the place He had taken amongst us, every Christian recognizes; but that is not the point here. The writer’s doctrine is, that from the moment He came into the world He was obnoxious to a wrath which He escaped in part by prayer, faith, and obedience.

Now here “man was yet in his distance from God,” and “Jesus, as man, was associated with this place of distance in which man in the flesh was.” Now His having personal sin is not the question here. The writer is not

charged with saying that; and hence his clearing himself of that is clearing himself of nothing at all.

What was the place of distance in which man in the flesh was? What was due to it? Was it not condemnation? Christ was there by association. He was in this place; not as made an offering for sin, not vicariously, but by association.

The doctrine of truth is, that, perfectly acceptable and accepted in His person and sinless under the law, He was made sin, and by one offering, offered without the gate, perfected for ever those that are sanctified—a sin-offering once for all. The doctrine of the writer of the second tract is, that Christ was personally sinless indeed, but was associated as man with the place of distance in which man in the flesh was. Not as earning His bread in the sweat of His brow: that is not the meaning of the distance from God of man in the flesh. "'He had through obedience to find His way to that point where God could meet Him as having finished His appointed work—glorify Him, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places: and that point was death— death on the cross—death under the wrath of God." Can anything be plainer than this? Is this wrath of chastisement? Is death on the cross—death under the wrath of God—the meeting-point obtained for man at a distance from God, because the appointed work was finished—is that chastisement, or wrath due, in the full sense, to man as in the flesh and at a distance from God?

This, then, according to the writer, was Christ's place. Not He who knew no sin made sin, but from the beginning of His fife finding His way through obedience out of a place of wrath naturally due to man as at a

distance from God, and which was not reached till it arrived at death under wrath. But there He was from the beginning. It is idle, then, to speak of appointment of God as to the extent of His sufferings, not merely because it contradicts God's alleged interference to deliver Him from them; but because His position was the position of man at a distance from God. What had God appointed? What, by the very nature of God Himself, was the necessary result of that? Hence it is not merely terrors as an occasional thing which might reach His Spirit: He was associated with man's place of distance, and therefore under wrath for sin. When He said, Mine iniquities are gone over my head, it was the place He was in (for man was there), not vicariously: He had to extricate Himself out of it,21 to escape what He could by faith, and obedience, and prayer, "to find His way to that point where God could meet Him as having finished His appointed work"—that is, "death under the wrath of God."22 He was under this wrath then all the time in His relation to God in the position He had taken—not vicariously, but by association. It is another gospel, which is not another; for death under the wrath of God is not here itself vicarious— not the bearing of the sins of His redeemed—but finding His way, by reason of the position He was in Himself, to that point where God could meet Him as having finished the work which death on the cross, due to the position He was Himself in, closed. It is not (as Irvingism) that He partook of sinful nature, so that He was obnoxious to wrath as such; but it is that He was from His birth, by the position which He took as man, Himself at a distance from God. Not that He bore sins and took wrath on the cross: it was His own position; out of which He had to find His way to that point where God could meet Him, which point was death

under wrath, which is what indeed is due to man in the flesh at a distance from God—the place where Christ always was.

If any man has a respect for Christ, or the fear of God; if any man values the essential truth of the gospel, he will flee from such teaching as from a serpent, and much more earnestly. “Cease, my son, to hear the instruction which causeth thee to err from the words of knowledge.”

I warn every saint, that it is destroying Christ in what is most essential—subverting the gospel—the error of the enemy himself. Souls may be foolish enough to go and ask him who teaches such things, does he mean to do this? Of course he will say, No. The answer is: I have no need to ask him; I know he does it. I have read his own authentic publication—a publication professedly put forth to clear up his views, because of circumstances which have arisen. This proves, in the fullest way, that he does subvert it. I know well that this is the doctrine that has been habitually taught: that Christ was a constituted sinner, and under death, and worked His way up to life. But it would have been hard to catch flying words.23 God has taken care that the doctrine should be printed and published. Every one now who countenances them is answerable to God for the doctrine and for the souls that may be ensnared by it; and therefore it is that I speak plainly of it, as the teaching of a seducing spirit contrary to God. With the motives of those who teach it I have nothing to do—there may be seducers and seduced. The point is to guard souls against the teaching itself, and to warn them against those who teach it.

I shall add a few words directly on the Psalms. It is the custom of heresy, in all ages, to take difficult passages, not generally, or not at all understood, and found on them its doctrines as something more deep and excellent than others possess. Because it is evidently more difficult to reply when the passages are not understood—more difficult to wrest them out of the hands of those who use them thus perversely according to Satan. The thing taught can be disproved by scripture, but the passage rests beclouded. It is thus with the writer. Certain passages, if you introduce Christ as speaking in the Psalms, are difficult; as, speaking of sins, of foolishness, of sin. To understand the bearing of them all supposes an acquaintance with the meaning of the prophetic Spirit, and capacity to apply them exactly to the right object of the prophecy. On these the writer seizes to pervert souls. Confessing that the Gospels afford him nothing, he seeks to introduce his hearers here, to prove to them that Christ suffered wrath by reason of His own position and relation to God. I have replied to this from scripture and plain scriptural truth. It may assist some souls to dwell a little more on the Psalms themselves, which, while blessedly feeding the affections in many parts (indeed in all, as far as understood), and specially when Christ is fully seen in them, are perhaps the most difficult of interpretation in their prophetic application.

But I beg the reader’s attention to this point: that the writer, instead of increasing our apprehensions of the entering of Christ into our sorrow, or Israel’s sorrow, does exactly the contrary. The truth teaches that His soul entered into the full depth of them, avoiding nothing—that, as Captain of our salvation, and as the

good Shepherd, He led the way in sorrow. The writer teaches, that He was obnoxious to wrath in virtue of His position as man and amongst Israel, and was preserved from much of what He would have suffered as in that position by prayer, faith, and obedience; so that the sympathies of Christ are largely curtailed. It would be hard to say, why He was not spared all, or why He had to bear some. He was there by reason of others, as in the position they had brought themselves into; but not for others, for He extricated Himself out of it as far as possible. Moreover, it was God's appointment to Him of a certain quantity. I am not here returning to the inconsistency of this statement, but shewing that it was a limited suffering, arising from the position He was in in His relation to God—a position we have seen to be positive wrath, for this was man's—not His soul entering into that of others.

Now, I say that the Psalms, whether taken as to man or Israel, teach us that He entered into the full depths of suffering, which made Him the vessel of sympathizing grace with those who had to pass through them; and that, as seeing and pleading with God in respect of them. They were sinners, could claim no exemption, count on no favour which could deliver and restore. They must have taken the actual sufferings in connection with the guilt which left them in them without favour. But this was not God's thought—He was minded to deliver them; and Christ in grace steps in. [He takes the guilt of those that should be delivered —this was vicarious suffering as a substitute—and, in the path of perfect obedience, puts Himself in the sorrow through which they had to pass; enters into it so as to draw down the efficacy of God's delivering favour on those who

should be in it, and be the pledge, in virtue of all this, of their deliverance out of it as standing thus for them, the sustainer of their hope in it, so that they should not fail. Not that they should not pass through it. Because they were so to pass through it according to the righteous ways of God in respect of their folly and wickedness, and to purify them inwardly from it all, that Christ entered into it, to be a spring of life and sustainer of faith to them in it, when the hand of oppression should be heavy from without, the sense of guilt terrible from within, and hence no hope of favour but that One, who had assured and could convey this favour, had taken up their cause with God, and passed through it for them. And hence Christ did not escape where they would,24 because He must suffer the full penalty of the guilt and evil, or He could not deliver them. Thus Christ must pass personally fully through the sorrow, as He did in spirit; and, besides that, have no deliverance, but, on the contrary, make atonement for the guilt.

But it was as being near to God, save as in atonement, that He passed through it all. And though, in entering into it in spirit, He might see all the terrors of death and judgment before Him, and feel it anticipatively, yet He, as perfectly near to God and in favour, could at once turn to Him in perfectness, and hence make available all the grace and favour of God towards Him, as regarded that case, in behalf of those who should come to be in it (this we see continually in the Psalms and in the Gospels too), and have all the mind of God for them in that case, which they could use when they found themselves in it, even though in darkness. And how many in darkness, even in these christian times, have so availed themselves of them! And this, because He was in the

perfect favour, and could count on the perfect favour of God, while passing through these depths, and thus, through the atonement, make it available as to all the circumstances for others in its suitable application—for others ruined else in their guilt. It was favour, and sustaining, and blessing, during the whole course of and in the circumstances, not the deliverance of One who was at a distance as in the position of those who were so, Himself obnoxious to wrath.

And hence we find that, while all the most exquisite sympathies of the Lord's sufferings are precious in Him and for us, inasmuch as in general the saint is always a sufferer among sinners, and the circumstances are analogous, and we have to walk as He walked, and the grace precious in His walk by which He lived is precious for us, yet the prophetic application is, properly speaking, to Israel, not to the Church, save in a particular way in some very peculiar passages, where the remnant of Israel is considered after His resurrection, which formed the first nucleus of the Church; and where the heavens are vaguely alluded to—where we now know the Church will be, when the judgments come on the earth. There is one point which particularly refers to this—the constant claim for vengeance and deliverance by destruction of the psalmist's enemies. This is not the Church's cry, because her deliverance is by being taken out of the scene. That is the certain character of the deliverance. But in the Psalms it is destruction of enemies. The resurrection is clearly put forward as the confidence of those whom the enemy may slay—a principle ever true, and, in fact, accomplished in Christ. How fully this applies to the

remnant of Jews, in the latter day oppressed by the enemy, every one will see. But this by the bye.

Let us examine the Psalms in their connection with Christ Himself, who was, as in Israel, the faithful One in the midst of a rebellious and apostate race; but yet put to the test by this last visit in goodness. But as regards His path and trials, Christ was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He called all as such, doubtless; but it was a separative mission. His sheep were to hear His voice. His fan was in His hand—the axe at the root of the trees. The meek were to inherit the land—the poor in spirit to have the kingdom. His preaching righteousness and truth was in the great congregation; but the effect was to gather a little flock, with whom all His associations were, and to whom it was His Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom. This was His position in Israel. From such, and the thoughts of One perfect before God in such a position, the testimony of the Spirit of prophecy in the Psalms flowed, and flowed for those who shall be in such a position in the latter day; while, as the revelation of the perfection of Christ, they are the blessed portion of the Church in all ages. From all this it flows that some psalms speak of Christ Himself as alone making atonement; others of His sorrows in Ufe as taking up the cause of the godly and being perfectly so Himself; others the prophetic provision of the expression of right feelings by the remnant in the latter day, into whose condition He thus enters in spirit.

We will examine the Psalms a little to bring this out. The first psalm presents the blessedness, natural in God's ways, to the perfect man under the law; distinguishing him from the wicked. The second presents the title of Christ, in the decree of Jehovah, to the headship over

the heathen, as set King in Zion. The third at once turns to the actual position: the righteous man is surrounded with enemies—suffers instead of reigning. The rest shew out all the thoughts of God, as to this, in sorrow, or in purpose and final glory. “How are they increased,” says the righteous man, “that trouble me! There is no help for him in his God. But thou, O Jehovah, art a shield;” closing with the great testimony in Israel—ever true —“Salvation belongeth unto Jehovah. His blessing is upon his people.” The fourth: they turn His glory into shame. But they would know that Jehovah had set apart the godly man for Himself. Many could say there was no good, but for him the light of Jehovah’s countenance satisfied him. The Lord only was his refuge. Here we have the position of the righteous remnant fully provided for, and the Spirit of Christ entering fully into it; putting real strength into it, for the name of Jehovah is a strong tower. The fifth: He finds Himself surrounded by confident wickedness; but God does not take pleasure in it. He knows God’s name. There were bloody and deceitful men. He calls on God to destroy them. He will come into His temple. The Lord would bless the righteous. The sixth: in the midst of these workers of iniquity the righteous soul sees death before it. His soul is vexed. He sees the righteous indignation of God upon the people. The Spirit of Christ enters into that which was due to, and ought to be felt by, the righteous remnant in the day of trouble as really due to it.25 The righteous soul felt it as the chastening hand of God, saw the rod, and who had appointed it, and bowed down as in the presence of death (the simple pass on and are punished), but looked perfectly to the Lord in that condition, saying,” Thou, O Jehovah, how long?” The Spirit of Christ, entering into this, does not “preserve”

from seeing the rod and feeling the burden, but quite the contrary, and enables the soul to look constantly to the Lord.

Christ, then, does enter in spirit into this sorrow of the remnant fully: but it is not His relation to God as due to Him as associated with the people. It is because He is near God through it all, that He can hold the soul of the remnant in the place of sustaining grace by faith in the position where they were to receive the chastisement. It is not Himself “at a distance,” as the place of the sinful man under wrath (save in atonement) in His relation to God; but the link with the remnant in spirit, when in the circumstances where they would feel all pressing upon them, and could not have been near God, being sinners and guilty as a nation, but that He who had drawn them to seek righteousness maintained them in spirit, brought them into the sustaining value of His place by entering into theirs in grace. The position is the position of the remnant; the link with God in it, Christ. Sometimes it rises up therefore to where He alone could individually stand, and becomes a direct prophecy of Him; and then we find His interest in, and application of, all this to the remnant as a distinct body from Him. In general, to understand the Psalms, we must see the Jewish remnant faithful in trial, and the Spirit of Christ taking up this position to link them with the strength of Jehovah, as well as, in some psalms, bearing sin alone in the way of atonement that He might be able to do so. Sometimes it is the deliverance and glory which this strength will accomplish as the answer.

So (Psalm 7) Christ pleads in the midst of the people in His righteousness, and calls to Jehovah to awake to the judgment which He has commanded, lifting up Himself

in anger against the rage of His enemies. Christ, as He was, did not do this, and could not, but the contrary, for higher and more glorious reasons; nor can the Church now. It is His Spirit speaking in and for the remnant. Yet the Spirit of Christ knew perfectly His title to this righteous vengeance: but He had a higher work to accomplish. He could have asked His Father, and have had twelve legions of angels; but the scriptures were to be fulfilled. The disciples were not even to tell that He was the Christ: the Son of man was to suffer, and hold a higher and more glorious place. He had come to save men's lives, not to destroy them; and He prayed for His ignorant enemies.

Hence, from the accomplishment of the effect of Christ's taking up the cause and entering thus into the circumstances of the earthly people, in Psalm 8 Jehovah, the God of Israel, has His name excellent in all the earth, as the God of the Jews, in the exaltation of the Son of man. In Psalm 9 we have the judgment executed against the enemies so often complained of, and an enlarged account of it. So in Psalm 10 the wicked thus domineering in the latter day are fully described, and the result for the humble remnant, whose heart God prepared and caused his ear to hear.

In the psalms which follow on this, this is fully entered into; that is, the Spirit of Christ draws out the whole scene, becoming the spring and portrayer of all the varied exercises of feeling in that day, in the fullest sympathy with the humble, whose heart God had prepared. And it is exceedingly lovely to see all the weaknesses, sorrows, thoughts, feelings, exercises, spoken of by the Spirit of Christ Himself. All this supposes weakness: "I had said almost as they," says the

poor oppressed upright one in that day; that, when all the circumstances by which they shall be occasioned in that day are there, they may have, by the word, the vehicle to their hearts of this sympathy, and the certainty of it in the very thoughts presented by it for and in the circumstances. It is not an excellency out of the reach of their condition; it is the entering of the Spirit of Christ into it.

This is partially true of us; but it is not quite the same, because there Christ descends in sympathy into the circumstances as there with them, whereas for us He is on high; and we having received the Holy Ghost, consequent on the knowledge of full redemption, to join Christ in heaven, and so be ever with Him— we have Him as our High Priest on high to bring us in spirit there, out of where we are, and having suffered being tempted, maintaining the communion of the weak with the perfectness of the light we belong to, and the fulness of glory and perfection which we see by faith, and in which we walk. The Holy Ghost in us presents those groanings which cannot be uttered, because, being already associated with the joy and glory of that new creation, we groan, being burdened with our connection with the old. Our enemies are spiritual. We do not look for deliverance by the execution of judgment on earthly foes, though we see and can desire the deliverance of earth by it in due time. But here the blessed Jesus provides His sympathies for a people who are not in this position, but in trials from which, for the most part, unless killed, the execution of judgment can alone deliver them; and they wait for the Lord, saying, “How long?” and find in the words of Jesus that He has not forgotten them, knows their sorrows, and furnishes

them through His Spirit with the expression of them—an expression of them of which God takes notice as being of the Spirit of Christ Himself who has made the atonement for the nation, though it be but the cry of weakness, but divinely suited to their state. They, too, vent their sorrow in what they know outwardly and inwardly, for it cannot be otherwise, for the words of God are sweet and known by His own to be the words their God has given them.

Often, as in Psalm 14, we have the Lord's view of all this. He rises above the circumstances and takes a view of them. How encouraging to the poor tried remnant! yet, putting them in their place as sinners, for they are not by known redemption out of that, though they wait and hope for it. Hence it is, too, that these psalms often suit souls awakened and in that state. Thus in Psalm 15 we have just a description of the character of those who shall find a place in God's tabernacle. In Psalm 16 we find one of those psalms which shews us, as the apostle quotes their general principle as illustrating the position of Christ, that He did not merely depict and express, or sympathize, in a way of provision for or in divine intelligence, the sorrows of the remnant, but that He came Himself into their place, and suffered, being tempted, and tasted all the sorrow, so as to be able to succour them that were tempted. He was in the place, not of distance, but of dependence. It is saints who want sympathy, however weak, and however their feelings are the expressions of infirmity— not man at a distance and disobedient. He was in the position of dependence in the place of sorrow, but perfection, in the dependence of a saint. Here Christ looks to be preserved by God, for, as a man, He puts His trust in Him. He said to Jehovah, "He

was his Adon (his Lord): to the saints and the excellent on earth, all his delight was in them”—not with man at a distance, as Himself obnoxious to wrath because He was there (though saints may feel their sins when called into the place of trial and repentance and chastening—feel them according to grace), nor with the mass of disobedient Israel, but with the saints and excellent of the earth. This is Christ’s place in the Psalms, unless alone in the atonement. Still it is in Israel. He will not go after another god: Jehovah was the portion of His inheritance; and He sees, in this confidence in Jehovah, the resurrection as His path of fife and joy.

I think I see in these Psalms, which are the expression of the thoughts of Christ Himself, in a certain sense a higher tone, more perfectness, in that He is in the absolute completeness and perfectness of feeling which belongs to perfectness in the place in which He is. He may be in the very depths, but He is perfectly and perfect there. He has exactly that feeling which suits a perfect apprehension of the place He is in. He enters perfectly into the tossings to and fro of the hearts of His poor saints who through grace feel rightly, but hardly know how, and do not know how to estimate absolutely (it would be impossible and contradict their place as exercised because of imperfection, and always feeble, never divine), the place they are in in relation to God. He enters, I say, perfectly into their feelings; but His feelings are perfect; and hence there is an exact perfect setting of each thing in its place, which leaves no broken or vague impression. We see One who has scanned in the light the whole extent of His position, though that position be the depth of darkness itself, giving God perfectly His place in relation thereto. Hence these

psalms become as centres of thought for the whole book (as stakes in the hedge which sustain and keep it all in place, though others form it), as they will be in fact for the remnant, as a pledge of blessing for all in similar circumstances of trial, though Christ were alone in the expiatory part of them; and this they habitually express also.

Thus this Psalm 16. So Psalm 22—forsaken of God, no uncertainty, no hope He may not be. He is yet (O wondrous thought, and blessed one that it should have been so!) equally perfect in His estimate of God: “Thou continuest holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.” All the powers of evil were then against Him: He is at the same time forsaken of His God, for whom to be near Him He cried in the hour of distress: but perfect in owning the perfection of God in it notwithstanding all. Weakness, hostility, and abandonment did not give an imperfect thought of all that God was. He was heard.

So, in my judgment, Psalm 23 where He walks the path of the blessing and trial of faith, and presents the confidence of it (putting forth His sheep, He goes before them), and shews it to them whatever He had to suffer in it, assured to them what Jehovah was—He who He was proved Himself to be in Psalm 24.

But one word as to Psalms 20, 21, in their connection with 22. In the two preceding psalms the Spirit presents Messiah the object of the contemplation of the saint in spirit prophetically; for we must remember they are prophecies. Psalm 19 gives the testimony of creation and the law, such as they really are. But in Psalm 20 Messiah is seen in the day of trouble. Strange sight! but one that the saint must enter into, and he knows now

that the Lord saves His anointed, and none is to be trusted but Jehovah. Here it is the day of trouble, and the saints can enter into it—Jewish saints and expressed in Jewish circumstances. It closes with their hosanna. In Psalm 21 they contemplate the answer, seeing Messiah not only delivered but exalted; glory and great majesty set upon Him. What they had looked for, as interested in His desires, Psalm 20:4, they see answered, Psalm 21:2; and much more, too, as the answer opens out upon their view in the blessing and exaltation of the Messiah, with whom they had identified themselves in heart in the day of His trouble prophetically; but all this in Jewish association, and hence they see His power in judgment. "Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies."

But in Psalm 22 it was not sufferings in a day of trouble which could be contemplated and entered into by others, and the psalm is, and must be, in the mouth of Jesus Himself. He alone could enter, and in entering understand, that depth. And hence, being of expiatory power as bearing the forsaking of God, which was not the portion of His believing people, He, as now heard26 in resurrection, can declare Jehovah's name on a new ground to His brethren; and, assembling the remnant round Himself, sing in the midst of the congregation, the gathered remnant of Israel redeemed into fuller blessings, and which became the nucleus of the Church —the Church, in fact, itself in its commencement. But thereon He calls on all Israel also, in virtue of this His being heard. And His praise is in the great congregation —all Israel, when fully gathered hereafter; and then all the ends of the world, "for the kingdom is Jehovah's." This gives a very peculiar force to this psalm—in its own

proper depth, beyond all our feelings, and the foundation of all our hopes.

In Psalm 69 we have another of the character I have just now mentioned, which will afford us much instruction, and where the Lord fully expresses the well known and well denned position He is in before God, and really in His ways as well as His sorrows. The waters had come into His soul. He cried to God—His throat was dry while waiting for Him—His eyes failed—there was no standing in the depth He was in—His enemies were there, and mighty. But even here, in speaking of foolishness and sins, which we know to have been of others, not His own, He speaks as fully in the presence of God, all being in the light. “Thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee.” His whole case is before God, He knowing it. It is not merely the sorrows and effects of sin down here. Hence, as I have said, He pleads for other godly ones (what touching grace in such a case!), that He, having to suffer the full depths of rejection, having taken all on Him, may not be an occasion of stumbling to the godly, the remnant who waited upon God. How likely in hearts prompt to say on His apparent rejection, because man had rejected Him, and His own word ill-believed, “We thought that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel;” as in the latter day, in Psalm 73, when the godly man felt, “therefore his people return thither, and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them;” and they were ready to say, “Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency.” “Let not them that wait on thee be ashamed for my sake, let not them that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel, because for thy sake I have borne reproach;” and the Lord shews the real ground on

which, on man's part, trouble had come upon Him —His grace in sorrow towards them. But still in all the trouble also He is fully and consciously before God. "Thou hast known my reproach, and my shame, and my dishonour," though as a man reproach had broken His heart, and He cried for deliverance. Here also we find judgment claimed from the God of Israel against the enemies; and, in verse 26, Christ brings together Himself and the remnant. In the end, seeing all the result, "their heart should live that seek God; for God will save Zion." Again, in another Psalm (51), we have, though inspired for them by the Spirit of Christ, the confession of the remnant, the bloodguiltiness being indeed of all from Abel to Zacharias, but surely above all of Christ Himself. Then the confession of the remnant in Israel by the Spirit of Christ clearly applies to them, and not to Christ, save so far as Christ has taken it all on Himself indeed in grace. "In sin did my mother conceive me" cannot in any sense be applied to Christ; for it was not only the absence of personal sin, but an entirely different manner of introduction into manhood, which distinguished the position of Christ. It was a holy thing which was born, so born as to be called the Son of God, so that there was a necessary and special relation between Him and God His Father, even as a man born into the world, whatever He took on Himself, or into whatever He perfectly entered.

In Psalm 40, where we have Christ personally again, we find Him pleading His entire and unfaltering faithfulness, but having come to do God's will, and that through the offering of His body once for all (for we have the apostle's application of it here) His iniquities take such hold upon Him, that He is not able to look up:

they are more in number than the hairs on His head. It is not His being sorry for them, or remission, as deliverance or relief, but the weight of them on Him. Again, He asks judgment on the enemy, and that the remnant may rejoice.

In Psalm 102 we have again one which applies personally to Christ, rises up to the height, that is, of His person, though never separated from the interests of His people. He had been lifted up, as One chosen out of the people, as Messiah, and cast down to the lowest place. His days were like a shadow, but, as ever, the full recognition, as standing in the light, of the glory of Jehovah in relation to Him: “Thou, O Jehovah, shalt endure forever.” Let Him suffer and be cut off as He might, Jehovah and His glory, His remembrance (and that was to be the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God revealed to Moses) should endure. He should arise and have mercy on Zion, and the Spirit of Christ goes on to the time of the remnant in the latter day. The set time was come, for the servants of God (for such these were: see Isa. 65 and 66) took pleasure in her stones. Also, when the Lord built up Zion, He would appear, and His glory among the heathen be established; for He would look down and hear the cry of the poor remnant appointed to death. But what should Christ do? His strength had been weakened in the way, His days had been shortened, yet had He cried to God. “He asked life” of Him. But what a glorious answer to bring out the full person of Christ, in contrast, yet in full recognition and connection in unity of person, with His suffering dying humanity, and with the sparing of those appointed to death, on whom the Lord shall look down on that day! “Of old”—is the glorious answer—“thou hast laid the

foundation of the earth; the heavens are the work of thy hands;" they would perish, but He was the same, His years should have no end. The sufferer was Jehovah, the Creator Himself. And then the remnant of Israel are brought in in millennial blessing. "The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee." He, all glorious as He was, could not do without them; nor could they fail who had waited on such as He, though suffering as listening to His word in the midst of the enemies of His name, and appointed to death.

In Psalm 25 we have Christ entering as the head of the godly remnant into the sorrows and consequences of the sin of Israel which that remnant cannot repudiate, but, on the contrary, are known by the confession of, as we see in Daniel. The wicked say, as in Malachi, Wherein have we offended? It is a weariness to serve, the remnant confess. And note here, Daniel is reserved, and makes his confession amongst the Gentiles, now recognized as beasts after the restoration: shewing that for the full and best intelligence of the mind of God there was no restoration yet really of the people. Loved infallibly of God as His people, they were still in condition Lo-Ammi, not God's people. Hence the post-captivity prophets never call them so, though prophesying that they will be in a future day. Daniel, taking fully their position in prophetic sympathy by the Spirit of Christ, can address God according to His mind, and, confessing their sin, consider Jerusalem as the holy mountain, and all in the full light of God's unchangeable thoughts of love27 (see Dan. 9); and their condition, as driven out, is the curse he speaks of in which they were.

But he speaks also in the certainty of divine love, and of the people as God's people, called by His name.

In Psalm 25, then, Christ speaks as the head of the remnant, so to speak. "O my God, I trust in thee; let me not be ashamed; let not mine enemies triumph over me;" for in the presence of ungodly enemies we ever find Him, never associated with them. And, therefore suffering, He prays that He may not be shut up with them.28 "Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed; let them be ashamed that transgress without cause. Lead me. Remember thy tender mercies. Remember not the sins of my youth [here Israel is personified—Christ entering into their case; for sins of His youth are clearly not His relation to God], but according to thy mercy remember me." He enters into the spirit of that word, God's real and only possible way of dealing with Israel, "that he might have mercy upon all." Christ had come for the truth of God to confirm the promises, but He had been refused of Israel, and now Israel must come in under mercy. This the remnant understand. The meek are those the Lord will accept and guide. The Lord's ways are owned; and so conscious are they of no excuse on Israel's part for their sin, that their forgiveness is based on the name of the Lord, the only sure ground, as it is necessarily perfect in its power. The man that fears the Lord will be taught in this way; and, finally, Israel will be redeemed (so is the desire) out of all his troubles.

I have noticed this psalm, because it shews the spirit in (in which association in grace with the remnant, with those that wait on Jehovah) Christ takes up in spirit, as in the condition of the people, looked at not as bearing the sin Himself, but in the feelings of the remnant about the sin of Israel (right though sorrowful feelings), in

which, I say, He takes up the sins and the cause of this remnant: for if He did not take up the question of their sins, He could not take up their cause, nor His spirit be the inspirer and expresser by the word of right feelings in them. For, have they these feelings, they must feel, own, recognize, and even groan under the sins which have brought them to that low estate, as is true of every saint, whose sorrow under the consciousness of sin is the fruit of the working of the Spirit of Christ, not His relation to God as at man's distance from Him.

I will now turn, therefore, to some other psalms, referred to as expressing the greatest positive anguish in respect of these sins.

In Psalm 38 Israel is evidently viewed in the anguish of the bitter consequences of sin; but then, mark, of sin confessed as the true source of the anguish, unrighteous as was the oppressing enemy. Seeing it as the hand of the Lord, and bowing under it, and hoping in the Lord who would hear, and saying (as Job at the close, when the testimony of Elihu and Jehovah had reached his spirit, and made the suffering spiritually available), he would declare his iniquity, and be sorry for his sin. In a word, he no longer keeps silence, and guile is not now in his heart, so that we recognise the working of the Spirit of Christ in the remnant; and, consequently, here expressed according to the perfect workings of that Spirit.29 All my desire is before thee. The condition is the condition of Israel under the heavy hand of God's chastening—the sentiments are the sentiments of the elect remnant (and so in spirit morally true of any soul in such case), in faith confessing the sin, and sure that God will hear—a certainty expressed for them by the Spirit of Christ, who fully enters into their case, and

produces the sentiments, as having made the atonement which enables Him thus to lead them to God, though as yet they know not its value, and are crying out of the depths. They are the remnant that, in the midst of trial, “follow the thing that good is.” Now that was Christ’s place. He sorrowed in the sorrow of Israel, and suffered the suffering of Israel; but His soul was with God about it, though the effect of His righteous path was to bring trial and forsaking upon Him, and the Lord left Him there till all was complete: but, however groaning deeply in spirit, knowing that the Father heard Him always. As in His previous life, one doubtless of deep thoughts about Israel unknown to man, He knew well, though subject to the path of ordinary duty as of God till God called Him, that He must be about His Father’s business, thus shewing, not merely an unchangeable and eternal relationship as Son in the bosom of the Father, but a known relationship down here (and that in service), according to that which He was as a man born of God, who was His God from His mother’s belly, who made Him hope when He was on His mother’s breasts; and as such He grew in wisdom and stature, in favour with God and man.

Nor can it be doubted that He entered into the sufferings and sense of Israel’s guilt in a more peculiar way, when sealed and anointed with the Holy Ghost, and with power for official service, though I doubt not His heart felt it all along. But He waited in private upon God. Look at the sense of the presence and working of His enemies, and the pressure of the ungodly, the contradiction of sinners, which are invariably spoken of in these psalms. And when was that the case? Was it the blameless carpenter who had grown in favour with God

and man, whatever His inward thoughts (and I doubt not at all they were deep and full of the glory of God, the glory of God in Israel, of God dishonoured in Israel, and deep and earnest love to His people, and His glory in them)? Or was it the anointed servant of Jehovah declaring His righteousness in the great congregation, and following His ways so as to confound the hypocrites, and asserting His glory in the temple itself, when the zeal of His house ate Him up, that found that the reproaches of those that reproached God fell on Him, that felt the desolation of a people sold for their iniquities to the Gentiles, and the enmity of a cruel nation, and whose lovers and friends stood aloof? But in all these psalms this pressure and sense of enemies are found.

In such a Psalm as 38, then, Christ enters into the sorrow of the godly remnant where He had been, but in the confession, and inspiring the confession of their sin, taking guile out of their heart, and as One who could do it, as He who had come into all its bitterness, and had borne all its weight as known in the light of God.

So in Psalm 6 it is not the iniquities, but the grief and prostration of spirit, and that in the presence of these same enemies, which bring the weeping souls of the remnant to the gates of death. But this, according to the perfectness of the Spirit of Christ (in man in effect and previously to reading such a word, often mixed with unbelief and the sorrows likely to produce disheartening and turning to the world); here encouraged by the comforting testimony for their hearts in that day —“Jehovah hath heard.” But it is here because of “all mine enemies,” but the hand of God looked to in it—not chastening on man at a distance, but a cry acceptable,

and heard because the Spirit of Christ is in it, and heard in the judgment of their enemies: which note.

In Psalm 88 we get deeper into this scene of trial, and as we know that Christ was heard in that He feared, that His soul dreaded death and the cup that His Father gave Him to drink, though perfect in obedience, so He expresses this all here. His perfectness before God was seen: that no sin, no evil, no distance had clouded His sense of how terrible separation from God and His wrath was in that which His soul here expresses. He looks at it as under it. He had seen and apprehended it, we learn here, from His youth up. But it was His nearness to God, 30 and sense of what He was, made Him feel what the sorrow and horror was of the contrary. He was Jehovah God of His salvation; His loving-kindness as to man (hence not declared in the grave as to man in the flesh) well known; that is, the relation of God with His people, the godly ones before Him according to His faithful love to Israel; but, on the other hand, the full depth of judgment, sorrow, and wrath, entirely entered into, often anticipated, and now measured and known; for He could measure and know it, and He alone, for He has passed under it.

“Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps. Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves. Thou hast put away mine acquaintance from me; I am shut up, I cannot come forth. Thy fierce wrath goeth over me, thy terrors have cut me off.” This is no escape nor extrication from a state of distance from God. He is afflicted with all God’s waves: He is in the lowest pit. His soul is cast off. God’s fierce wrath went over Him. His terrors cut Him off. That Christ anticipated this we know. That He

anticipated it in all its extent during the time of His service in the intelligent power of the Spirit (doubtless His righteous soul entered into it before) we know. But with what result? To escape it partially, or extricate Himself from it? No. Or was it merely after His service was closed, that He entered into another position? No. Jesus, knowing all things that should come upon Him, steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem. That the hour of the power of Satan's darkness, and the hour of the dreadful wrath of God, were different from all before, from the holy anticipation of it, and from that service during which Satan departed from Him for a season (having first tried to seduce, and now, having been unable to succeed, oppressing Him with terror, sorrow, and death)—all this is quite true.

But the thing weighed by the Spirit of Christ in this psalm is the terror, and the wrath, and the waves in their full extent. Till it was accomplished, He had a baptism to be baptized with; and He was straitened till it was accomplished. That Christ's feelings varied, though the foundation of them all was the same, is undoubted. He could speak of our partaking of His joy, and of the fellowship of His sufferings. He had meat to eat in accomplishing His Father's work, and a cup to drink so bitter, that it, and it alone, He prayed might pass. But it did not, and He had to drink it, but at His Father's hand. He might be in the joy of communion with Him who heard Him always, in the service of love to men, or grieved, infinitely grieved, with the unbelief and contradiction of sinners; in glory, speaking of His decease with the saints in glory, or suffering it under the wrath of God. He could be led in the Spirit to be tempted, and return in the power of the Spirit to cast

out demons, having bound the strong man; and Satan return as the prince of this world, to whom Jesus would not be subject, nor own: and He was perfect in each position, I mean perfect in His feelings relative to that position. So He might enter prophetically into the sorrows of others, and by His prophetic spirit so record His own that the word became His word when He was in them. But in all this His perfectness never changed in His own relation to God, nor His nearness to Him as man, as Son of God down here born of the Virgin.

The time of atonement had another character, and this we know He anticipated in spirit. And here I would remark, that, instead of escaping wrath to which He was relatively obnoxious, whether by position or appointment, we do find Him, when that one cup had to be drunk, seeing that it should pass, though perfectly submissive; but it could not. For nothing else was like that.

For before, the reproaches of them that reproached God fell on Him, and, though He suffered in every way, in the midst of it all He looked constantly to God. Every groan in spirit, as in the case of Lazarus, was heard, and reproaches because of unbelief turned in the same hour into thanking God in spirit, who hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them to babes. The sense of unbelief, even in His disciples, which disabled them from using the power of His name against the demon that tormented the world, which made Him feel, on descending from the momentary vision or rather realization of glory, that that generation was not long to be supported, nor He to be with them, yet turns without an interval into the exercise of love and display of power

against the enemy, while He was with His poor unhappy people—with unhappy man.

But now, when this cup (not reproaches for God, not contradiction from sinners, but wrath from God because man was at a distance, was proved to be so, proved incapable of being won back by anything such as He was) was to be drunk—now, He prays it may pass—that from this hour He may be saved. But no, it could not be. We well know why: our hearts know it well. That cup could not pass; not that one. It was drunk for us; and He drinks it in love to His Father, in obedience, and in accomplishment of His blessed and precious love to us. And our souls adore Him, and Him who gave Him for us —Him who came to do the will which sanctifies and perfects us by one offering. Associated with us in wrath, from which He extricates Himself, and escapes, in part, by prayer, faith, and obedience!—does not the soul revolt from such a thought, and leave it with disgust to the friends or dupes of Satan to entertain or adopt it? But let us turn rather to the Lord.

In this Psalm (88) the Lord enters prophetically into the depth of this; not as in it historically, but as reflecting on it, if I may so speak, so that, in verse 16, He can speak of it as entering into it in spirit at all times. This He has done, no doubt, for every saved soul; but, I do not doubt, also in contemplation of the condition of Israel ruined under the law, the curse of which He fully bore. For, note, it is not a question if Christ enters into this place—He did fully. It is His being associated in it as coming into the world, and escaping part, and extricating Himself from it, and applying His sense of the terror of it to this, that is so evil. Verses 17 and 18 refer, I do not doubt, to that, which however is a minor part here—His

enemies and the removal of His friends. But here it is from the hand of God. In Psalm 38, when looked at in another point of view, they stand aloof. It is the misery there—here the wrath.

In Psalm 35 we have Christ again in spirit entering into the sorrow of the remnant, and claiming judgment on the enemy; but giving the remnant credit, as it were, for being identified with Him and His cause, as the righteous one in spirit, and praying that they may shout for joy that favour His righteous cause.

In Psalm 34. He takes up the song of praise for the faithfulness of the Lord. Not a bone of Him had been broken. His soul makes its boast in the Lord—the humble should hear thereof and be glad: “heard in that he feared;” and, whatever the glory that resulted, as seen in Psalm 21, and yet better known by us, He applies it to the comfort of the tried remnant in that day, so that they may bless the Lord at all times, even in trial and seeming desertion. They were to magnify the Lord with Him, and exalt His name together. He sought the Lord, and He heard Him and delivered Him from all His fears. They looked unto Him and were lightened. So they can say, “This poor man cried, and Jehovah heard him and saved him out of all his troubles.” In verses 21 and 22 the grand conclusion, as to the wicked and the remnant, is drawn.

I have, I think, gone through a sufficient number of psalms,31 and those the most difficult, I believe, to give the principle on which I judge we can understand them and their application, so as to facilitate the interpretation and application of the others, and, in having the true sense, the avoiding of a false one. If the

Lord permit, and give leisure, most joyous and profitable would it be, not only to search into them all, but I would trust for others, to unfold the application of them; but this, as deeply interesting, would require a long time and much application. I have only rapidly given great principles, but most precious, as rendering us more familiar with the spirit and mind of the Lord Jesus, which is everything to us, and makes the Psalms so precious. Exhortations, prophetic history, psalms of praise, all are found flowing from His Spirit, easier in general of application, specially if we have the latter days in view. I will, before closing, just notice Psalm 91 as one used by the enemy we know to Christ, and affording a key to the position of Christ before Jehovah in Israel.

The first verse gives the two names of the trust and blessing of Abraham, looked at as heir of the world. As the Almighty He was made known to Abraham we know (see Ex. 6:3). The Most High was His name of blessing by Melchisedek. He who knew the secret place of this last should enjoy the protection of that other first-mentioned name. Messiah (ver. 2) takes the name of the God of Israel, as the secret place of the Most High, Jehovah—by which name He was known to them. (Ex. 6:3.) Down to verse 8 the consequence is stated. He is, indeed, the Almighty Protector who should shield Him. As thus in Israel, only with His eyes should He see the reward of the wicked. This was His relationship, and the ground of it with the God of Israel. In verse 9 the Spirit in the remnant of Israel takes up the song: “Because thou hast made Jehovah which is my refuge, even the Most High,” whose secret place He had thus known, His dwellings He should give His angels charge over Him;

He should be borne up and trample on the power of evil. In verse 14, the Fear of Israel, Jehovah, speaks: “Because he has set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.” The exaltation of the name of Jehovah, the God of Israel, is constant in the Psalms; and the refusal to look to any but Him, or accept deliverance, or honour, or exaltation but from His hands, and consequently in His time; and this characterizes the faithful remnant in the latter day, though smitten into the place of dragons. But it brings trial and sorrow on them; and into this Christ, therefore, entered in spirit, in its fullest and highest sense—it was His place. And, indeed, when we seek relief elsewhere, we must act on principles below His, for He acts on His own in His own blessed and perfect time; and hence suffering. Satan sought to make the Lord count on this out of the way of obedience, and as putting it to the test to exalt Himself, which would have been really unbelief, saying, “Is the Lord indeed among us?”

This psalm, then, gives the key to the relationship of Christ with Jehovah in Israel. But He awaited therein His perfect pleasure, and suffered for and in spirit with His people, and, blessed be God, not for that nation only.

The division into five books is generally known, and will give a diversity of bearings in this relation, prophetic relation, of the Lord in spirit with the remnant; but I cannot enter into this now, as it would carry me too far, and leads properly to or indeed is rather founded on, the interpretation of the whole book. Peace be with my reader. May he be enabled, indeed, to enter into the spirit of the Psalms as of the Spirit of Christ, and enjoy it as much as my poor and feeble soul has done. And, if

only so, he will know Christ the better, and not lose much pains if he bestow it on them. Though, indeed, it is not pains, but the gift of teaching of the Spirit of God, that makes us know Christ, and understand the Psalms as speaking of Him, as of every other good gift.

We may do well to consider what the New Testament does say as to the sufferings of Christ. Mr. Newton's theory is based on the principle that this kind of sufferings of Christ is not found in the history of the New Testament, but only in the Psalms. But surely a doctrine of such immense importance as the subjection of Christ to the wrath of God previous to the cross, and not vicariously, whether up to John's baptism, as he sometimes states it, or up to His death, as at others—from which He was delivered by His obedience, or by John's baptism, or not at all, till He had endured it all (for all these are taught too in the tract, as well as the direct opposite to the last)—a doctrine, I say, of such importance as Christ's being under wrath would be found in the epistles, in the way of comment on the history. But not a word of any such doctrine is found, but quite the contrary. Sufferings in righteousness from the contradiction of sinners are indeed spoken of, and bearing sin also, but so as to exclude the thought of any other kind. Thus, 1 Peter 3:18, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God [not find His way to a point where God could meet Him], being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." So, chapter 2:21, "For even hereunto were ye called [that is, to do well, suffer for it, and take it patiently]: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his

mouth: who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye are healed. For ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls."

Now here we have the whole course of Christ's sufferings for righteousness' sake and for sins in contrast moreover with the wandering32 condition of Israel. So, 1 Peter 4:1, "For as much then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin." Now here we have Christ's sufferings in the flesh given as a whole when they were not vicarious sin-bearing. And we are called upon to arm ourselves with the same mind, not most certainly with inflictions from God in wrath. So, verses 12-19, of the fierytrial: —"Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial… but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings … If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God… Wherefore, let them that suffer according to the will of God…."

Here, then, we have sufferings by appointment, and that by judgment on the house of God; and true saints suffering as Christians, partaking of Christ's sufferings in it: in which they were to rejoice; so that the nature of such sufferings, as known in and by Christ, is entirely contrary to what the writer has taught concerning them. It was no strange thing, but a thing understood and

known; and the very contrary of the writer's doctrine on the points he treats of. For such sufferings by appointment, and inflictions of God in judgment on the house of God, we, according to him, have nothing to say to. Christ extricated Himself out of, and preserved Himself from, them; whereas I find we are to rejoice in partaking of them with Him.

So in Hebrews 12, after many partial though blessed exhibitions of faith held up to lead us to run with patience, it is added, "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of faith," One who has begun and finished the whole course of faith, in which faith is exercised; so that we have here everything in which He trod the path —ajrchgoVn kaiV teleiwthVn—who has led in and completed the course: "who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners33 against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin." And then taking, as to us, another view of it. "And ye have forgotten the exhortation, which speaketh unto you as unto children. My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him. For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." Now that Christ had no need to be rebuked is certain; but so far as this can have any appHcation to Him, as a trial and exercise of perfectness in circumstances, it is clear it relates to His enduring from the wickedness of men, as we in following Him have to endure—giving another character to those sufferings of Christ than that which

the writer gives— namely, that one in which the godly man has to follow Him in the path of faith.

So, in the doing of God’s will, which was His whole career in life and death, in Hebrews 10, the apostle sees no such thing as inflictions of God on Him as associated with those who had not done it. It was to do God’s will that His body was prepared: but there is no connection with sins in relation to God in wrath but the offering of His body once.

Indeed, Hebrews 7:27, I doubt not, contradicts directly the statement of the writer; for though, as High Priest, Christ exercises His office as made higher than the heavens, yet His qualifications must have existed previously in order to be m that place: holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, made higher than the heavens. He is made (genovmeno") higher than the heavens, but He was constantly separate from sinners, distinguished in position from them.

And Christ perfect through sufferings, as has been observed by others, is connected with His tasting death. So, if He partook, and in as far as He partook of the children’s, not the wicked’s, place—flesh and blood, it was that through death, &c; and it behoved Him in all things to be made like unto His brethren. But how so? “For in that he hath suffered being tempted, he might be able to succour them that are tempted,” “for he was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” It was not extricating Himself out of something He was in, because sinners were there; but entering into all, that the children were in, of trial and difficulty, that He might succour them there. So in the “strong crying and tears in the days of his flesh,” giving thus the whole constant

character to them as such, it was “unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared.” It was not inflictions on the position of the ungodly. It was piety met God’s eye in His cry and reached His ear; and thus, “though he were a son, he learned obedience by the things which he suffered, and being made perfect,” &c. There is no thought of another kind and class of sufferings; yet the sufferings are fully spoken of and considered, and so as to leave no room for, but entirely exclude, the blasphemous doctrine of the author as to the position Christ was in.

Indeed, other considerations shew the antiscriptural nature of his doctrine on this all-vital point. For Christ was to get out of this place of being exposed to what was due to man’s sin and Israel’s disobedience. If He was then answerable for it, how without blood? “For without shedding of blood, there is no remission.” Hence, when Christ did put Himself there, He did shed His blood, and was brought again from the dead according to the power of the blood of the everlasting covenant. But how, when He was under it the first time, as born into it? Was His obedient life sufficient to put away the consequences of sin? That He was never under it, by reason of that life, a Christian understands; but that He redeemed Himself out of it by good living is an unscriptural principle.

Further, remark, the position He was in was for sins of others; so that, if this redemption by living righteously under the law was accomplished and effectual, it was accomplished effectually for them, for it was the position they were in He took. But, indeed, it is hard to say it was; for, according to the author, though He extricated Himself from this position by His own righteousness, He

preserved Himself only from a part of it. For some eighteen years He had to bear as much as God thought proper during that period. Of what avail, then, was His perfect obedience to bring Him out of it, since He suffered under it a good while? or, why so suffer, if He was perfect enough in obedience to merit getting out of it? For it was not for others in effect then, for He alone got out; nor for us, for we were never in it, says the author. Or why was John's baptism for the remission of sins so blessed to Him to get out of this position, if He was getting out of it solely by His own righteousness? It is no answer to say that He chose to abide there with Israel, for it was a different way of getting out; nor, if He was relieving Himself by remission, was He fulfilling righteousness. He falsified His place, for, then, to work effectually for Israel, He ought to have separated Himself from them, as now able to take up their cause; nor can it be said that He chose then to enter into their condition, because getting remission of sins by repentance, as joy and deliverance to His own soul and new ground, was not associating Himself with their sins.

He got from Sinai to Zion then; but how was that taking Sinai-place with them? And it is all confusion moreover to say, that He did what Israel would not, because, without any previous title of righteousness at all, multitudes were baptized by John, confessing their sins; nor was John's ministry to Israel such as the writer presents it, namely, the new economy of grace. It was the representing of an axe at the root of the tree, and Messiah with the fan in His hand about to cleanse His floor, and judge, and execute vengeance against all that did not bear good fruit, gather up the grain into His garner, and burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire; so

that it was not, in any real or true sense in its address to Israel, the introduction into the earth of the new economy of grace. John did, indeed, prophetically point out something more; but this he identified entirely with the death of Christ and the baptizing with the Holy Ghost. “Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world.” “He it is that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.” And, rising above the circumstances in which Jesus placed Himself, he bears testimony to Him, “and I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God.” “I knew him not.”

Again, shewing the entire misapplication in principle of the Psalms, the doctrine of the writer is, that Christ wrought His way by righteousness up to the point of meeting God, learned obedience, proved His perfectness, &c. It was not a need of, nor had He a claim on, mercy. He must make His way by obedience and righteousness; He extricated Himself by His own perfect obedience. Now what is remarkable in the Psalms is, that they constantly appeal to the mercy of God, putting it ever before His righteousness, as it will be with Israel in that day. It is this that distinguishes them: “God prepares their heart;” for they must come in under mercy, according to Romans n. And this is the case in Psalm 6 itself, on which the writer comments, and where it is said, “Save me for thy mercies’ sake.” It sets aside his whole principle of application to Christ.

I will add also a few words on Jeremiah, which is also used to puzzle the minds of the saints. Recalling the fact, that the question is not, if Christ in spirit entered into the sorrows of Israel: I believe, that, as being always near to God, He could. The doctrine taught is that He was under wrath in a way we never can be, and

did not suffer all its consequences but saved Himself from it.

Jeremiah then, in spirit, by the Spirit of Christ, entered in his measure into the sorrows of Israel: not as subject to the wrath, though as a man he was of course; but as having the mind of Christ's love, and His word about them.

"I have set thee," says God, "for a tower and a fortress among my people, that thou mayest know and try their way." (Jer. 6:27.) God had sanctified him for this (chap. 1:5), and the nation would fight against him. (Ver. 19.) This is not sufferings as associated with them, but as separated from them, though divinely interested in them, that is, as a prophet. (Chap. 15:15.) We have his trials under it; and what was the ground it went upon? Just so far as he was there in the Spirit of Christ. "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart. … I sat alone because of thy hand: for thou hast filled me with indignation." Now, here he is filled with it. How? Is it by being naturally exposed and obnoxious to it, and extricating himself out of it? No, but as sanctified to it by God, and called by His name; it is as partaking of the word of God that he suffered, and suffered as far as that was the case, as Christ did. And this was the identification with Israel which made him suffer, according to the grace of God, and in spiritual understanding according to His mind; his heart and spirit being associated with them, according to God's love to them, and feeling their sorrow and their sins; the grace of God identifying itself in the prophet with the people as loved of Him—suffering in their sorrows, and

calling for judgment on them who wilfully opposed the testimony, despised the sorrower, and helped on the evil.

But this was the opposite of suffering the inflictions of God's wrath from him as due to the people. Jeremiah 10:24, 25, shews plainly the impossibility of such an idea of wrath, so due and escaped from: "O Lord, correct me, but with judgment not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing." Now, no such desire could be expressed as to inflictions of God's wrath, to which a man was naturally obnoxious. It looks for correction, but not in anger. No one could look for nor acquiesce in this way in the infliction of the curse of the law. And as to the Lamentations: that Jeremiah and the Lord Jesus entered into the sorrow of the actual wrath and evil that had fallen on Israel, who doubts? But this was not exposure to it from which the prophet preserved himself. His heart entered into it all, as sorrowing over what was loved of God but guilty, and with which he identified himself, being in such a case. Here also the enmity of ungodly Jews is not lost sight of. (Lam. 3:14.) Besides, here also mercy is what is referred to and expected, not wrath due and avoided in a measure, but suffering felt from wrath executed, and looking to mercy out of it, because of God's goodness and His love to the people. He had seen affliction. (See verses, 22, 31, 32, 48, 52 to the end.)

I shall add some of the doctrines taught which may put brethren on their guard against the whole system. It was taught in London that Christ had no human feelings—that the weakness of man was an evil as well as sin, and hence it was not in Christ.

This was taken notice of, and the cases of Christ's loving the young man, and His reference to His mother on the cross, were referred to, as proving that He had those feelings: but the first was declared to be the love of election; and the second the divine nature suggesting what was right; but neither human feeling. The fire consuming the wood upon the altar was expounded, as shewing that God did consume nature, not sin merely as a thing hateful to Himself.

It was assiduously taught in more than one place, that Abel's sacrifice was more abundant than Cain's, and that this, not its nature, was its superiority,34 the word nXeiova being relied on to prove it. Lecturing on Leviticus 1, it was taught that the preciousness of it was, that if our devotedness, though acceptable, was inadequate in quantity, the deficiency was made up by Christ's; and the peculiar preciousness of this was, that it was made up for by a thing of the like kind.

I feel bound to add, that the doctrine of the tract involves really, though more obscurely, the person of the Lord; because, it is stated that, as the Eternal Son, He had an unchangeable relation of favour; but, that as man, not vicariously, He was obnoxious to wrath. Now this divides the person entirely. That He took it vicariously, though in perfect favour Himself, is true; but that He was in favour as Eternal Son, and under wrath Himself as man, not vicariously, subverts the doctrine of the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is near as Eternal Son, and as man at a distance, not as a substitute.

The horrible and frightful doctrine of this tract then is—it makes one shudder to state it—that Christ was

exposed to damnation Himself from the position He had taken; being that of man's distance35 from God, and the curse of a broken law, according to Galatians 3:10—that He extricated Himself from it, and again entered into it for others. The same doctrine is, not only in the notes published by Mr. Harris, but in the paper of the author in the second edition of the "Christian Witness." There Christ is said to be not guilty of actual transgression, nor having original sin, but to be under the third part of the consequences of Adam's guilt, the imputed or reckoned penalty of it as being a man. Nor can there be any doubt what the doctrine is; for it is stated36 that He chose to abide what He had delivered Himself from, by the law being strong for Him; and so the iniquity was laid upon Him, and the wrath came. So that what He was liable to, was the wrath judicially due to sin, for that is what He did abide. Many of the most inconceivable things are in MS. notes, which are in the hands of others, but those I leave to the persons who possess them. But I do say, Woe be to those who pervert the truth and ruin souls by it; or, who are not faithful in their denunciation of it where it is really before them; or, who seek to palliate it so as to enfeeble the security of simple souls against it. It is not for me here to discuss what are the motives, nor what system of doctrine has led to it—of this I may feel pretty well assured. But the business of a faithful man is with the evil itself as the work of Satan, and to warn in the most solemn manner, every saint against those who teach it.

I repeat here, to facilitate the use of the Psalms, three things found in them:—1, The Spirit of Christ entering into the sorrows of the godly remnant of Israel, especially in the latter day; 2, His own grief and sorrow

as in life down here (and oh! what sorrow, reproach, desertion, and treachery, for his tender and perfect spirit!), as well as going through this very place of the remnant in principle; 3, The atonement and sin-bearing, which enabled Him to use effectually for others His nearness to God, so that He could bring their sorrows as occasions of mercy, and give to them right feelings in the sense of sins as their drawing near to God. Of course, this develops itself largely in many ways as to suffering and feeling, while other psalms largely introduce the consequences in blessing—Christ's coming in glory, who He is, and the circumstances and thoughts in the godly among the people connected with these things.

Since the publication of this, an answer to Mr. Harris's remarks on the notes has been published; but, while labouring to get rid of the effect, it fully confirms the blasphemous doctrine taught. I have examined it elsewhere. It has been doubted whether one passage in this tract made sufficiently clear that the atonement was the ground on which alone blessing could come on the remnant. I judged it clear enough, but, if there be any obscurity, I add this to take it away.

10 "He stood in a new position;" second tract (p. 23). "His (p. 22) baptism may be considered the great turning point in the life of the Lord Jesus… His life of service here… It was the introduction into the earth of the new economy of grace… If the soul of Jesus had realized, experimentally realized, and that too under the hand of God, and to a degree that we little think, the fearful condition of Israel; if He had seen it, as it were, girt about by fiery indignation, and threatened by the full devouring power of that mountain of fire, blackness

and tempest, under which they had been abiding." What kind of wrath was this—chastisement or vengeance? that which was supplanted by the new economy of grace at Jesus' baptism—"how joyful to His soul the sense of the introduction of new things!"

11 The principles of the two tracts are precisely the same. I have given the statements of the first tract, as shewing that the whole is a well-ordered system; but this quotation is from the second. The second says also, "the felt weakness of His humanity." I add here this monstrous statement as to Gethsemane from the second: "The danger that had approached so nigh the sleeping disciples, and which Jesus alone had appreciated, was driven away. A gulf unseen by them had yawned around them—but it was gone." What was gone? "His conflict just passed had given them deliverance from the danger that threatened them in Gethsemane… It [Jesus' will] had not wavered. And, therefore, was not Jesus justified in speaking [saying, Sleep on now] as if the end had been perfectly and fully reached? … If therefore, the danger that had just threatened was removed, and if that which He was then doing was to give them sure, unchangeable, peaceful security from all the power of Satan and of sin for evermore, why should He not regard them as those who had passed through their last dangerous storm, and who had virtually reached the haven. 'Sleep on and take your rest.'" What has their last dangerous storm to do with atonement? They could aid here, it is said? "'Sleep on and take your rest.' They are words not of upbraiding, but of comfort, or if anything like sorrow mingles with them, it is in the thought that the occasion was lost of aiding in a conflict such as that in Gethsemane had been… They might have

prayed with Him in Gethsemane." So His seeking for sympathy and prayer from His disciples (tract 1, p. 18). He never sought their prayers. "Tarry ye here while I go and pray yonder." He certainly never sought their aid in a conflict where He found "the terrors of the Almighty set in array against him."

12 The statements of the writer are inconsistent and absurd enough. It was by the appointment of God and measured by that, and a positive infliction of God; yet, being from His birth obnoxious to it, He escaped a great deal by faith, prayer, and obedience. But it was His privilege and glory to have a great deal, and be chief in it. We, however, are never under Israel's curse, which this was. He extricated Himself out of this privilege by His perfect obedience, elsewhere by accepting John's message by a wise heart; and though measured by the appointment of God, and a dealing of the hand of God, yet there were "continual interferences of God in His behalf" to deliver Him from them. How truly those who depart from the faith, and exercise their own mind in order to have a great appearance of knowledge, know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm! Nothing more strikes me, than the total absence of all divine teaching in all these statements. That total absence in the writer's teaching I have been fully convinced of now for several years.

13 The reckless upsetting of truth as to the person of Christ by other teachers of this school, may be guessed by a lecture on John 15, where it was taught, that there were things in Christ which needed to be removed, and that, therefore, the Father used the pruning knife as to Him. Happily the hearers were guarded enough of God for it to strike and alarm them: the lecturer was spoken

to, and it was of course explained away. The way in which the doctrine of the tracts used to be taught at Plymouth (for it is nothing new), was that Christ was a constituted sinner subject to death, and worked His way up to life. But not being in writing, it was hard, as regards others, to verify it. See Introduction, as to the "Christian Witness," however.

14 The reader may see page 8 of the "Remarks," pages 12, 16, &c.

15 This, after all, is confusion, for, as a nation, the iniquity of Israel is declared to be purged by the chastisement which she has received at the hand of the Lord, "double for all her sins."

16 So page 23: "The difference between Sinai the mountain of blackness, and Zion the mountain of light, and grace and blessing, the place of the Church of the firstborn, might be used to illustrate the difference between the two dispensational positions held by the Lord Jesus in the midst of Israel previous to His baptism, and that which He dispensationally and ministerially took when anointed by the Holy Ghost." That Christ was born under the law, and, being sinless under it, was not obnoxious to wrath, and that He took its curse on the tree: that scripture teaches. But that He was obnoxious to wrath under it by identification with Israel, and the relation He was in to God thereby, is unknown to scripture. That relation is vengeance, certain inevitable vengeance: as many as are of its works, as mere men, are under its curse, which is vengeance. Christ, exempt from that, took it on Himself. That there were curses written in the law which were come on the people, as recited by Daniel, is unquestionable, and that Christ's

soul entered into the sorrow of them. But that is not the question 5 and, to reduce the curse of a broken law to the level of this, and cite Galatians 3:10 as referring to it, only shews that the bearing of the apostle's teaching, the light which the rent veil has cast on the true extent of the curse of the broken law, does not enter at all into the mind of the writer. What is Sinai's mountain of blackness in the eye of the apostle, if it be not condemnation and death, even in spite of the grace in government introduced by the mediation of Moses? For it is the law after, and in spite of this, which is spoken of in 2 Corinthians 3. As if to heap inconsistency on inconsistency, though it is useless to point all of them out, especially when far more solemn things are in question, the place of the Church of the firstborn, used, in page 23, to illustrate Christ's place after John's baptism and the anointing which followed, is declared, in page 31, not to have been His place during His ministry. "Man was yet in his distance from God. There was as yet no glorified humanity on the right hand of the throne of God," &c. "The mighty power of God [in resurrection] not yet put forth j the Spirit, not yet become the unfolder and seal [of things to come], &c.; and Jesus, as man, was associated with this place of distance, in which man in the flesh was, and He had, through obedience, to find His way," &c. And note here, this goes on to the cross. Where, then, is all the grand difference on John's baptism, illustrated by a change from Sinai to the place of the Church of the firstborn? Is it not pitiable to see souls bewildered and misled by such things, under the pretence of deep knowledge? In page 16 of the first tract it is said, that Christ's place, during the time of His ministry is granted to us, and that we never come under the curse of Israel, which was His

first place; in page 31 of the second—during His ministry on earth, He came into a place dispensationally lower than that into which He has now brought His Church. If we are not in the first condition, and not in the second, it is hard to tell how Christ is an example. If it be said: As man (here, page 31, referred to the place He took in ministry after all), He is associated with man at a distance from God, which is said not to be our place at all. On the last paragraph I have referred to, I shall comment on its own account. But how, in this confusion, is Christ lost to those under this instruction? Thus at sea, with Jesus not really known, they are a prey to any thoughts imposed upon them. But my object is not to shew the confusion, and leave souls in it to fly in despair they know not where, but to shew the very distinct, positive, deadly error insisted on in the midst of this confusion into which the soul, lost in it, falls, having no true knowledge of Christ to keep them.

17 See Remarks, pages 14, 22, and many other passages. This sixth Psalm, as I shall shew, entirely contradicts the writer's theory, for its appeal is "for thy mercies' sake."

18 Not extricated Himself out of it.

19 The same thing is found in Psalm 26 very distinctly.

20 Not as the only reason, but He so ordered it.

21 Page 12, Second Tract.

22 Page 31, Second Tract.

23 Very recently, a brother under the teaching of this system stated that Christ had to be judged, after His death, like another man. This alarmed a brother who heard it, and he spoke of it. The circumstance struck me

much, because I had myself heard Mr. N. teaching this from Hebrews 9 at least five years ago, or more, at a private teaching meeting at which I happened, as just arrived at the house where it was held, to be present. I spoke about it, on going out, to Mr. Harris, who was present, with astonishment,* but said nothing about it at the meeting, as Mr. Newton never could bear anything to be called in question. I supposed it was some rash view or statement; and as I did not (though unsatisfied by his teaching, and already miserable at the state of things) suspect any design or system of doctrine, I went no farther than to speak of it anxiously to Mr. Harris. There is daily more of this extraordinary teaching coming out since attention has been drawn to it, but I advert no farther to the particulars here. The ground of this was, that, as it was appointed unto men once to die and after that the judgment, Christ being a man, these things were for Him too. The same ground was stated in the recent case referred to.

24 It is in this the sufferings and the atonement meet] He suffered onwards up to death, then He also made atonement. Some of the remnant may suffer on to death; but then, like Christ, they will obtain a better resurrection.

25 Hence a claim in the psalm founded on mercy, entirely incompatible with the writer’s doctrine as to Christ.

26 I believe Jesus’s soul passed into peace, that He might give up His own Spirit—which no one took from Him—to God His Father. He delivered it up, as it is stated in John 19:30; He commended it into His Father’s hands. (Luke 23:46.) His soul, while living, had gone

morally through all the full depth of the—to us—unfathomable suffering of the atoning work, and gave up His spirit Himself to God His Father. But it is evident that the full answer to His prayer was in resurrection. “He asked life of thee, and thou gavest him long life, even length of days for ever and ever. His glory is great in thy salvation.” Full glory, indeed, at God’s right hand, and the redemption of the Church; and, indeed, power over all flesh, and headship over all things, are the only full answer to His work as to result; but we speak here of life. So Psalm 16— “Thou wilt shew me the path of life; in thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand pleasures for evermore.”

27 Daniel, as among the Gentiles, or any answer of God to him, never goes beyond the point of closure, and introduction of the full blessing: never enters on it prophetically; for Israel was among the Gentiles, and he represents the remnant amongst them, but predicts the close of this and the bringing-in all prophesied of, sealing it, but there ends.

28 So see Psalm 28:2.

29 Historically there may be imperfection in the remnant, as there is in us, but these feelings are expressed in the word, according to the perfectness of the spirit which inspires them, and this is the blessedness of having Christ’s Spirit entering into them, furnishing withal the expression to them when He does inspire them, and for His sake accepted of God, though mixed and imperfect in us, according to that perfectness.

30 His soul entering in a perfectly righteous feeling into what the condemnation of the, law was, and its curse,

and the terror of God's majesty in respect of it, is entirely different from, and indeed the very opposite to, God's inflictions of wrath on Him, according to the position of distance in which He was from God. Piety and suffering vengeance are surely distinct things; but deep as these sufferings of Christ were, they were the depth of piety: "He was heard in that he feared."

31 The reader may turn to Psalm 70, where he will again find this desire that the godly in Israel may not be stumbled at Jesus's sufferings, desiring that they may ever have praise in their mouth; and to Psalm 71, where we evidently find circumstances in the condition of the writer alluded to, "old and grey-headed:" but still used by the Spirit of Christ prophetically; not to speak of Christ merely personally, but of His taking up the condition of the remnant in Israel, feeble in the old age, as it were, of their history, in the presence of their enemies, whose hope God had always been, marking the faith of the believing remnant, and who should shew His righteousness to that generation—His power to every one that was to come. And so it shall be according to the spirit and title of Christ in that day.

32 It is well to remark, that the word in Psalm 119, "I have gone astray like a sheep that is lost," which Mr. N. applies to Christ, is the same that is used in Isaiah 53:6 —"All we, like sheep, have gone astray;" and in a moral way it is ever used of moral error—indeed, is always used in the sense of evil, either moral, or, in a few passages, of misery. This application of Psalm 119 to Christ by Mr. N., well known to all who have heard him, and confirmed in his own tract on the sufferings of Christ (note to p. 16), is to be remarked by Christians. It is a part of that utter and revolting disrespect for Christ

which characterizes all their teaching; because it is not only verse 176 in which going astray is attributed to him who speaks, but in verse 67:—“Before I was afflicted, I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.” What does “go astray” mean here? And here I shall mention some circumstances connected with this word. In the notes which are so abundantly circulated, one, amongst others, was furnished to persons in communion where all this evil is not received, in which sins of ignorance were directly in terms attributed to Christ; and here I shall give a brief statement of what these notes are. They are not the communication of casual notes taken by anybody, for which it would be hard to render any one responsible: they are taken by a clever and assiduous disciple of Mr. N.’s, a very good and correct note-taker, copied out fair, and given to other disciples to be copied and circulated; some being paid for doing it. Now I will not here attribute to Mr. N. the ascribing sins of ignorance to Christ in the lecture referred to—I shall just now say why. But this is certain, that his most efficient and ardent disciples so take it, copy it, read, recommend, and circulate it. These notes having been read by another whose faith was not yet ruined by this teaching—this person was naturally shocked at the blasphemous doctrines contained in them, and the thing became known and spoken of at Plymouth; and a friend of Mr. N.’s, one, though his disciple, too much taught of old in the faith to bear this, got the notes and had them interlined so as that the words “sins of ignorance “should be disconnected from Christ, and taken as a comparison of what in others was like what was spoken of as being in Him. But how must feeling about Christ have been lost and destroyed by the teaching, that the disciples of Mr. N. should not have been at once stopped

by finding sins attributed to Christ! Nor is it surprising; for, though I do not pretend to attribute to Mr. N. what some of his friends say cannot be, though others have diligently circulated as his, it is quite certain that Mr. N.'s teaching does so. Psalm 119 he applies directly to Christ. See page 15 of his tract, where, verse 9, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way," is applied to Him; and the psalm in general, note to page 16.

But, as to attributing sins of ignorance to Christ, which Mr. N.'s poor deluded victims are circulating as such blessed teaching, this is certain, that there is nothing more in it than what Mr. N. does teach. He attributes Psalm 119 to Christ; explaining away, indeed, one of the passages which says, that he who speaks went astray. But verse 67, which also states that before he was afflicted he went astray, employs the word which is used all through Leviticus and Numbers for sinning or sins through ignorance.

And I beg also the reader to remark the comparison he makes to justify the application of this and other psalms to Christ. "If I were to send a faithful servant heavily burdened to scale the sides of an icy mountain, and were to see his foot slide, should I marvel? But what, if I should see him stumble or slip in some easy path, because of carelessness, &c. how different my judgment of his conduct!" Did the faithful servant heavily burdened (and whom that represents I can leave the reader to judge of)—did His foot slide on the icy mountain? What does Mr. N. mean about Christ in saying this? He would not marvel at His foot sliding! Is indignation to be restrained at such language? Woe be

to the man that hears, encourages, or sanctions such blasphemies.

Either Mr. N. is deliberately seeking to degrade and dishonour Christ, or he is a blind instrument of Satan in doing it.

33 We have seen this principle all through in examining the Psalms.

34 This piece of false criticism I do not comment on; but I do warn the reader, who may be imposed on by an appearance of exact learning, that the Greek criticisms of the writer are oftener wrong than right. This is the case with some found in the papers which have given occasion to these remarks.

35 See page 31, of “Remarks,” by Mr. N.

36 Only, as we have seen it said, there to be vicariously incurred; but this does not affect, unless in the way of confirmation, the evidence of what He had “incurred.”

A Plain Statement Of The Doctrine On The Sufferings Of Our Blessed Lord

Propounded In Some Recent Tracts,

In Extracts Taken From The Author’s Writings.

Introduction

I had purposed giving a brief recapitulation of the statements and doctrines propounded in Ebrington Street, that every one might see clearly what they are by extracts drawn from printed documents; having already discussed the merits of the system at some length in a tract. Since entertaining the thought of giving this brief summary, Mr. Newton has answered Mr. Harris’s tract, so that we have the fullest opportunity of ascertaining what his views are. The author, as is his known custom, after making statements which subvert the faith, seeks by modifying, by making statements which are entirely different appear to be the same, or substituting one for the other, smothering up what was said by expatiating on recognized truths, to confound the minds of the simple, and escape the discrediting detection of the doctrines he has taught. Happier would it be to let it all alone; but it is due to souls that it should be known. I leave to others to express their feeling as to the hopeless dishonesty of the author. To one who knows the facts, this last tract does carry it to an extent inconceivable were it not there in print. I shall merely state the doctrines of the author clearly, and state one or two facts connected with his attempt to evade the effect of it.

There can be no doubt that this last tract is intended to confirm the substance of the doctrine already taught.

The author says, “I increasingly feel, after writing the present tract, that the doctrine intended to be conveyed will bear, as a whole, most rigid examination by the word of God.”

A Plain Statement, &c.

The author’s doctrine is that Christ came by birth into man’s relative condition as a sinner, and into Israel’s under a broken law, making part thus of an accursed people; that He was exposed to, and threatened by, obnoxious to, the consequences of this position—not vicariously, but as being one of them, but preserved Himself in a measure from those consequences, and extricated Himself out of that condition, by His life under the law, which was strong to Him though weak to us, and subsequently underwent what was due to it vicariously on the cross; that is, that Christ was subject, not vicariously but as associated with us, to damnation and wrath, but freed Himself from it by keeping the law; that what He suffered when in this position during the first thirty years of His life was the infliction of God upon His soul; not entering into the condition of man in spirit, though this might be true too; and that He got out of this condition, this relation to God, at John’s baptism (though in this he contradicts himself).

And here I press on the reader always to bear in mind that Christ is stated to have been exposed or obnoxious to this from His birth—not perhaps to have endured it all, which shews that it is not His spirit entering into it, but exposed and obnoxious to it; that it is distinguished as inflictions by God, even when felt, from exercises of

His own soul; that these inflictions were under law, not under love. Let him remark also that sinless penalties, though freely spoken of to confound the reader, have nothing to say to the matter. Christ did not extricate Himself from them; hunger and thirst and weariness were His portion all through; nor is that the meaning of the curse of the law. Saint and sinner are alike subject to them. Jesus might have felt their true character as, though more deeply than, the saints will; but this is not an infliction from God on His soul. All this is an attempt to throw dust in the eyes.

I shall now state the doctrines from Mr. N.'s own writings, and first from No. 6 of the second37edition of the "Christian Witness," vol. 2, in, 113. "In order to form a scriptural judgment on these things, it is needful to consider attentively the state in which we, as the descendants of Adam, are placed before God. There are three particulars which mark our condition as sinners before Him: first, original, or vicarious guilt, imputed (or reckoned) to us on account of the transgression of our first parent,38 of which Romans 5 treats; secondly, Original sin, or indwelling corruption; and thirdly, Actual transgression. "The distinction between imputed transgression, and indwelling corruption is often neglected. It may be thus illustrated. The children of an exile in Siberia, though innocent of rebellion themselves, might yet be involved in all the penalties of their parent and be punished for and on account of him. Even so the one transgression of Adam in the garden exposes all his posterity to be treated by God as transgressors on account of him. The penalty of death would still have impended over them, even though they could have been born pure as angels in themselves." "The Lord Jesus was

as free from indwelling sin as from actual transgression: yet nevertheless He was a member, so to speak, of the exiled family, and was therefore born subject to their penalties. But He was made under the law; and, being essentially holy, He was able to fulfil the law, and so to rise above the39 penalties to which He had become subject on account of Adam's guilt. He was able to enter into life, by keeping the commandments; and the very same law, which had been death to every other, was unto Him life, even as it is written, 'If there could have been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.' On account of our sinful flesh, to us the law was weak, but strong unto Him, because He had no sinful flesh, but was essentially the holy One. He learned obedience in the midst of suffering, and was proved to be the righteous One, who might have entered into life by Himself alone, but who preferred to lay down His life that He might take it again, that so, through the knowledge of Him, many might be justified. All that the soul of a saint recognizes as true in the writings of Mr. Irving, respecting Christ being in 'that condition of being and region of existence which is proper to a sinner,' will be found to be altogether comprised in the fact of His being born under the curse of the exiled family,40 vicariously incurred. But He rose out of this region through the power of His own inherent holiness; and therefore never would have come into 'that experience into [read, of] God's action which is proper for a sinner,' unless He had chosen to abide it for the sake of others. And when He had chosen this, then it pleased the Lord to bruise Him."

Nor is there any ambiguity as to the extent of this.

“Now it is fully allowed, as has been stated in the preface, that He was born into our ‘condition of being’ in the sense of being born out of paradise. And also that He exposed Himself to the danger of receiving all the punishment which followed upon the imputation of Adam’s offence: but, though exposed to it, He rose above it all, because He was by birth the holy One, made under the law; who did not, as we, find it weak through the flesh, but effectually ordained unto life, because His flesh was holy. ‘This do and thou shalt live,’ was to Him a word of delivering power. So far, therefore, from His having been punished on account of the condition of being into which He had come, He would not have been punished at all, unless He had freely chosen whilst standing as the ‘justified one,’ to offer atonement to the Father, and to become the substitute and sin-bearer of all who believe in His name.” (Page 126.)

It is impossible anything can be clearer than this. Exposed to judgment as inheriting the whole guilt of Adam, He by keeping the law becomes the justified One, and then offers Himself as a substitute. Had He not been made under the law, He must have been condemned as every child of Adam. Nor could He from the beginning have been so offered as the guiltless Lamb, for He was under guilt and exposed to judgment. It was only when by keeping the law He was the “justified one” that He could offer atonement to the Father.

The author now seeks to confound all this in the mind of the reader, by speaking of Christ’s suffering, entering into these sorrows, appropriating the sins, and His and our privilege in suffering. I shall proceed to quote passages from his two late tracts, shewing, with all this garbling and changing for others the statements made,

that the doctrine is still contained therein: what that is, we have plainly seen from the extracts from the "Christian Witness." I do not quote from the notes Mr. Harris published; though they are worth perusing, because, after the corrections of Mr. Newton in his last, they afford the clearest evidence of what is really taught. Those corrections leave the substance unchanged. Many of the grosser forms which are corrected are to a reflecting mind comparatively immaterial. It will be seen, moreover, that to read "the Lamb made perfect through suffering," or "the One made perfect through suffering," makes no difference whatever; because it is stated that He was made perfect through suffering in order to be a sacrifice;41 and that is the whole point of the objection. This Mr. N. leaves as it is. And this is quite consistent with the doctrine in the "Christian Witness," since there He was exposed by birth to the judgment due to Adam's guilt, and rose by keeping the law out of that region and then offered Himself—and so in the "Remarks," page 31, "He had to find His way to a point where God would meet Him." The "Remarks" justify the form, "had to be found," as the sum of the notes, whatever its force. For there (p. 3), it is said, "The appointment of God required that He should be proved," "and He must… be proved a righteous servant." But to proceed.

And first to shew that the two tracts confirm the doctrine that Jesus was by birth associated with Israel in its condition before God, that is, the curse of a broken law; not that He took the sin vicariously, but that He was exposed by birth to the consequences of it.

"The fact of Jesus being by birth an Israelite would have been alone sufficient to link Him in direct association

with that people in the estimate of God." ("Observations," page 23.) His baptism by John "was the acknowledgment of the condition of His people and of His association with them in that condition." (Page 24.) As to birth (see also "Remarks," pp. 4, 5. So "Observations," p. 20, 21), "It must not be thought that the fact of Israel's being under wrath and the curse at the time when the Lord Jesus was born amongst them is of trivial importance in the present controversy." "And if it can be shewn (as it has been shewn) … that Jesus became by birth one of that family."

And now, as to the extent of this: though we ought not to have to shew it, for Christians ought to know what is due to a broken law, it will be found to embrace man's position, as such. "He was born, not in paradise, but into the midst of the fallen family of man." "But He had not merely become connected with the sorrows and sufferings of man. There was a part of the human family, &c. This was Israel." "They had fallen from that ground of professed obedience, and like Adam, had earned, by their disobedience, the fearful inflictions of God's broken law, for it had been said, 'Cursed is he that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law, to do them.'" Galatians 3:10.42 ("Remarks," pp. 4, 5.)

"And observe ["Remarks," p. 21], what full identification with Israel's position, and Israel's sin, is implied in this act of the Lord Jesus, in submitting to baptism by the hand of John; not indeed identification in the same sense as that in which He is made one with His elect people, for that is identification in substitution and in union—identification therefore that cannot fail. But although not that identification, how beautiful the grace, and how

perfect the development of character shewn in owning, though innocent and spotless, the shame and guilt of others, as if it were His own."

Now, fair as these words are, to elude the doctrine taught, it must be remembered that it was not associating Himself with the people in grace in that baptism: He was by birth in this condition. And it must be remembered that He is said to have emerged out of this Sinai condition at John's baptism. (See "Remarks," p. 23. So page 25.)

"If He was made to realize the distance into which man had wandered out of the presence of God, and if He realized also the distance of Israel… I believe it to have been chiefly, if not exclusively before His baptism. Observe, I am speaking of the exercises of His heart from God. That His own soul did not cease to enter into the condition of things around Him; and that the poignancy of His sorrow increased rather than lessened, in proportion as the blind wilfulness of Israel in rejecting Him became more and more developed, I most assuredly believe. But I am not now speaking of the spontaneous actings of His soul, but of the manner in which He was directly exercised43 by God." ("Remarks," p. 25.) The doctrine that Christ was born, subject to condemnation, according to Galatians 3:10, is confirmed by page 15, "Observations." "It is said by the apostle, 'as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse, for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them.' Law worketh wrath; for where no law is, there is no transgression. Israel had formally taken their stand before God, under a covenant of law, and therefore the very first moment disobedience was found amongst

them, they were brought ‘under curse.’44 The fire of Sinai began instantly to burn against them, and therefore, even if every deserved infliction had been withheld from that moment to the time when Jesus was born, yet still He would have been one of a nation that was exposed45 to all the terrors of Sinai. They were all set in array against Israel.”

Again, page 29. “As an Israelite, He was under that holy covenant which was made at Sinai… He was standing in closest association with those whose dispensational relation to God was marked by the darkness and lightnings and voices of Sinai —a sight so terrible that even Moses said, ‘I exceedingly fear and quake.’ Sinai marked the relation of God to Israel when Jesus came— and the worship of the golden calf (though that would not fully represent the ripened evil) may be taken as marking their relation to God. And since God, in exercising the souls of His servants, must exercise them according to truth —and the application of truth by God varies according to the nature of the dispensation under which His servants live—we might be very sure, even if the evidence of scripture were less direct than it is, that the Lord Jesus was caused to appreciate to the full the relation in which Israel (and46 Himself because of Israel) was standing before God. We may hear of Sinai, or think of Sinai, but Jesus realized it, as the power of an actual subsisting relation betwixt His people and God. He had to live in the midst of Israel, at a time when God’s only declared relation to it was that of Sinai. Years passed over His head thus. And unless we say that through the whole of that period He remained unexercised before God, according to the circumstances around Him, we shall not find it difficult to say what the

nature of His experiences must have been. Every experience in which He realized the condition either of man or Israel must have caused Him to long for that hour when the appointed messenger should go forth to prepare His way before Him."47 But (p. 31) "The moment that Jesus was anointed with the Holy Ghost as a dove, God stood in a new relation to Israel. The dove belongs not to Sinai."

How far this goes in the author's mind may be seen (p. 11) when, speaking of John Baptist's ministry, he says, "Indeed unless grace be the same as law, and destruction the same as salvation, the infinite importance of that era cannot be denied."

So that Christ's position, previous to that era, is beyond all question, though it was not His own sin that brought Him there.

And it was not, as we have seen, substitution.

"So different," we read ("Remarks," p. 11), "is the place of a substitute for sinners, from the place of suffering amongst sinners." And see quotation given from "Remarks," page 21, and, "Observations," page 33, "It was indeed a different character of suffering."

"And what was the world, what more especially was Israel to Him, but as the oven's heat? God's holy hand in stern controversy with transgressing flesh was there. The Lord Jesus was not unconscious of the presence of that hand, nor of the nature of that48 controversy. He felt it the more, because He was the holy One. It was not the presence of God as in paradise … It was His holiness present49 in a fallen world, in the midst of sinful flesh and of a transgressing people. (Page 33.)

“How should we feel [“Observations,” p. 35], imperfect as our sensibilities are, if God, according to the power of His own holiness, were to press upon the apprehension of our souls a truthful sense of the present and future50 condition of ruined man? And what relations were there, either of Israel or of man, that Jesus was not caused to estimate thus?”

So, “I cannot well conceive how anyone should suppose that He whose distinctive allotment was ‘to learn,’ should be a man without being caused to feel what man was, or an Israelite without being taught to feel what Israel had become before God.” (“Observations,” p. 56.51)

And that this was what He was exposed to in relation to God, not merely what He was made to learn as of an understanding heart, is clear, not only from passages already quoted, but from others where He is said to have been so exposed, but to have escaped a part, or otherwise got out of it or through it.

Thus “Remarks,” page 8: “Was then the Lord Jesus subjected during His life to all the inflictions that were due to man as man, and to Israel as Israel? I answer, No! To be obnoxious, that is, exposed to certain things, is a different thing from actually enduring them. His faith, His prayer, His obedience, all contributed to preserve Him from many things to which He was by His relative position exposed, and by which He was threatened.” “And since He was not until the cross punished substitutionally, why was it that He was chastened at all? How could it be but because He was made experimentally to prove the reality of that condition into which others,52 but more especially Israel, had sunk

themselves, by their disobedience to God's holy law, a condition out of which He was able to extricate Himself, and from which He proved that He could extricate Himself by His own perfect obedience?" (Page 12.)

And we have always the same reason for the infliction. "But observe I do not say that Jesus was personally accursed, because He formed part of a people on whom curses were resting." (Page 13.) And curses here were no partial thing; "and secondly, when we remember that Jesus had no feeble or imperfect estimate of the place in which Israel stood; that He indeed truly saw it standing with all the terrors of that mountain arrayed against it, where there were fire and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words, and that His soul appreciated the meaning of these things; and lastly (which is indeed the thing more than any else distinctive of those sufferings of Jesus of which I speak), that God pressed these things on the apprehensions of His soul according to His own power and holiness, and caused Him to feel as a part of that which was exposed to the judgments of His heavy hand." ("Remarks," p. 14.)

Again, "Remarks," page 31: "Man was yet in his distance from God." "And Jesus, as man, was associated with this place of distance in which man in the flesh was, and He had through obedience to find His way to that point where God could meet Him as having finished His appointed work—glorify Him and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, and that point was death—death on the cross—death under the wrath of God."53 I shall now quote some passages less consecutively, collaterally bearing upon the subject. First shewing what the place is Christ so took according to the author. "The being so united to another as to be

necessarily involved in the consequences of that other's actings suggests an idea which is very near akin to that of vicariousness. But a distinction is to be made. We were in Adam when he sinned; we are accounted before God as sinners because he sinned," &c. ("Observations," pp. 46, 47.)

"The poor defiled sinner, who has nothing in which to stand before the holiness of God—but has resting on Him all the condemnation which He inherits from Adam.

"Neither do we say that Adam disobeyed in our stead, although by his one act of disobedience we are all constituted sinners in the sight of God." I give these extracts as shewing the view the author takes of the position into which Christ entered by birth, as distinguished from vicariously. The following is given as characterizing the days of Christ's manhood, as affording "certain and extended knowledge respecting all the years of the Lord's sojourn here." ("Observations," p. 40.) "Therefore I will look unto the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation, my God will hear me. Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise, when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me. Passages like this supply an abundance of principles which must have, more or less, characterized all the days of the manhood of the Lord Jesus." So page 39, Psalm 119 is quoted as affording it also; in which we read, "before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy law."

Speaking ("Observations," p. 9) of the analogy of a Son, who had banished Himself, it is said, "we should regard Him not only as one of the banished, but as one suffering also under the penalties which the law of His

Father had imposed on the banished ones, with whom He had thus placed Himself in association." "He was exposed for example, because of His relation to Adam, to that sentence of death, that had been pronounced on the whole family of man; personally He evinced His title to freedom from it, and His title to life by keeping that law of which it had been said, This do, and thou shalt live. And if He was exposed to the doom of man," &c. (Page 9.) Now all this is given as explaining His being by birth exposed to sinless penalties.

The very extraordinary statements of the author, and how truly, in another tract, their source has been judged of, as it has been indeed by others, and what state of mind one led by this system may be in, will appear from another quotation, "Observations," page 26: "Moreover, the exercises of soul which His elect, in their unconverted state, ought to have,54 and which they would have, if it were possible for them to know and feel everything rightly according to God—such exercises, yet without sin, Jesus had." This very clearly brings out the position he places the blessed One in.

And here is the source in his prophetic system, "At an hour not yet come, one portion of His elect will have to pass through a furnace of affliction, the like to which has never been, since there was a nation upon earth. They will live when every jot and tittle of the desolation described in Jeremiah, and the prophets will, in full accomplishment, have fallen upon Israel. They will live when the last grasp of Satan, through his great instrument, Antichrist, shall have laid hold upon Israel. They will live even through the day of the Lord's visitation—will pass through its fires, and be refined like silver in the furnace. Here is a peculiar experience

indeed of some of the elect of God. Into this also Jesus entered. Hence His bitter cries in the Lamentations. The remnant of Israel will not taste of a cup of sorrow of which He will not have drunk; but the difference is this — they will feel partially, incompletely, wrongly, not unfrequently self-righteously, in the midst of the desolations, which their eyes cannot but recognize and their hearts cannot but feel. They will see the ruin, but their hearts will not be in communion with the thoughts of God, whereas Jesus beheld it with and according to God." All this is connected with the system55 of the author of the unconverted state of the saved remnant of the Jews in the latter-day, and many of the Psalms being expressions of their self-righteous feelings. Hence I doubt not the way he has associated Christ with unconverted sinful Israel, not with the saints and excellent of the earth, in whom is all His delight, and to whom the Psalms will supply the blessed expression of thought and feeling.

"Observations," page 81. The writer says of the law, "No blessings were ever proposed to Israel save in the form of a testament, and a testament implies death, even the death of a testator. God could not even have given the law to a sinful people, much less have given blessings consequent upon its being kept (had such a thing been possible), except on the ground of the precious efficacy of the blood of Jesus." So that the law not in the heart, but written and engraven on stones, as a ministration of condemnation and death, and which entered that the offence might abound, as given under the old covenant, gendering to bondage, was founded necessarily on the blood of the new.

I shall now quote a passage which, while confirming the statements as to Christ being relatively by birth at man's distance from God, shews that all attempt to attract the affections of the saint by the notion of Christ's soul entering into our sorrow, and our fellowship in His sufferings by the Spirit, is really the merest deceit.

"His servants ["Observations," p. 35], such for example as St. Paul, may follow their Master in drinking in their more feeble measure of the cup of others' woe; they may suffer much with others, and for the sake of others; they may also have exercises of spirit; but none excepting Jesus ever had His soul exercised in the same manner (for the dispensation was one of law), nor with the same intensity—the intensity of truth. The Lord Jesus was as much alone, in His living estimate under God's hand of the circumstances of human life here, as in enduring wrath upon the cross. He who, before He was made flesh, had known all the heights of uncreated and eternal glory; was also, when here, made to estimate according to the sensibilities of that nature, which He had taken, the (to us) inconceivable56 distance of humanity from God. And when thus exercised, though personally holy and beloved, He was made to feel that His association with them, thus standing in the fearfulness of their distance from God, was a real thing, and that it was so regarded by God. His was no mere pretended imaginary association."

Hence all such language as that, "To know the fellowship of His sufferings, as well as the power of His resurrection, was the desire of one who was wise in Christ, wise in seeking the true riches—one who has told us to imitate him as he imitated Christ" (p. 62)—such words, I say, are merely seeking to delude, because he

has told us (pp. 35, 36) that this very Paul, to whom he alludes, could not possibly have anything to say to the sufferings of which he is treating in these tracts, any more than he could to those of the cross. So also he says (note to p. 58), “though our experiences are very unlike to His” (Christ’s). And hence, also, all that is said (p. 57), “when believers now are exercised in spirit, when they are caused to feel—to feel perhaps keenly the present ruin of the Church, &c, are such exercises esteemed contrary to blessing—are they inconsistent with the closest abiding in love?” All this is merely seeking to delude, because there is, according to pages 35, 36, no analogy whatever in these sufferings. It is added, “So far from being tokens of divine displeasure towards the individual, they may be, and in the case of Jesus always were, tokens of highest honour.” This goes farther than seeking to delude; it is, after what is said in pages 35, 36, positive deceit. And what is the curse of the law, and man’s distance from God, and that under law, in the intensity of truth, and that as exposed to it by birth—if it be not divine displeasure, as to the exercise of the soul? It is, moreover, a singular remark in a tract, vindicating the application of Psalm 6 to Christ, which says, Neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure, affirming that Christ did pass through this.

Mark the note too to page 57, where it is sought to be said, that it is not “implied that such exercises, whether in our Lord or in ourselves [we have seen that we cannot be in those in which Christ was], had anything to do with atoning for sin”— then it would not be mysticism merely, but direct heresy and sin. “Without shedding of blood there is no remission.” Now if Christ came under “man’s doom,” under the reckoned or imputed guilt of

Adam, though not a sinner, how did He get out of it? By keeping the law. He rose out of that region, that is, through these very sufferings, “for the dispensation [p. 36] was one of law, in which He exposed Himself to the danger of receiving all the punishment which followed upon the imputation of Adam’s offence. But though exposed to it, yet He rose above it all, because He was by birth the holy One made under the law.” “‘This do and thou shall live,’ was unto Him a word of delivering power.” “He would not have been punished at all, unless He had freely chosen, whilst standing as the ‘justified one,’ to offer atonement to the Father.” So that the imputation of sin was got rid of by another means than by shedding of blood. Where the imputation was to be altered nothing. Christ’s being exposed to it (as we well know by the cross) could not set aside God’s eternal principles.

The whole system of doctrine is, according to the author, heresy and sin, and in my judgment of a worse character than that he attaches to it.

It is needless to quote many other passages which confirm the doctrine taught, or which speak of Christ’s sufferings, to attract the heart, in a way denied to be true, by the writer himself. There is another passage I would quote, as remarkable collaterally: “The anointing of the Spirit would never have come on Him at Jordan unless He had been fore-ordained, and certainly known as the victim to be slain on Calvary.” (Page 32.) Now that all was fore-ordained, and known and linked together in the purposes of God, is most sure. But that Christ could not have been anointed without blood is most false and heretical: the writer has not said, could not; what he means by “would not,” I must leave the reader to judge.

One other class of reasoning may be noticed—suffering from association with others. (“Observations,” p. 23.) “Did not Caleb and Joshua suffer under die infliction that had fallen upon Israel, when,” &c. What has that to do with man’s distance from God and exposure to the whole of the punishment of Adam’s guilt? the sufferings in which Christ is as much alone as on the cross? All saints suffer sorrows consequent on common failure. This is not wradi on their souls. Did Caleb and Joshua suffer that? All this is merely misleading.

Next a few words as to the shelter sought under others’ names, and the diversion attempted to be made by discrediting others.

Dr. Hawker’s doctrine has no analogy or connection with that of Mr. N. The statement is that, Christ having become the surety and representative of His people, He* suffered in this world the sorrows and infirmities incident to their state, its calamities, and participated in every groan He heard; and even through life as well as in death was a man of sorrows. No one questions diat this was the case, but it has nothing whatever to do with the doctrine of Mr. Newton; as he admits, having contrasted what Dr. Hawker speaks of with what he means (p. 21, of “Remarks”), while he declares that he does not agree with the doctrine of Dr. Hawker. Dr. Hawker states that all His life the blessed Jesus was a man of sorrows; and who is there that does not believe it? Mr. N. tell us that He was by birth liable to the condemnation man was in. With this Dr. Hawker’s statement has nothing to do. The use of His name is merely an attempt to cover, by one that all respect, what it has no connection with at all.

Nor has Witsius. He, like Hawker, holds Christ's sufferings through His life to be a part of His vicarious work; but he merely speaks of "vicissitudes of human misery," and has no such thought as that of Mr. N. at all. Nor is there a word that leads to the idea of what Mr. N. says he must have found in the Psalms—direct inflictions from God. He speaks of "misery which has followed upon sin, and to which the sinner man is obnoxious all His life."

I will next say some few words on the subject of the Rock.

The reference ("Observations," page 34) to the Reply to the "Wreck and the Rock" is a dishonest statement. The language used in the Reply is not an argument to shew that Peter was not individually gathered to safety on that Rock.

That paragraph begins thus: "And here let me state a point of greater importance; namely, that what the Lord meant by building His Church upon the rock is a totally different thing from the representation made in this tract." It is a discussion on the import of Christ's words in Matthew 16:18. The reader will judge how far Mr. Newton's statements are honest from the following facts. Mr. Newton declares that, the Hagar vessel in which the Jews were being wrecked, John Baptist was on the sand, and Peter gathered by Christ on the Rock. The author of the Reply says, If you mean really safety, or being saved by having an interest in Christ, Abel, Abraham, and John Baptist, were all on the Rock as well as Peter himself. If you speak of being really gathered to safety, how can you speak of John Baptist being on the sand? If you speak of the ground of safety as to actual

accomplishment then you must bring in the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ: without which safety cannot be, or you make incarnation sufficient to save without blood-shedding and resurrection. Hence Christ says, I will build my Church. If you mean in God's mind, every saved one in all times was on the Rock as much as Peter. And in truth a more absurd, and unsound, contradictory statement could not well be than the Wreck and the Rock. For, as a system of argument, it put John Baptist expressly and in fact all the saints previously, out of safety and off the Rock of salvation. In reasoning on this, the author of the Reply says, that when in Matthew 16:18 the Lord speaks of building on the rock, He speaks of a thing future, I will build, and not of what He was then doing. And as to the point in question he says, "But, first of all, the disciples of Jesus were not gathered on the Rock in His lifetime in the sense of Matthew 16." Because to begin the building actually He must be dead and risen, the firstborn of the dead, the Head of the body of the Church.

I add that this expression, rock-man, given as if of inspired authority, is without sense. Because, in the author's meaning of it, there is nothing peculiar to Peter at all, for all were rock-men one as another; for they were all gathered in safety to Him on the rock. Whereas it is evident that there is something special as to Peter in the passage.

The author's argument in the Reply is, that when Mr. N. speaks of Christ's presence being a new ground of safety, he is in error. Because if he speaks of real fundamental safety, it was not new ground, but the only one in all ages. If he speaks of actual accomplishment, then he makes incarnation, and not death and

resurrection, the ground of safety, which is false doctrine; and that Christ therefore, in Matthew 16:13, speaks in the future, I will build. To say therefore that it is attempted to shew that Peter was not individually gathered to safety on that rock is a dishonest statement. Nobody says Peter was not placed on that rock as to personal safety, but so was John Baptist too, whom Mr. N. places on the sand. And so was Abel and Abraham and all else. They were rock-men in that sense. I proceed to the attacks in page 35.

“I read that union with the Son of God57 is a thing which the scripture knows nothing of.” Mr. N. would lead the reader to suppose, that the person he alludes to and others deny the well-known doctrine of union with the Lord Jesus Christ. What is the fact? The term union with the Son of God, had been used in a general sense by all, and innocently enough, because the term was taken as a title of the person of Christ. Mr. N., however, declared that the saints in glory would be omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, declaring it in terms. It then became necessary to distinguish and shew that union with the person of the Son of God was not a scriptural expression58—necessary, because Mr. N. used it in the sense of partaking in the attributes of Godhead. And in this way taken, as a divine title, scripture does know nothing of union with the person of the Son of God.

As to the seed of Abraham, it is very certain to me that this title of God’s children does not amount to the full statement of a church position, because it does not express unity in one body by the Holy Ghost come down from heaven.

Of the next statement, what shall I say? I am ashamed really to allude to it. There are some things almost too bad to talk of.

Mr. N. had taught for a length of time, that the Old Testament saints had not life at all. He subsequently charged me with it in print, at which I was amazed, as I had brought him out of it, and we had had a long discussion just before, before thirteen people, as to what he had taught. However, many knew he had taught this, as Lord Congleton, Sir A. Campbell, Mr. Deck, and others, and he at last confessed it was himself who had taught it, but said he had never charged me with it, which, as it was in print, was no use either.59 To the rest of the reasoning no answer is required. “In Him as the Son of Abraham” is, I apprehend, as new as many others of the author’s expressions. I prefer the truth of scripture and the language of scripture. The honesty of declaiming on two modes of union may be judged of by the following quotation from a tract of the author’s. (Second Letter, p.54.) “Observe, I do not say there was the same character of union as afterwards in resurrection. But I hold that it would be an equal error, to say that there was no union previous to the resurrection, and to say that it existed after the same sort as in resurrection.” What “forms of salvation” mean, I really do not know. Of modes of union I am not aware that I have said anything.

I have adverted, thus far, to the attempt to direct attention from the views of the author, by attacking others. I leave it without further comment, because my object here is to place Mr. N.’s doctrine plainly before the saints by extracts from his own elaborate writings, so that all may judge of it.

I append the following as another form in which the doctrine was stated in public teaching, affording further distinct evidence of what it was.

Christ was in the place of man's distance from God, and had to work His way home to God, and we begin where He finished. I would just refer too to page 13 of "Observations," and ask, if that was meant to depict Israel's position as Christ identified Himself with it, what was originally due to it, remembering that all through his statements, Mr. N. declares that he was under law, not under our discipline in love?

Another expression, noticed elsewhere, used to express this doctrine was, that Christ as coming into the world was a constituted sinner, and worked His way up to life. This is important as being the application of Romans 5:19 to Christ according to the doctrine of the article in the "Christian Witness:" the word "constituted" being habitually, and not wrongly, employed for "made," there used. See page 14, last paragraph.

37 It is not in the first.

38 Hence Christ, though personally able to rise out of it, was really an heir of wrath naturally as man. For this, as we shall see, was of the three particulars that which applied to Him. Mr. N. has sought to distinguish wrath from wrath. But what is due to man's distance from God, by imputation of Adam's guilt, and the curse of a broken law, or, as we shall see, the future condition of lost man, if it be not wrath in the full sense?

39 It is clear enough here that it is not "sinless penalties," such as hunger and the sweat of His brow, which are in question. He never rose above them. Note here sinless penalties is an expression conveniently

borrowed to confuse people. All penalties are sinless. The expression has been used to express that Christ partook of the sorrows incident to human nature in consequence of the Fall, but had not the taint of sin which came by it. But this leaves untouched the question: was He under the guilt imputed to Adam's children and exposed by His birth amongst them to the penalties due to it, without taking them vicariously, according to Romans 5? Mr. N. says He was, and got out of it by keeping the law. Note the word "But He was made under the law." That is, without this there was no hope for Him to be delivered from the guilt He was under. And if we remember that He was the true God, think what it was to be born liable to the penalty of Adam's guilt; not to bear it in grace!

40 It is equally clear here that Christ was born under the curse due to man, but did not endure it because He rose out of it by keeping the law. Mr. N. in both the subsequent tracts says that "vicariously" is wrong here; and declares that the condition of suffering spoken of was not vicarious j as indeed is evident, for He did not rise out of vicarious suffering, save in quite another sense, but underwent it. Note, He was born under the curse, not took it on Him therefore vicariously. Afterwards He abode it for others. This shews plainly what He was under by birth. For, what did He abide?

41 The passage in Hebrews 2 refers to Christ being perfect on high by passing through suffering unto death, not being made perfect in order to be a sacrifice.

42 We see here what the colour given to it by the term, sinless penalties, is worth. It was a condition expressed by Galatians 3:10, into which Jesus came: and it will be

remembered that in Galatians 3 this is expressly referred to what was borne on the cross.

43 It will be remarked here that, to whatever extent these inflictions from God came upon Him, they are positively distinguished from His own soul entering into the condition of things. So that all that may be said attractively about that has nothing to say to the doctrine we are discussing. When confounded with it, or presented as what is meant, it is but an attempt to deceive.

44 Let the reader remember, from Galatians 3, what curse.

45 It must be remembered, that this is not vicarious, nor His soul entering into it. The exceeding and outrageous folly of putting Christ in such an identification with Israel is seen, page 18, where it is shewn they were declared not My people, and page 20, where the passage, “Therefore they would not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts,” &c, is quoted as part of this curse and affliction, adding, “are these words obscure?” But think of a system that puts Christ under that!

46 Mark this, for it is not vicarious nor entering into sorrow. Christ’s own relation to God (because of Israel), before He took sin on Him vicariously, was that of being under the curse of a broken law, and guilty of ripened evil. Note all the italics in the quotations are the author’s. All Christians believe that Christ was made under the law; but they believe, that as the sinless spotless Son of God, He was perfectly acceptable under it, and took its curse only vicariously, and as a substitute for others; though He suffered many outward

consequences in sorrow of Israel's condition, and entered in spirit, into their afflictions.

47 Note here too, that John's baptism and message were for the relief of Christ Himself from the relation in which He stood to God. It is the more out of the way, because the message goes before the face of the Lord to prepare His way. And, note, sinless penalties have nothing to say here: John's message did not relieve Christ from them.

48 Remember, that, though not because of His personal sin, it was His own relation to God, according to the author.

49 It must not be supposed that this means that Christ was God's holiness present in a fallen world. Christ was subject to the presence of God's hand in judgment as one of the fallen world, though not Himself fallen. See next quotation, page 35.

50 This can leave no mistake as to where Christ is said to have been; for every Christian knows that the future condition of ruined man is damnation. And remember that is Christ's relation to God; and not on the cross. Nor is there any confusion of mind with the cross, nor with the soul of Christ entering into the sense of it. The passage is introduced (p. 34) by the following statements: "But we should form a very inadequate conception of the living experiences of the Lord Jesus, if, in addition to the sufferings which flowed spontaneously, as it were from the condition of man and of Israel, we did not recognize a more close and searching dealing of God with His servant." What is the good of talking about sinless penalties? Is hell a sinless penalty? Well, so it is, perhaps; but is that what people mean? And, remember,

Christ was obnoxious, exposed, to this, at any rate up to John's baptism.

51 The entire forgetfulness of all scripture truth by the author, is remarkable here, for he adds, "And did not Jesus appreciate and long after this instruction? Did He shrink from it, because He who increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow? No! He longed for it as hid treasure." That is, He longed to know what damnation was, and what man was in his distance from God, and what Israel was, as under the curse of a broken law, according to Galatians 3:10, and this as His own relation to God. We know, that when He had to suffer it for others, He desired, both at the time, and before, and He prayed, that the cup might pass. And it is singular, that all the author's remarks are founded on his comment on a psalm, which prays that He may not so suffer. But once on such ground intellectually, without any guidance from God, and there is no end to the folly.

52 Note here that it is not the sorrows of Israel under divine government, for this does not apply to "others." Nor sinless penalties, nor entering into sorrows, nor appropriating them, for "extricating" Himself from them admits of no such application.

53 This passage is plain enough. There was no point where God could meet Jesus as a man, till He had worked His way up to the wrath of God which was due to man. This is neither entering into sorrows nor appropriation of anything. Jesus as man was there. To reconcile this with His deliverance from Sinai to Zion, and change of relationship with God, by John's baptism, is not for me to undertake. In either case the doctrine is substantially the same. Jesus was, not as a substitute but

as a man and as an Israelite, under that wrath which was measured, if infinite can be said to be measured, in His sufferings in death on the cross; and He worked His way up out of it—“rose out of that region”— “emerged” out of it—“extricated” Himself from it. Only here no room is left for His afterwards undergoing it vicariously; for He suffered death as part of the obedience necessary to get at the point of meeting. Save this very important point, it is the doctrine of the author in his article in the “Christian Witness,” in the second edition.

54 Note, an unconverted man in such a case must know himself to be lost. This clearly confirms the statement of what the doctrine is. Did Jesus know and feel this?

55 I have not the least doubt (from circumstances I have heard lately of the authenticity of which I have not the smallest question) that Mr. Newton received his prophetic system by direct inspiration from Satan, analogous to the Irvingite delusion.

56 Mark that this was His own relation by birth. It is not the cross.

57 There are no references which enable me to verify the statements. This point is treated in page 69 of the Examination of the Thoughts on the Apocalypse, where it is stated that union with the person of the Son of God is an unscriptural statement, on the ground here referred to, and union with Christ, as the head of the body, is fully spoken of.

58 All this may be seen in the “Answer to the second Letter,” &c.

59 The doctrine of the author on the communication of the divine life is fundamentally unsound now, as it was

subversive of fundamental truth to deny life to the Old Testament saints. But all this has been already discussed. He confounds Deity with communicated life, and hence expressly in terms attributes omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience to the saints. See “Answer to the Second Letter to the Brethren and Sisters,” &c. As to having life from the Son of man, I can find nothing about it in anything I have written on the subject. The writer gives no references.

Notice Of The Statement And Acknowledgment Of Error Circulated By Mr. Newton

Mr. Newton having addressed “A Statement and Acknowledgment” respecting certain doctrinal errors to very many brethren (so, indeed, as to have reached, directly or indirectly, almost all), I desire to make some remarks upon it. I do not doubt many are quite able to judge of its value. Still, as there are very many ignorant of the real point and bearing of the error, and on whom the idea of an acknowledgment would act so as to set their mind at ease, and that from a disposition (which every one would hail) to receive in grace the confession of error or fault, I feel it right, for the sake of the beloved church of God, to weigh its value. I am aware that I shall be considered relentless; but I think of the interest of the church of God in it, and even of Mr. Newton’s own. If the Spirit of God be really working in his mind, the pointing out the deficiency of this will not hinder his going farther; and as the evil is confessedly very great, and specially as it is sought to be excused by the fact, that many brethren did not find it out, it is worth while, for the sake of simple and unsuspecting minds, to enquire seriously if it is really abandoned, and to what extent.

I proceed then at once to say (for I am satisfied that the plainest way is the most charitable here), that it is impossible that anything can be more unsatisfactory in every way; and I shall now say why. Mr. Newton has taught that Christ was, from the position He was in by birth as a man and an Israelite, under the curse of the

exiled family, not vicariously on the cross, but in His own relation to God; that He was under the doom of death, under the curse of the law, and had to work His way up to a point where God could meet Him; that He had the experiences which an unconverted elect man, if he felt rightly, would have. These are not deductions, but the statements of Mr. Newton himself.

Besides this the “Christian Witness” furnished the evidence that this view of Christ’s position has been originally based on an application of Romans 5, which subjected Christ to the imputation of Adam’s guilt. This last, which gave so horrible a character to the doctrine itself as to shock everybody, is withdrawn, but the doctrine of the tracts is not withdrawn at all. The imputation of Adam’s guilt was not the point taught in the tracts —was not presented as the basis of the doctrine taught in them. They were an attempt to maintain all that Mr. Newton taught as to Christ, the basis formerly laid in the “Christian Witness” being withdrawn.

The “Statement and Acknowledgment” now gives up professedly what was already given up silently in the tracts, the doctrine itself, as to what Christ was, being now based in the “Statement” on another and a new ground: but it does not give up the doctrine itself at all, but quite the contrary; it maintains it distinctly on a new ground, more subtle and less apparently offensive in its character, and most carefully limits the confession of error to what was made the ground of the doctrine in the “Christian Witness.” Pages 3, 4, Mr. N. says, “It was this that first introduced Romans 5 into the controversy, as shewing that death of the body resulted from that which one man had done;60 and if due care had been

taken to discriminate between the mode in which the consequences of Adam's transgression reached mankind through federal headship, and the manner in which the Lord Jesus took certain of these consequences upon Himself, but not through federal headship—the error which I now have to confess would have been avoided. If I had watched this, I should have carefully avoided referring that part of Romans 5 to the Lord Jesus, and I should have stated, that His connection with these consequences was in virtue of His being made of a woman, and thus having brought Himself into association with a race on whom these penalties were resting." Now, here, Christ's connection with the consequences before attributed to the imputation of Adam's guilt is reaffirmed, and based on another ground. It is true, "certain consequences" leaves room enough to bring in anything, or leave out anything; but lower down we have "in virtue of such association He partook of these consequences, even all the consequences in which He could share unconnected with personal sin." Now, this is not retracting the doctrine as to the position Christ was in, but affirming it anew, and putting it on a new ground.

Further on Mr. N. says. "I have been led, as I have above stated, to see that I was distinctly in error, in holding that the Lord Jesus came by birth under any imputation of Adam's guilt, or the consequences of such imputation…And I hereby withdraw all statements of mine, whether in print, or in any other form, in which this error, or any of its fruits,61 may be found." Now, mark here, that positive and necessary subjection to death is one of the consequences directly lying on Christ, according to the "Statement and

Acknowledgment;" a necessity not arising, according to Mr. N., from one's own sin (for that, indeed, would make Christ a sinner), but solely from Adam's. So that Christ was born under the consequences of Adam's sin, as to the penalties pronounced by God, not merely the circumstances He was in, but the penalties judicially pronounced on man because of sin, though it was not by imputation of His guilt but by association of nature. In a word, though the tracts are withdrawn from circulation for reconsideration, the doctrine contained in them is carefully maintained.

And here I beg, too, to draw attention to another point. Mr. Newton grounds his statement and new views on the distinction between the imputation of Adam's guilt and association with his penal condition by birth (a wonderfully narrow distinction, more fitted to save the credit of the doctrine than the glory of the person of the blessed Jesus): but there is another ground on which Christ's liability to condemnation—the horrible and frightful doctrine of His being Himself a condemned and lost man— exists in the tracts (not one atom of which is recalled), and that is, that He was born an Israelite under the curse of a broken law. This is the doctrine of the tracts. Now this, so far from being recalled, is really still maintained by confining retractations as to the law to the point of imputation of Adam's guilt. It is said, page 6, "Nor yet that He had by keeping the law, or by anything else, to deliver Himself from such62 imputation or from its consequences." Now Mr. Newton declares in the tracts, that Christ was born under the curse of the broken law, according to Galatians 3, and that He found His way to a point where God could meet Him; all this remaining in its full force unretracted.

In a word, I repeat, the “Christian Witness” is given up; the tracts are maintained, unless so far as the doctrine of the imputation of Adam’s guilt may be found in them. The whole of the statements, so justly frightful to every one that honours the Lord Jesus Christ, remain untouched and unrecalled, though the ground laid for them in the “Christian Witness “in the application of Romans 5 is acknowledged to be error. And it is very well known that, when these things were first brought before Mr. N. a few weeks before the “Statement and Acknowledgment” appeared, he took this very ground: and that further retractations were proposed to him and refused. And here, I feel bound to add, that the way Christ is spoken of is to me really as frightful as the doctrine. Think of referring to the blessed Lord in such language as that, “if a faithful servant heavily burthened be set to walk up an ice mountain, if he slip I do not marvel,” and suchlike statements!

The only advance made is, that the tracts are withdrawn from circulation to reconsider. To reconsider what? Whether Christ was by birth in such association with Israel as to be under the curse of a broken law? All this, let it be noted, is connected, not with Romans 5, but with the interpretation of the Psalms and the Lamentations, and with the whole system of Mr. N.’s interpretation. But if Christ’s honour be the thing in question, if that is what we have at heart, would not that be the very first point, and easily settled? But as to all this there is total silence. The doctrine is removed from an evidently assailable ground to a more abstruse one, as to Christ’s connection with Adam, and the worst part of the evil is by the “Statement” endeavoured to be made more free from possibility of attack, while the

second ground of it—connection with Israel, so as to be under the curse of the broken law not vicariously—is carefully reserved. It is not a confession of the evil of the doctrine in the tracts, but a direct maintaining of it. In the meanwhile, the tracts are withdrawn from circulation, which, while the doctrine is not, does more harm than good, because the plain evidences of the abominable evil are concealed from sight, and it seems to be unjust to appeal to them. But let the reader remember that the doctrine is maintained as to Christ's position, for in setting it on a new ground it is maintained, and as regards His connection with Israel all remains unretracted, as is all as to the effect of John's baptism in putting Jesus for the first time under grace.

And now mark the facts. Mr. N. for ten or twelve long years has been teaching, in his own circle, doctrines which, it is now confessed, subvert the person and work of the Lord Jesus altogether—make Him a guilty lost man. This has been spread farther by private communications. He has spread it, through the ignorance of the clergy of the establishment, in India: his defence is, that brethren themselves have propagated it; though I affirm them to have never thought of such a thing, save his own immediate disciples and helps.

The horrible dishonour done to Christ is brought to the notice of unsuspecting brethren, and is denounced; his own friends declare that they can have nothing more to say to such teaching, and acknowledgment becomes necessary. Now if Christ had been thought of, what would have been the effect if the soul had been touched with the sense of the subversion of His person and glory

and work, and the harm done to souls? Even if some difficulties remained, would not there have been (is there not always wrhen sin is judged by the person convinced of it?) the strongest sense of it, the greatest horror of it, the self-condemning reprobation of it, in the person who has been thus dishonouring Christ?

If Mr. N. had said, “Well, whatever I can understand of the Psalms, the devil has been deceiving me, and I have been deceiving others: what can I do enough to condemn and undo what I have been doing?” Would it have been a translating of the dishonour to safer ground —a statement that he had guarded and limited the teaching on it? How guarded and limited the teaching that Christ was a lost and condemned man by birth; that he was right in this, and right in that: only he overstepped the mark in seeking to do the wisest thing to meet another error twelve years ago! Would it be the practical claim to be still the person to make it clear, and to state the right extent to which, and guards under which, it is to be adopted? Is all this safely guarded reserve of die error humiliating or anything like it? He says he does not wish to extenuate the error by it. What does he wish, then? He desires this to be considered as an expression of deep and unfeigned grief and sorrow, especially by those who may have been grieved or injured. What is to be considered so? The placing the worst part of the error on new grounds as to one half, so as to re-establish it; and reserving the other, which was quite as bad?

I cannot see the deep sorrow in die tract. I write on christian grounds—for the sake of the church of God. The present statement is calculated to do more injury than the tracts withdrawn from circulation. They were

too plain, though less so in terms than the “Christian Witness.” If Christ was under the doom of death from His birth, by association with man as made of woman, coming under the penalty of God’s judgment against sin not vicariously—under all its consequences, in which He could share unconnected with personal sin—and this is the doctrine of the “Statement”—the question of the imputation of Adam’s guilt is only a nice distinction. If Christ was under the curse of the law, He could not be made a curse for others.

And now one word as to what is said as to the deductions I have drawn. Were I seeking myself, I might be content with the statement of their being legitimate; but I am not. Mr. N., and any of those who have erred, will find that, when the Spirit of God is to be seen working in them, I shall be the first to hail it with unfeigned joy. But I am perfectly satisfied that all this work is a work of Satan. This doctrine has proved it. That it is so is my hope as to the personal integrity of many; nay, it is now confessed even by themselves; for what is the preaching of error so gross and horrible, without finding it out for some ten years, but a delusion of Satan? Now that work I resist openly and everywhere for Christ and the brethren’s sake, and shall expose, heeding very little the comments made, and looking for the Lord’s approbation, and not man’s. I say, then, that what was charged on Mr. N. was no deduction, legitimate or not. He stated, that the Lord Jesus was by birth, as a man and an Israelite, under the curse of the broken law; that He was under the imputation of Adam’s guilt; that He was under the doom of death; that He had to work His own way up to life; that He was exposed to the danger of all the punishment due to Adam’s guilt,

and other like statements. Now there was no need of deductions from this. The meaning of the statements themselves is plain to all who know what guilt and a curse mean. It is not a doctrine deductions from which can be guarded against. The things complained of are the statements themselves. There is no guarding them. Nor are they retracted save one.

And here I beg leave to remark, that there are others who have to answer to the church of God as to these errors. Messrs. —— and —— and ——63 have all been fully involved in this doctrine, and committed themselves to it. Nor is a sudden casting it all over on Mr. N. any satisfaction to others, or likely to produce confidence in them. I am aware that Mr.—— has stated, at East Coker, that he repudiated it all; but I know that, but few days before it was detected and exposed, he had declared that for eight years back the doctrine had been fully canvassed in Ebrington Street, and that all were thoroughly made up in it. Mr.—— has declared, not that Adam's guilt was imputed indeed, but that the doctrine in general was necessarily true from the constitution of Christ's nature. I do not pretend to give the words, nor those in which Mr. Walker stated his judgment; but it is very well known that they held and taught these views (possibly without knowing what they were about), and that they approved and admired the tracts. They must explain themselves. If they do not, it is clear they are seeking something else than the glory of the Lord Jesus. Even if Mr. N. be the originator of the doctrine, it will not do to make him a scape-goat for their errors. With this I have no kind of sympathy. If Mr. N. were restored, it would be the joy of my heart. They have set up for teachers and guarders of sound doctrine, for holding

“the truth.” They have boasted of uniformity of doctrine and of its importance, gladly driving away others who would not submit to their yoke. Is this the doctrine, uniformity in which was essential?

Do they hold the doctrine in the tracts or not? Is it wholly and definitely rejected by them? Are the souls they have been aiding to seduce into error delivered from it? Have they been humbled enough to call in question their path in other things and doctrines, while under this awful delusion of Satan? Their disciples were brought to believe and recommend as precious truth, that Christ was guilty of sins of ignorance in these very terms. Mr. N.’s constant teaching on the Psalms confirmed this. Are they restored? And are those who have been their leaders during this time, still professing to guide them?64 Further, the way in which the matter has been more than once put to me and others obliges me to refer to another point. I have been asked, “Well, now, if there has been a retractation of the errors, cannot there be a re-association?” Now I have opposed it as a work of Satan. It has been found to be so. I look for this being set aside. My answer then has been, I look for a work of God’s Spirit, where this work of evil has been. It seems to me that when persons claiming to have been not only teachers but guardians of the truth have been teaching really that Christ was a lost man, and discover that they have been thus deluded for years, they would be in the dust, and, instead of pretending to teach or guide, hide themselves as dishonourers of the Lord, supposing even it were done ignorantly. It would lead them to distrust themselves. Were this so, it would go farther, and grace would surely soon settle all. Were the Holy Ghost beginning to work even, one would hope,

surely, that He would go farther; yea, be certain of it. If He be working, it will do so—and I should with joy forget all, as I hope to be forgiven myself by Him who remembereth no more our sins and iniquities. Every part of the sorrow would be more than effaced: but the church and poor of the flock cannot be sacrificed meanwhile to the power of error and evil.

But a mere retractation of error cannot set aside the charges of untruth, which have forced so many to disown these persons before the heresy came out. Intercourse with those who have been recently delivered, and who, by various questions, brought my mind back to this part of the subject, many of the details of which I had forgotten, has recalled me to these details; and I can only say, not speaking now of Mr. Newton, but of Messrs. —— ——, ——, and ——, that I have never met with such wretched trickery, or such bold untruth, as in the printed documents they have circulated. I dare say Satan’s delusion may be the cause; and that there may be various qualities in the evil, as misled and misleading, so that once delivered I might hail some as Christians as much as ever. But there the evil is: the proof that they were delivered from the delusion would be the confession of the sin.

I would further remark, that, as to this, there has been no question of investigation at all. It was proposed to them to meet brethren at the last London meeting, but they did not come; and, further, even as regards Mr. Newton, the alleged investigation did not apply to the great body of the charges. They had never been made when the investigation took place. The great bulk of them were made long after the alleged investigation at Plymouth; since then no investigation or pretence of one

has taken place, save that many, forced to examine for themselves, have found out the truth of the matter. No retractation of subsequently discovered error can set aside this ground of action, which subsisted before and is unremoved. Men who set up to be teachers have been guilty of acts, which have led some to say they could not sit down in the same room with them. That remains where it was.

As to what Mr. ——has added, it does not call for a reply. If it does anything, it is to destroy the little hope we might have had of a commencement of breaking down. Supposing unsuspecting brethren circulated the tract, having very likely read it in its original form, free from error, or taking it on trust; how does that excuse the deliberate insisting on it when objected to, as the fact was as to Mr. N. three years since? If the error escaped the clergy of Madras, what then? As to Dublin, Mr. N. stated at Langport,65 that it was a letter of Mr. ——'s. Mr. ——is perfectly certain he never wrote any such letter, and had never read the tract. As to the work at Dublin, I was occupied in every detail of it. I remember the paper (in which the doctrines were not) serving me, as giving the extracts from Mr. Irving's works, as did Mr. ——'s book; but I never heard of any reference to the article in the Dublin controversy. That some one may have written a letter as to the original article in the "Christian Witness" is possible: but what then? What paper was found useful then, supposing it were so? The paper in which not one particle of the statements objected to is found. Because this was found useful, the tract was then published, and the errors added. What has the Dublin recommendation to do with the matter? The only remark suggested by Mr. ——'s note is, that it

is a very poor sign of humiliation, seeking to prove that others did not detect the error, and that others were as bad, because they were deceived by it, if that were true, which it is not.

There is one point of doctrine which I would desire to advert to in explanation. “Mortal” is a word used in two senses—being capable of dying, and being actually subject to death as a necessity. Now of course Christ was capable of dying, or He could not die. But the doctrine taught here is that He was mortal as we are. Now Mr. N. insists on everything being God and man unitedly. Now, if He gave Himself, this can be understood; but how, if it was the penal condition to which He was subjected necessarily as man made of a woman?

Note too here, in passing, that there is, in many minds, the same confusion as to ‘immortal.’ God only has immortality essentially; but other beings are in the condition of immortality actually. I do not discuss the doctrine further here, as it is not my object.

60 Every one owns that it resulted from what one man had done; but Mr. N.’s interpretation of Romans 5 is entirely wrong and unfounded. He reads, “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin,” as being by one man’s sin exclusively that death entered into the world, which is quite another thing; and the passage continues, “and so death passed upon all men for that all have sinned.”

61 The italics are Mr. Newton’s.

62 The imputation of Adam’s guilt, with which in fact the law had nothing to do.

63 It is rumoured that there is another retractation to be published by them, they not being satisfied with Mr. N.'s. If there be, my present remark is justified, and remains, of course, harmless to any.

64 Are evils of this character to be made mere matters of human regard and a personal question?

65 I have been also told Mr. —— did. It is possible, as both were present

Observations On “A Statement From Christians In Ebrington Street.”

I trust, that, in—to me at any rate—the remarkable work which the Lord is now doing in the deliverance of valued brethren from the recognized snare of the enemy into the blessed liberty of grace and truth, I may be enabled to wait as patiently on that grace, through unfeigned faith in it, as I have felt it right to be active when I was satisfied the power of the enemy was at work. Where our blessed God deigns graciously to be at work, we may surely trust Him to bring it to a good and happy end. But where the enemy is still at work, there I feel the same cause for activity as ever.

Now the “Statement from Christians in Ebrington Street, Plymouth,” is, I am satisfied, distinctly marked by the power of the same evil spirit which so many now recognize to have been at work—disingenuousness, subtlety, reserving all the error possible, while the credit of those concerned is sought to be maintained, a Christ, or that which bears His name, which is no real living Christ of faith, accompanied by professions calculated to blind the simple and unwary. By whom drawn up I know not, or what Christians profess it, or how far to’ be taken as a profession of the assembly, or for the assembly by those who now assume to guide them, I know not, nor can anyone; nor know what authority to attach to an unsigned document. I can deal only with the document itself. It is said, “We can and do say that we have no wish to cloke or defend error;” but as to who can and do say it, we are left entirely in the dark. Still, in the Lord’s

hands, I believe this mysterious way of presenting it a mercy. I turn to the document.

A system of doctrine has been denounced, as is well known, by those who have recently left the assembly and others. “This system,” the “Statement” tell us, “it is said, involves these errors,” &c. I need not repeat them here. “With regard to these errors, we desire to state, that the great majority amongst us were wholly ignorant of their existence, so that the assertions made touching ‘our having lost Christ,’ or having had presented to us a ‘false Christ’ for years past, were assertions perfectly strange and appalling to our ears and hearts; and they appeared to us to be not only untrue, but also of a most painful character and tendency.”

Now that damnable heresies are brought in privily there cannot be a doubt, and that many children of God escape many of the real and legitimate consequences of error because of positive truth already in their hearts I thankfully admit, and I dare say it has been the case with many of the poor of the flock in this case, and I bless God for it. But what are the facts here? First, more than two hundred persons had left the assembly, of whom a vast body felt that practically they had lost Christ; many had more definite reasons, no doubt, but with some that was practically the whole matter. Spiritual sense made them feel Christ was gone though they might not have been able to explain what had taken Him away. And they were right. God constantly thus guides His flock. “A stranger will they not follow, for they know not the voice of a stranger.” They cannot tell who the stranger is, but it is not the Shepherd’s voice. Many taunted them with this being no reason. It was a divine

Spirit-taught reason, and God has justified them. But to proceed.

For years the chief teachers of Ebrington Street have all of them held what they now avow destroys the gospel. Do they not know what Christ they presented? This doctrine was taught, diligently taught; notes of lectures assiduously inculcating it were taken and diligently circulated all over England; tracts, with this doctrine contained in it, written and revised by the teachers, and sold and circulated; tracts, since its being charged as heresy by others, put forth by Mr. Newton, and read and approved by others in MS. and in print, and the doctrine justified and applauded: and now the whole assembly, or those who speak for them, tell us they were wholly ignorant of their existence. If their teachers really held this doctrine, their hearers had lost Christ, or had a false Christ presented to them. And whatever we may judge of the notes of lectures or their accuracy, they prove that the doctrine was assiduously and constantly taught. What that doctrine was we have the declaration of all the teachers to let us know. And will anyone believe that this, even when it was not the express subject, did not affect all the teaching and the action of the Holy Ghost in the assembly.

The declaration merely shews that the effect had been so complete that they had lost Christ without knowing it, had a false Christ presented to them without knowing it. And what does this speak for the state of the assembly? And when it was fully discussed and brought forward, what did they do? Was there confession and humiliation in the assembly? Was the matter judged? Or how came their teachers to have left? And now mark the excuse of the Statement: “This system, it is said, involves.” Do not

they yet then know whether it does or not? Is this the way men speak who care for Christ's glory, when His glory is concerned? Of two things one: either they are yet so blinded by the enemy that they do not yet see what has been printed and reprinted, and discussed and confessed, or they do see it and decline to acknowledge its heinousness. In either case the power of Satan is evident. Could any straightforward person say, "it is said this system involves" so and so, when the doctrines have been elaborately brought out in terms in Mr. N.'s tracts, and a good while defended amongst those who say so, and at last confessed openly by most of those who taught them? Does a thing involve itself? Are not these things stated in Mr. N.'s writings? Have they not in part been retracted by himself? I do not speak of consequences but of the plain statements themselves. And when it is said, page 2, "an error held by some of us," is that honest? Was it not taught by some? Did not the teachers hold it? Who are the "some" who held it?

And note further here, there is subtlety as well as dishonesty. In page 3, the imputation of guilt to Christ, taught and circulated all over the kingdom, and far beyond its limits, by those who learned it in Ebrington Street, is declared to have been seen erroneous, and to have been confessed by those who once held it. But as to the law and its curse, it is said, we believe that this was not held by any amongst us. Indeed! And what are Mr. N.'s tracts and lectures? Will the assembly say that he is not amongst them? Or what mean the confessions of their teachers? "Indefinite thoughts which individuals may have entertained, or do entertain," are spoken of. And what of the "Remarks and Observations?" And if individuals amongst them (and clearly teachers, for the

mass were totally ignorant of the doctrines) do hold indefinite thoughts about Christ's being under the curse of the law, Christ is lost, or a false Christ proclaimed. For a Christ born under the curse of the law in His own position is a false Christ; and indefinite thoughts in that prove that a man has no Christ at all; and to talk about it in such a way proves something very like indifference to it in those who drew up the paper. And mark, retraction or confession, or anything explicit as rejection, stated as to the imputation of Adam's guilt, page 2, is not pretended to have been made on this second point. Now the teaching was not indefinite, but explicit enough; and whatever it was, some, perhaps, do maintain it. Who?

But I go farther, and I say, the true Christ, a known Christ, is lost in this very paper. I read, from page 9, "He voluntarily subjected Himself to all these things which were involved in such connections, so far as it pleased God His Father for Him to be placed in them." Now in this diplomatic sentence, this shameful sentence to have written about the blessed Lord, what was Christ's place? There is not one positive word of faith about Christ in it. It is declared that "this voluntary position could in no way affect the dignity of His person or perfectness of His work, nor yet could it indicate that something was laid on Him which He had to remove before He could become our substitute and sin-bearer." That is what I will tell you when you tell me what the position was which He did take. But you have left me without any Christ at all, but a possible one, who was "subjected to all things which were involved in such connections"—connections with sinful man and cursed Israel, mark, "so far as it pleased God His Father for Him to be placed in them." But how far was He in them? Have you nothing

positive? Is it an unknown possibility of the Father's will, the measure of Christ's connections with sin and the curse? Was the connection—positively held as a doctrine by some amongst you, and taught, and printed, and applied to the interpretation of the whole book of Psalms—was that possible to be the Father's pleasure, or the Son of God's place! Is there no revelation of what were the connections with man and Israel, in which the blessed Lord was placed?

And now, you, who have drawn up this, who say that a position in a moral distance from God is perfectly abhorrent to every christian mind and heart, what position was given to Christ in the tracts printed, and the doctrine taught and defended amongst you? Did you ever read the "Remarks" and "Observations?" And is man's distance from God, and working his way up to a point where God could meet him, not a moral distance from God? If not, what is? For the sake of individuals over whom I yet sorrow, for your own sakes, you ought to hide your faces for having written such a sentence as this. If this, and many like passages, are not a moral distance from God, what is?

Further, it would have been happy, if, instead of speaking vaguely of what Christ could have experienced, you had stated a little what you thought of what it has been stated amongst you He did experience; or what you think now. But in all this there is an ominous silence. You tell us, indeed, that whatever it was, "whatever he might have felt," it would not affect, and it would not involve. Now I do not at all agree with you. I say, if He felt certain things in consequence of His position by birth (and that is the question), it would affect His person and it would involve the curse. Doctrines recently taught

among yourselves did affect His person, and involve His work. You told us when these doctrines, now confessed to be abominable heresies, were taught and held among you, that you did not see that it affected His person or involved the curse. Now you see it does.

But you come and tell us that whatever Christ experienced, or in whatever way it pleased God His Father for Him to be placed in connection with man and Israel, it could in no possible way affect His person or work. How came it to do so, in what has been retracted? and how can I trust you in the dark for this vague unknown Christ, whose position, you tell me, cannot, and will not affect His person and work? You must let me know what your Christ is first. And so carefully do you guard this vague open door, that you tell us you cannot "know any further than God has been pleased to reveal by His Spirit in the word, and what it was proper for Christ to feel or not to feel"—the italics are yours. But do you know of nothing in the word which is revealed as to what He did not feel? The experience of an unconverted elect man, for instance? Is this the way you speak of Christ still? You are discussing what it was proper for Him to feel, instead of learning and believing in what the living Christ was.

And now let me ask you, here, what you mean by "experiences which it may have pleased the Father that He should pass through," and what it was proper for Christ to feel? Besides sympathy with others, which is not now the question, nor His death on the cross—"but living feelings and experiences of the Lord Jesus," could He have had any but what were real, resulting from the position He was in "as a man and an Israelite?" Were His feelings and experiences fictitious? You are speaking of

Him as born into the nation of Israel, and as sharer of man's nature. Could He then have experienced, as a man and as an Israelite, what was not according to the truth of the position He was in? Were His own experiences not true ones, according to the relation He was in? and is it not evident, if they were, that they involve the relationship? What do you mean by experiences it pleased the Father He should pass through, or that it was proper for Christ to feel? Circumstances I understand. He learned obedience by the things which He suffered; but experiences from the Father's pleasure, and proper to feel, were they the real ones of the position He was in, or inflicted ones? Were they experiences belonging to His position, or not belonging to it? Were they founded on His relation to God and man, or arbitrary and not founded on it?

It is the more necessary you should explain this, not only because my questions apply to doctrines which have been diligently taught among you, as to which your statements have an alarming vagueness, but because in this very passage you speak of "experiences which it may have pleased the Father that He should pass through," which could not involve "the rejection of His true experiences as the Son." Now I avow to you such an expression, instead of clearing up your views, looks largely tainted with the abominable and frightful doctrine long taught among you. And this accompanied by a very anxious effort to shew that nothing you may hold could or would involve anything that affected the doctrine of Christ, and the absence of stating what you do hold, and of the refutation of what has been taught on the experiences of Christ, and on the contrary leaving the most open door possible for holding anything, only

assuring us that whatever it may be it cannot affect Christ, only tends to confirm the conviction that you are still, as an assembly, under the power of Satan.

The entire want of candour and honesty as to what has been taught, printed, circulated, put in tracts, and confessed by your teachers, only painfully confirms this sad conviction. And, as undoubtedly convinced of it, I warn all who are among you solemnly of it, and exhort and call upon all who value Christ and their own souls to come out and partake no longer of the sins of the assembly, that they may have nothing to do with the judgments which belong to such evil. You, who are Christians, do you not yet see the hand of the Lord is out against all the system, though in love surely to His own? I do not charge all in the assembly as intentionally involved in their errors. Nor do I with the subtlety of this paper, which is an additional reason for having done with those who drew it up. You were ignorant perhaps of the errors, as those misled usually are; but if those who taught among you were full of these doctrines, you had lost the true Christ, for the Christ they had in their minds, which was the one you heard of from them, was not the true Christ. Besides I am bold to say, from my own knowledge, that the grace of God in the work of Christ and His person too were undermined and set aside in the public and private teaching in Ebrington Street; and it was clearly felt by the poor, though they might not be able to reason about and account for their judgment. Will any of you, moreover, stand up and deny that it was systematically taught that Christ was a constituted sinner and worked His way up to life? You cannot. That simple poor ones may, by God’s grace, have escaped it all, I can well believe. Is that a reason for

their being subjected to such a system? or remaining in it?

I feel bound to add that the positive doctrine stated is unsatisfactory on two material points, particularly important to notice from the doctrines which have been taught, as they tend to confirm my conviction that those who have drawn up this paper are not free from the evil or from the influence of Satan. That Christ was truly a man, born of a woman, born under the law, is of the very essence of our faith—tempted in all points like as we are, yet without (apart from) sin; all this is the revealed comfort to the soul. But the statements of page 5, as to it, will be found to have, very many of them, no scripture to base them on. Hebrews 2:14 does not make the statement here made but a very definite one—not the one found here. The statement as to Christ's death, on its only ground, I judge to shew equally defective views, though meant to guard against the charge of holding error. He could only die as bearing the sins of others seems to guard Christ's death, but it makes it an imposed and necessary consequence. Now, though "if He took the sins, He could only expiate them by death," it was not the whole character of His death or taken by itself a true one. They have ventured too far in mental dealing with the blessed Saviour, and we always lose Christ, the true Christ, when we do. It is an unsound exposition of Christ's nature and death. But further, the second point is this: "while He, in living obedience, was working out that one righteousness in which we stand as believers in His name." This last, too, specially connects itself with the errors which have been taught.

And now I close, only adding this one reflection. We have all known the ground taken by teachers and guides

(precious gifts I fully recognize to the flock of God), and the separate authority attributed to them, and the security afforded by them as God's ordinance. What has become of them? Where are they? Some of them, at any rate, I must thankfully believe under the unquestionably gracious operation of God's Spirit, but I speak now of the security afforded by such a system, of its comfort to the saints, and the glory rendered to God by it. I pray for the peace of you all.

Yours, affectionately in Christ,

J. N. D.

Addition To Observations On A Tract Entitled “Remarks On The Sufferings Of The Lord Jesus.”

Editor's Note 88

In closing, I desire too the reader to ponder seriously the way this affects the person and divine nature of our Lord. Was God manifest in the flesh, “as man,” born subject to wrath; under the guilt of Adam, and hence, liable to damnation; associated with man in the flesh, at a distance where God could not meet Him? The writer says, He was. He adds, that as a Son, He was always in the bosom of the Father. But if He were in the bosom of the Father, as Son, and born under wrath, as man—not vicariously—where is the unity of His person? Some one will say, What do you say then to the cross? I reply, His whole person and work were always, and then, as to His work, above all, infinitely acceptable to God. He had to suffer in His soul the wrath and bitterness; the doing of which was an additional title to the love of God His Father. “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life.” His soul had to drink the whole cup of wrath: He was infinitely acceptable, and so was His work. Its vicariousness makes all the difference. But how could God’s manifestation in the flesh associate Him in the mystery of His birth as man, with man’s distance from God? I have treated, mainly, the positive statements of the tract, compared with scripture, but it is well to compare its statements with the scripture doctrine of the divine person of Christ—God incarnate.

Another tract—“Observations,” on that published by Mr. Harris—has been put forth by Mr. N. It clearly confirms the doctrine taught already, while expatiating on other points. Christ is said to have had all the feelings which God’s unconverted elect ought to have had! Now, incredible nonsense as this is, it is clear that the only meaning it can have is that Christ ought to have felt Himself deserving of damnation. Further, though concealing it to the inattentive reader by quoting only half the sentence, he has confirmed the very worst passage in the notes, and the whole poison of the doctrine, in the fullest way. He says, the passage, “Lamb made perfect through suffering,” ought to be “one made perfect through suffering.” But he does not quote the rest of the phrase, which is this, “in order to be a sacrifice.” So that Christ was the One made ‘perfect’ through suffering, in order to be a sacrifice. I do not insist on the entire perversion of scripture, where ‘perfect’ refers to His present state. But it is clear that the doctrine is, that He was not perfect for sacrifice till after going through the process. How could He be, if exposed to wrath? if born in such a condition that He had to extricate Himself out of it, and work His way up to life, to a point where God could meet Him?

And note, the writer declares that by these corrections given in the “Observations,” we are to know what he does own, and what he does not, in the notes published by Mr. Harris.

88 [These remarks were added to the second edition of the author’s tract (“Observations,” &c.) and are inserted here, as the reprint was from the first.—Ed.]

Remarks On “A Letter On Subjects Connected With The Lord’s Humanity.”

The reader will meet with some remarks in a part of this tract which—if not accustomed to abstract reasoning—he will probably have difficulty in understanding. I add these few lines to say, he need not be the least uneasy at it; probably it is so much the better for himself. Abstract discussions on the nature of the Lord Jesus are, I believe, very unhealthful things for the soul; and if, in the form of a positive attempt to define incarnate Godhead—always erroneous in some expression or other—what may be found difficult of apprehension in these pages (and it is chiefly in a note) is introduced with no such object, but merely to shew the fallacious ground of reasoning taken, in order to introduce error. When there were minds exercised on it, it was right to notice this; when this is not the case, the reader will be only so much the happier to rest in his simplicity, and believe, with confiding faith, in the testimony of the word, that the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us, full of grace and truth;—and that, as the children whom He was bringing to glory partook of flesh and blood, He partook of it too: and, while knowing that the blessed One was absolutely, and in every sense, without sin, be assured that He knows how to speak a word in season to him that is weary—to sympathise with every sorrow—and to relieve and lift up in every infirmity—having suffered, being tempted, and thus able to succour them that are tempted.

I shall say nothing as to the moral character of this letter: in itself it would excite indignation; but, alas! indignation refuses itself to often-repeated evil, and gives place to another and more silent feeling.

The principles of the previous tracts are fully maintained; and the retractation, once published, is reduced to an acknowledgment of carelessness in theological expressions. At the same time the terms used to represent the principles have descended so far below the hardihood of those of the tracts, that they might, to many, seem almost harmless. I should not have noticed the letter but that individual souls, untaught by all that has passed, may be seduced into the thought of its harmlessness by the concealment of the evil.

The letter keeps most carefully out of sight what is the whole matter in question—Christ's relationship to God. The writer says, in substance, that Christ was, as to His person, sinless and acceptable. His doctrine really involves the contrary; but, admitting the statement, that is not the question: Irving even would have said as much. It is also true that he does not hold the doctrine of sin in Christ's human nature, which Irving did. That which he is charged with is false doctrine as to the relationship in which, as a man, Christ stood to God. But it may be said, he does not conceal his views on this; he does speak of relative position. Yes: but he always puts it before the mind in the letter as referring to relationship to man and to Israel. The question is, What was His relationship to God? This is carefully avoided—carefully concealed; and words so twisted, that a simple mind is unaware of what is conveyed. On this point it is that his doctrine is from the enemy himself.66 Mr. N. maintains the principles of his tracts (Letter, page 15), and does

not shrink from the explanation or defence of more minute statements in them. (Page 17.)

The statements of these tracts I shall now reproduce, because, while their principles are re-affirmed, their circulation is suspended, and a false account given of their contents in the letter.

But first a few preliminary observations.

The writer states many common truths, and gives a long string of texts to shew that Christ became a man by means of birth. As to the truths Irving would have put his hand to every one of them. The question does not lie there: the writer's heresy is on another point. I never heard of anyone who doubted that Christ was born—in these days at any rate. Nobody doubts He was a man and an Israelite,67 nor that He became so by means of birth. These statements then we may leave entirely aside. They are held by both sides—by Mr. Irving himself, equally by orthodox and heretics—on the point in question. Our search lies beyond this.

Mr. Newton states, "My sentiments on these subjects are so well known; it is so well known that I have never held or taught anything that is new or peculiar touching the person or natures of our blessed Lord," &c. (p. 2); and (p. 18), in referring to certain extracts, he asks, "Do they teach that Jesus was born under the curse of the broken law?"

Now these are the facts:—Mr. N., some ten years ago or more, put into a second edition of the "Christian Witness," which did not pass through the Editor's hand, an addition to an article on the doctrines of Newman Street containing the following statement: "All that the soul of a saint recognizes as true in the writings of Mr.

Irving, respecting Christ being in ‘that condition of being and region of existence which is proper to a sinner,’ will be found to be altogether comprised in the fact of His being born under the curse of the exiled family, vicariously incurred.68 But He rose out of this ‘region’—[not merely, mark, was able]—through the power of His own inherent holiness;” only He chose “to abide it for the sake of others;” and the result was the cross. And “He might have entered into life by Himself alone,” “He was able to enter into life by keeping the commandments.” The law was “strong unto Him,” it was “unto Him life”—as it is written, “If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.” Further, subsequently Mr. N. taught that Jesus was a constituted sinner, born such, and based this on Romans 5:19, as is publicly and universally known.

Having broached this doctrine some four years ago at a reading meeting, the doctrine was subsequently objected to by one present; and Mr. N. justified it in a long letter, but told the person to keep it secret, as the saints were not prepared to receive it yet. It was then taught privately, and, circulated under the strictest guard against its enunciation to those not “prepared to receive it,” was, through God’s mercy, detected, and was then, on some of Mr. N.’s own friends declaring that they could have nothing more to say to him if he did not retract it, retracted as a sin. When he left Plymouth to go to Cornwall, consequent upon the convictions which flashed on the minds of many, he declared that he wished it to be clearly understood that he went voluntarily away as a humiHation, because God, having entrusted him with a new and special truth, which was

also said to be a truth which was to save the church, he had failed by bringing it out before the church was ready to receive it.

Now, he declares, it is well known that he never held or taught anything new or peculiar.

His retractation now amounts to a confession of carelessness. He “used wrong theological terms [in accounting for the fact of Christ being brought under certain results of Adam’s sin], and a wrong application to Romans 5.” (Page 32.) A wrong application to Romans 5!!! And what did that amount to? Carelessness in theological terms! In accounting for the fact of Christ being brought under certain results of Adam’s sin, “confused between transmitted consequences and imputation?” Is not Romans 5 plain? You applied, unhappy man! Romans 5:19 to Christ. “By the disobedience of one many were made sinners.” “Certain results!” The verse states the result itself plainly enough; it states no circumstances, but relationship to God. You have stated (pages 30, 31, 32, of this letter) the results of it clearly enough: you taught it where you could—it was circulated secretly, you desired it to be concealed because saints were not prepared for it. Confounded at its exposure, you retracted this gross expression of it; and now it amounts to—a confusion of theological terms, and a wrong application of Romans 5:19! And what was the doctrine of Romans 5:19 applied to Christ? What does it mean to be constituted a sinner under Adam’s federal headship? That is what you applied to Christ. It was not “certain results.” The results flowed from this according to your system. And now you say, “it is so well known that I have never held or taught anything that is new or peculiar.”69 I shall

now quote various extracts from your two tracts, which you avow are still your principles; and I beg my reader to recall the question of relationship to God.

“Remarks,” page 1, 2. In the psalms “we find not only the sufferings of those hours of public ministry—not only the sufferings and reproach that pertained to Him as the appointed servant of God, but sufferings also which pertained to Him because He was a man,70 and because He was an Israelite.” “He was made sensible, under the hand71 of God, of the condition into which man had sunk, and yet more into which Israel had sunk in His sight.”

“Remarks,” page 4. “Personally indeed, He was one who, as to His essential relation to God, could know no change… The Son that is (d w[n) in the bosom of the Father. This was an essential condition of being which neither earth nor the grave could alter.” Be it so: but what were the new relations assumed when He was made flesh, made under the law? were they relations that necessarily brought sufferings with them?

“Remarks,” pages 4, 5. “He was born … into the midst of the fallen family of man… But He had not merely become connected with the sorrows and sufferings of man.” There was Israel; “they had fallen from that ground of professed obedience, and, like Adam, earned by their disobedience the fearful inflictions of God’s broken law; for it had been said, ‘Cursed is he that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them.’” Did this depend on His position and relationship to God?

“Remarks,” page 8. “His faith, His prayer, His obedience, all contributed to preserve Him from many

things to which He was by His relative position exposed, and by which He was threatened." So that it was not certain results of actual sufferings. He was exposed to them by His relative position even when He did not suffer them. It was a position He was in.

"Remarks," page 12. "He was made experimentally to prove the reality of that condition into which others, but more especially Israel, had sunk themselves, by their disobedience to God's holy law; a condition out of which He was able to extricate Himself [He was in it therefore: compare quotations from "Christian Witness"], and from which He proved that He could extricate Himself by His own perfect obedience." … And, "then to see Him emerging out of them"—the hindrances and miseries attached to this condition.

"Remarks," page 13. "In consequence of His position He would be abnoxious, that is, exposed to all the inflictions that the hand of God might be directing againt that evil generation."

"Remarks," page 14. "God pressed these things on the apprehensions of His soul according to His own power and holiness; and caused Him to feel as a part of that which was exposed to the judgments of His heavy hand."

"Remarks," page 15. "He had to realize the condition into which man and Israel had fallen."

But was it a reality flowing from relationship, or only His Spirit entering into them? First, it was, as we have seen, as a part, and He was exposed, consequently, to what He did not suffer.

"Remarks," page 23. But "the difference between Sinai, the mountain of blackness, and Zion, the mountain of

light and grace and blessing … might be used to illustrate the difference between the two dispensational positions held by the Lord Jesus in the midst of Israel previous to His baptism; and that which He dispensationally and ministerially took when anointed by the Holy Ghost." … "And if, as in token of this great change in His dispensational relations (for I anxiously repeat there was no change in Him personally), heaven, which had not before been opened over Him, was opened over His head." Now this is, beyond all controversy, His relationship with God, with heaven; and I pray the reader to note it.

And what was this relationship to God? "If He was made to realize the distance into which man had wandered out of the presence of God; and if He realized also the distance of Israel … I believe it to have been chiefly, if not exclusively, before His baptism. Observe, I am speaking of the exercises of His heart from God… The manner in which He was directly exercised by God." ("Remarks," p. 25.) So "Observations" page 29, "The Lord Jesus was caused to appreciate to the full the relation in which Israel (and Himself because of Israel) was standing before God. We may hear of Sinai, or think of Sinai; but Jesus realized it as the power of an actual subsisting relation between His people and God… Years passed over His head thus." And here I may add the quotation made in the "Letter" (p. 6) from the "Observations," to shew that "His birth-relation to the law could have brought to Him only blessing." It is this, "His dispensational place, therefore, if He had stood alone in dissociation from others, would not have interfered72 with any of the blessings that personally

pertained to Him." ("Observations," p. 29.) Thus far is quoted to prove his point.

This is what follows, "But He was not found in dissociation from others. He was standing in closest association with those whose dispensational relation to God was marked by the darkness, and lightnings, and voices of Sinai… Sinai marked the relation of God to Israel when Jesus came; and the worship of the golden calf (though that would but feebly represent their ripened evil) may be taken as marking their relation to God. And since God, in exercising the souls of His servants, must exercise them according to truth … we might be very sure, even if the evidence of scripture were less direct than it is, that the Lord Jesus was caused to appreciate to the full the relation in which Israel (and Himself because of Israel) was standing before God." Hence, though He escaped much of what He was exposed to by it, through prayer, faith and obedience (so that it was not what He entered into in spirit for others), the relation in which He was standing before God was but feebly represented by the worship of the golden calf. Such then was Christ's own relation to God in flesh.

The "Letter" tells us (p. 45), "He lived under, not above, the governmental arrangements of God in this world, and endured multitudes of the sufferings which these governmental arrangements had brought, or were then bringing on those with whose present condition of suffering He had connected Himself, and made as much as possible His own. And, seeing that these arrangements were the arrangements of God in government, the sufferings which followed from them are to be regarded as in a special sense coming from

God. By which fact [?] we are able to refute that strange and novel doctrine, … that Christ never suffered anything under the hand of God until … the cross." "These arrangements73 were God's—and if the Lord Jesus was not above them all, He must have suffered under them."

In the tracts, the writer insists that they were not spontaneous consequences, but direct inflictions—the direct exercise of His heart from God, such as none else could have, because He was under the law. See quotation which follows in text, and "Observations," page 36.

In the "Observations," on the contrary, we read (p. 34), "But we should form a very inadequate conception of the living experiences of the Lord Jesus, if, in addition to the sufferings which flowed spontaneously as it were from the condition of man and of Israel, we did not also recognize a yet more close and searching dealing of God with His servant… How should we feel, imperfect as our sensibilities are, if God, according to the power of His own holiness, were to press upon the apprehension of our souls a truthful sense of the present and future condition of ruined man?" (Page 35.) Was this merely circumstances or sufferings which followed from the arrangements of God in government?

Again, ("Observations" p. 36) "The Lord Jesus was as much alone in His living estimate under God's hand of the circumstances of human life here, as in enduring wrath upon the cross… He was also, when here, made to estimate, according to the sensibilities of that nature which He had taken, the (to us) inconceivable distance of humanity from God. And when thus exercised, though

personally holy and beloved, He was made to feel that His association with those thus standing in the fearfulness of their distance from God, was a real thing, and that it was so regarded by God. His was no mere pretended imaginary association." You may see, reader, what is meant by the circumstances of humanity.

Of the reality of this we may judge from a passage in the "Remarks," page 31: "But before I quit this part of the subject, there is one thing only I would further observe: how needful it is to distinguish between the person and the dispensational or relative positions of our blessed Lord. As to His person, we know Him to be the only begotten Son of God… But yet, during His ministry on earth, He stood in a place dispensationally lower than that into which He has now brought us, His church." Now does this mean, that officially in service He had a saintly place on earth, whereas now the church is one with Himself in heaven? No. "For man was yet in His distance from God. There was as yet no glorified humanity on the right hand of the throne of God. The mighty power whereby God raised Jesus from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places was not yet put forth…. And Jesus, as man, was associated with this place of distance, in which man in the flesh was; and He had, through obedience, to find His way to that point where God could meet Him as having finished His appointed work, and glorify Him, and set Him at His own right hand in heavenly places; and that point was death—death on the cross—death under the wrath of God." (Pages 31, 32.)

We may now enquire whether the "Letter" puts the blessed Jesus on any really different ground. This is the character of suffering spoken of. ("Observations," p. 35.)

“Horror hath taken hold upon me because of the wicked74 that forsake thy law. My flesh trembleth for fear of thee; and I am afraid of thy judgments. Trouble and anguish have taken hold on me, yet thy commandments are my delight. I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up: while I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted.” Let us remember that this is not viewed as Christ’s entering in spirit into things, but “the close and searching dealing of God with His servant.” (Page 35.) “It is the thought of Jesus being caused by God to estimate the terror of His holiness, in relation to the circumstances of humanity pressed in vivid realization on His soul, that alone enables me to understand such words as these” (p. 35): “the exercises,” as it is stated elsewhere “of His heart from God.” (“Remarks,” 25.) “But I am not (“Remarks,” 25) now speaking of the spontaneous actings of His soul, but of the manner in which He was directly exercised by God.” We have seen (Obs. 29) that God “must exercise them (the souls of His servants) according to truth”—hence, according to “the relation in which Israel (and Himself because of Israel) was standing before God.” Hence it was changed for Jesus at John’s baptism. (Obs. 31.) “Remarks,” 23: “His dispensational relations in them, how great the change,” clearly relations with God: for He was not less a man or an Israelite. We learn in the quotation from “Observations,” 35, what the circumstances of humanity mean. It amounts to no less than “the present and future condition of ruined man.”

Now these clearly are the great principles of the tracts, the “great leading principles which pervade them throughout.” (Letter, p. 16.) These are sanctioned, therefore, in the Letter. The doctrine of His personal

acceptance, as Son of God, is stated; but it is not the question: Irving held it just as much. Mr. N. may deprecate judgment as to what he holds, and claim “to define the limit beyond which no authoritative sentence must be allowed to go.” (Letter, p. 17.) It is a very comfortable thing for an accused person to do; but the saints are bound for their own souls, and for the saints’ sake, to preserve themselves from deadly error. These principles, then, the Letter re-affirms. (Page 15.)

We may also see if the Letter’s own statements alter the matter. First, the question of relationship to God is, as to terms, studiously avoided, save that the doctrine of the tract is re-affirmed. But, in other words, we shall see it in all its force fully adopted. (See p. 23, 24.)

And first, note particularly, that what is brought before the mind as to Jesus’ acceptance is not at once His relationship to God on earth—not His human acceptance. His personal position in acceptance is His eternal Sonship with the Father. What was due to His personal position is judged of by that, and based on it — His relation to the Father before the world was. “In heaven the circumstances or position of the Son had been in accordance with that which was due to Him.” (Letter, 24.) (Note in passing, we have the sense of position already changed. At first we were to judge of what was due to His position; now circumstances are equivalent to position, and position is due to Him—then they are mixed.) “He was there seen standing in all the excellency of His personal position, and until He took flesh He was receiving all that was due to that position.” [Mark that!] “But when it pleased Him to assume flesh, instead of assuming it under circumstances75 which would have been in accordance

with that which was due76 to His personal position, He assumed it in a condition of weakness, &c." ("&c!" Is Christ's state to be disposed of with an "&c.?") "which was not in accordance with the blessedness due to His personal77 position. This, therefore, may be said to be the assumption of a relative78 position." Relative to whom? What was His relation to God? His personal position of God and eternal Son of the Father, having "an unalterable title to blessing, which neither incarnation nor the cross could change." But what relation to God had He as incarnate? Incarnation did not change His being God and eternal Son of the Father, or His tide to blessing as such.

Further (Letter p. 24), "To a personal position (as much after as before He had assumed flesh) nothing but blessing would have been due." What is a personal position here—Godhead and eternal Sonship? That was what personal position meant a while back, and could not be changed. "Even as an Israelite under the law He had a title to all blessing." Now this was heretofore specifically and distinctively His relative position. Thus in this same 24th page, "He assumed it [flesh] in a condition of weakness, &c, which was not in accordance with the blessedness due to His personal position. This, therefore, may be said to be the assumption of a relative position." Now this was just being an Israelite under the law. Now, "To a personal position … nothing but blessing would have been due." "If… He had been pleased to claim that which was due to a personal position." Why a personal position? Was it His, or was it not? Was it the eternal, unchangeable position of eternal Son of God? If so, it leaves out His actual relative position as a man down here. As an Israelite under the law He had a title

to all blessing—not in His relative position; for He was in this, Mr. N. tells us, exposed to all the consequences of Israel's state. Was being an Israelite a personal position? Is not all confusion here, because the plain truth of His own relation to God, as man, is put aside?

But (Letter, p. 25), "He forewent the title of His personal position79 the moment He took flesh." Here we have the point. Though He might have had a claim if He had been pleased to assert it, He forewent it. He then "assumed a relative position." That, then, was His standing before God. This is confirmed by its application to the cross. He took there the position of substitute. His sufferings "flowed from a relative position, namely, that of substitution. So also in life." (Page 26.) Now, His place on the cross was under wrath, that is, He was regarded of God according to His position; so in life, having foregone the title of His own position,80 He was to be regarded of God in His relative one; that is, dealt with in the world as a sinful man, "according to truth." That was His relation to God—His relative position. (Letter, p. 26.) "Sufferings that flow from a personal position prove personal unworthiness; sufferings that flow from a relative position prove no personal unworthiness." No, nor is it charged as a doctrine. But for the same reason they prove relative unworthiness: just as, on the cross, God dealt with Christ according to His relative position —that is, in wrath due to sin. That was God's relation to Christ, personally worthy as He was, "so also in life." That is, according to Mr. N., God's relation to Christ was that He bore to sinful fallen man, the relative position He had taken. Now that is the point. The title of His personal position He had foregone—He had taken His relative position before God, that is, fallen man's and

fallen Israel's. That was Christ's relation to God. That is all the writer tells us concerning Him—His relation to God, whatever the reason; and this is confirmed by the statement, that it was pressed on His soul. He was exposed to it: that "His faith, His prayer, His obedience all contributed to preserve Him from many things to which He was, by His relative position, exposed, and by which He was threatened." ("Remarks," p. 8.) God might bring it home or relieve Him from it, but that was His relation to God. Of course the only meeting-point was death under wrath for such a position. "His baptism … was the acknowledgment of the condition of His people, and of His association with them in that condition." (Obs. p. 24.) An association, note, by birth. Hence He was obnoxious to all—that is, it was due to His relative position. For, as He was not subjected to all, 'obnoxious' must mean, it was what was due. Hence, heaven was not opened to Him till after His baptism, as we have seen. "He was made to feel that His association with those thus standing in the fearfulness of their distance from God was a real thing, and that it was so regarded by God. His was no mere imaginary association." (Obs. p. 36.)

I would now add a little which I hope may clear up some minds as to Christ's sympathy with us. First, I assume that my reader holds, as myself, the true and real humanity of the Lord, both in body and soul—that He was a true living man in flesh and blood. Mr. N. says, that some say He had no human soul; I never heard of any since Eutyches and the Apollinarians— people whom the most of my readers, I suppose, know nothing about.

Christ was a man in the truest sense of the word, body and soul. The question is as to His relation to God as

man. We are all agreed that He was sinless. He had true humanity, but united to Godhead. He was God manifest in the flesh. Scripture speaks simply, saying, He partook of flesh and blood. That is what the Christian has simply, and as taught of God, to believe.

Mr. N. goes beyond scripture in saying (p. 35) that “To say that there was in His humanity a divine spring of thought and feeling, is to deny His real humanity.” Was His humanity then without a divine spring of thought and feeling? Had he said it was not of or from His humanity, I should have nothing to say; but to say there was none in it unsettles the doctrine of Christ’s person. There was the fulness of the Godhead bodily; and the divine nature was a spring of many thoughts and feelings in Him. This is not the whole truth; but to deny it is not truth. If it merely means that humanity has not in itself a divine spring, that is plain enough; it would not be humanity. I am equally aware that it will be said that it was in His person; but to separate wholly the humanity and divinity in springs of thought and feeling is dangerously overstepping scripture. Is it meant that the love and holiness of the divine nature did not produce, was not a spring of, thought and feeling in His human soul? This would be to lower Christ below a Christian. Perhaps this is what Mr. N. means in saying He was dispensationally lower than the church. If so, it is merely a roundabout road to Socinianism.

His humanity, it is said, was not sui generis. This too is confusion. The abstract word humanity means humanity and no more: and, being abstract, must be taken absolutely, according to its own meaning. But, if the writer means that in fact the state of Christ’s humanity was not sui generis, it is quite wrong; for it was united

to Godhead, which no one else's humanity ever was; which, as to fact, alters its whole condition. For instance, it was not only sinless, but in that condition incapable of sinning; and to take it out of that condition is to take it out of Christ's person. What conclusion do I draw from all this?—That the wise soul will avoid the wretched attempt to settle in such a manner questions as to Him whom no one knoweth but the Father. The whole process of the reasoning is false.81 To turn, then, to scripture, we are told of the sinless infirmities of human nature, and that Christ partook of them. Now, I have no doubt this has been said most innocently; but, not being scripture, we must learn in what sense it is used. Now, that Christ was truly man, in thought, feeling, and sympathy, is a truth of cardinal blessing and fundamental importance to our souls. But I have learnt, thereby, not that humanity is not real humanity, if there is a divine spring of thought and feeling in it; but that God can be the spring of thought and feeling in it, without its ceasing to be truly and really man. This is the very truth of infinite and unspeakable blessedness that I have learnt. This, in its little feeble measure, and in another and derivative way, is true of us now by grace. He who searches the hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit. This is true in Jesus in a yet far more important and blessed way. There was once an innocent man left to himself; the spring of thought and feeling being simply man, however called on by every blessing and natural testimony of God without: we know what came of it. Then there was man whose heart alas! was the spring, "from within," of evil thoughts and the dark train of acts that followed. What I see in Christ is man, where God has become the spring of thought and feeling.82 And, through this wonderful mystery, in the

new creation in us, all things are of God. That, if we speak of His and our humanity, is what distinguishes it. Metaphysically to say “His and our humanity” is nonsense; because humanity is an abstraction which means nothing but itself, and always itself, and nothing else (just as if I said Godhead); and if I introduce any idea of its actual state I am destroying the idea and notion the word conveys. But the moment I do associate other ideas, I must introduce the whole effect and power of these ideas to modify the abstract one according to the actual fact. Thus humanity is always simply humanity. The moment I call it His, it is sui generis, because it is His; and in fact humanity sustained by Godhead is not humanity in the same state as humanity unsustained by Godhead.83 Sinless humanity, sustained in that state by Godhead, is not the same as sinful humanity left to itself. If it be said it was in the same circumstances, this is a question of fact, and to what extent? And here we have to guard against confounding relationships and circumstances. Thus deprivation of paradise is stated by Mr. N. as one thing which the blessed Lord had in common with ourselves. As to circumstances, it is quite clear it was so; but as to relationship to God—was Christ deprived of paradise as we are as guilty outcasts from it? Clearly not. And here let me remark on moral distance. Mr. N. says He could not be in moral distance (p. n), for moral distance is hatred to God. Hence (p. 13), “The Lord Jesus never knew, and never could know, moral distance or distance of affection from God His Father:” and then speaks of the change of circumstances from paradise and his future glory. Now, all this is merely avoiding the real question. What was meant by moral distance was this, that by His own relation to God, because of others

perhaps, but in which He Himself was, He had to find His way to a point where God could meet Him, rising out of the region of man's distance from God, a distance inconceivable to us.

Now, that is not mere circumstances. He felt, Mr. N. tells us, in His soul, according to truth, the present and future condition of ruined man. Now the circumstances of exclusion from paradise, hunger, thirst, uneasiness—in a word, the effects or results, death itself—are not inconceivable by us. The question is, not what were His affections, but in what light God regarded Him. What was His relation to God? And let me add here, this enquiry is only puzzled by talking about personal position and relative position. If by the former is meant merely His person, it does not touch the question. We all own the Father's delight in Him personally. If anything more is meant, relative position is a personal one. If I am a child, it is my personal position, and it is a relative one.

Further, then, if infirmities mean being in the circumstances of sorrow in which man was, and not screening Himself from them, no one, of course, questions it or the truest reality of it. As to death: if it be meant He was capable of dying, the fact is evident—He died, and that death was pressed upon His soul even before; if, that He was under the necessity of death in respect of His relationship to God, then it is false. And you cannot, in His person, separate the sustaining power of Godhead nor having fife in Himself so as to make a necessity without His will in grace. He laid it down of Himself. "The Lord's own words seem purposely intended to set aside such a doctrine." I quote from Mr. N. when he had not yet lost the influence of truth,

though he had introduced the worst of his errors: and further reasoning about it is vain. If Herod, we are told, had beheaded Him, He would have died. I see no reverence in this—He was not liable to it till He let Herod do it. Nor is it sense. What would have become of Adam, innocent, if he had been beheaded?

But scripture never uses the term that Christ was subject to infirmities. Nor is being in infirmities necessary to sympathy with those in them; but being out of them, though having a nature capable of apprehending in itself the suffering it brings into. The mother sympathizes with the babe in the pain she does not feel. Further, Christ is contrasted in His priestly sympathies with men having infirmity. The law makes men priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, the Son consecrated for evermore. (Hebrews 7:28.) The high priest taken from among men had compassion, for that (while priest, note) he was compassed with infirmity. That was mere man's way of sympathy; for he had to offer for his own sins. Instead of this, Christ in the days of His flesh, when He was not a priest, cried to Him who was able to save Him from death, took the place of lowly, subject, sorrowful man, and received the weight of it in His soul, and then being made perfect acts as priest. It is not said that He was infirm like us, but in all points tempted like as we are: and that He suffered, being tempted, and therefore is able to succour them that are tempted.

Another important passage connected with this is in Matthew. Christ took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses. Now how was this? "And he cast out the spirits with a word and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the

prophet: saying, Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses." I do not doubt His whole soul entered into them in the whole sorrow and burden of them before God, in the full sense of what they were, so viewed, in order to set them aside and bar Satan's power as to them. But was He sick and infirm because Himself took our infirmities? Clearly not. In a word, it is not being Himself in the state with which He sympathizes which gives the sympathy.

This connects itself with another point Mr. N. charges on others, that is, saying that Christ took the nature of the regenerate. This seems to me nonsense. I have just the same nature now as to my body, as I had when unregenerate; though the Holy Ghost may have a tide to my body, exercised in resurrection, in virtue of Christ's redemption. Christ partook of flesh and blood; that is what scripture states, and that is the whole matter. He was a true real man in flesh and blood. But there is a very important point connected with this which has been spoken of, and in which Mr. N.'s fearful error lies. It is this: according to Mr. N., when Christ did take flesh and blood, He was associated with man and Israel so as to be in their distance from God. That He was truly a man and an Israelite in true flesh and blood, born such, no one questions. But His associations in relationship with God were with the saints in Israel. They no doubt had the thoughts and feelings of an Israelitish saint; that is Israel's responsibility, failure, hopes and promises formed the basis, or structure, or character of their feelings as saints; but Christ's relationship was with them. And this is the distinctive character of the book of Psalms. It takes up Israelitish hopes, and circumstances and conditions, no doubt, but as held by the saints only;

and excludes the ungodly as an adverse party. Now that was Christ's place. It was association with the holy remnant in their Israelitish condition. Their relationship to God was a holy relationship; and though they might go through every test and trial of the new nature and faith on which it was founded, and acknowledge all the failure and the sin under which they were suffering, the relationship was a holy one with God. Into that Christ enters;84 and therefore, though He may enter into their sorrows and bear their guilt, He has no need to be in any other relationship to God than a holy one. In that He may feel the effects of another, just as a renewed soul, because it is near God and feels accordingly, feels its former state of sin and guilt; but it is not in it, save where guilt is not yet removed from the conscience, in which position of feeling clearly Christ was solely as a substitute. He is not associated with man's or Israel's distance (save as bearing sin), but with the children's relationship to God. Because the children partake of flesh and blood, He partook85 of them. The taking flesh and blood is stated as the consequence of His relationship with the children. Let us quote the passages.

"Both he that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified, are all of one."

"Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren."

"I and the children which God has given me." Compare Isaiah 8.

"I will put my trust in Him."

That is, the proof of His being in human nature is godly relationship in man.

It was not, then, that by taking flesh and blood He placed Himself in the distance of man; but that because He associated Himself with the children He partook of flesh and blood, and this is all that is said. The sanctifier and the sanctified being all of one, He was not ashamed to call them brethren. But His relationship was with the sanctified. His spirit entered into every sorrow, His soul passed through every distress, and He suffered under every temptation: but His relationship with God was never man's or Israel's as it then was, unless the cross be spoken of, because His was sinless, theirs sinful. It was His own. His relative position, that is, His relation to God, was according to what He was, whatever He might take upon Him or enter into in spirit, which included every sorrow and every difficulty felt, according to the full force of truth, and that before God.

This distinctive relationship with the remnant before God the Psalms specifically shew. The Spirit of Christ does not accept the position of Israel as it then stood: but distinguishes (see Psalm 1) the godly man as alone owned or approved of God, and Christ, born in the world, owned as Son, and decreed King in Zion in spite of adversaries. (Psalm 2.) He identifies Himself with the excellent on the earth. (Psalm 16.) God is good to Israel, even to them that are of a clean heart. He is God of Jacob, but a refuge to the remnant alone. With them Christ in spirit identifies Himself, and abhors the rest, looking for help—judicial help—against an ungodly nation.

The circumstances of His baptism were a remarkable illustration of this. Did the Lord take His place with the Pharisees and Scribes who were not baptized? Clearly not. When does He associate Himself with Israel? In the

first movement of the answer of faith to the testimony of God: when the people went to be baptized, Jesus also went. Now that was the answer of grace to God's testimony in John, in the remnant in whose hearts He was acting—the first and lowest beginning of it; still it was the movement of the heart under God's grace, in answer to the testimony. It was really the gracious part of Israel: it was really the excellent, the godly remnant, with whom Christ identified Himself in their godliness. He was fulfilling righteousness.

I will notice (without entering largely into any refutation) what may guard the reader against trusting the arguments of this pamphlet. Page 4: "Seeing that it is admitted that in the case of the Lord there could be no imputation of Adam's sin, and yet that He did suffer under certain consequences of that sin because of voluntary association;… and that this voluntary association was reached by birth, as a means—it follows that there may be association attended by all these circumstances, and yet no imputation." Now, His suffering some of the consequences of Adam's sin could not, by reason of birth being the means, involve Him in all, unless birth placed Him absolutely by necessity under every possible consequence of sin in which the being a man by birth involved Him. That is the whole force of the argument from some to all, because it was by means of birth. I pray the reader to note this: it really involves the whole question.

Christ, according to Mr. N., was involved in all the consequences of Adam's sin by necessity of birth. And mark here, that "circumstances" is used as equivalent to "consequences." Then remark as to law and Israel. In the tracts the Sinai relationship to God is ascribed to the

Lord: a worse state even than that at Sinai after worshipping the golden calf. Galatians 3:10 is quoted as expressing the state of Israel under the law. What means "Israelites became amenable to the things I have mentioned because they were men, not because they were Israelites?" (Page 4.)

Further, it is stated that the law was based on foreseen redemption. "God was too holy to propose any grounds of life to a sinful people except through mediation and atoning blood." (Page 5.) This subverts every principle both of law and redemption. The blood of the old covenant dedicated and sealed its authority and power. It was not, as to the law, a type of foreseen redemption. Redemption was the basis of the new, this the seal of the old: and mark here the force of "foreseen redemption." Redemption set them on the ground of getting life by keeping the law! Is that redemption—or its value? The redemption too, mark, of Christ! Is it the old covenant or the new? Man was not treated as a sinful people when put to the test of the law, but a being under trial; and redemption is here wholly and absolutely out of place. The question was, Could righteousness be by law as a means of title to life? It was shewn it could not. God does not put man on his trial by redemption, but saves him because he has failed in it, which is just the opposite of law. This passage upsets every truth as to law, redemption, life, and the whole ground and truth of the gospel, and confounds the two covenants together, making the solemn sanction and seal of the old the cause, as the redemptive power, of the new. And think of Christ earning life by the law in virtue of His own redemption—of Himself, therefore! because people are redeemed, Mr. N. says. He enjoyed the fruits of the earth

by virtue of it. Mark here the total ruin of all moral truth in this tract. This reasoning makes the temporal mercies which the raven enjoys the same thing as the terms of moral relationship to God. Supposing the circumstances of the world as to creation, through which Christ passed, were founded in mercy on His work, does that shew the ground of His own personal moral relation to God—His standing and way of life before God? Does the food of a sparrow and the relationship of Christ to God, as to having life, depend on the same efficacy of redemption? In this again you see how circumstances are equivalent to our whole standing before God. Is it not a doctrine which ought to astound and revolt everyone as an inconceivable perversion, that Christ was set to earn86 life under the law, in virtue of His own foreseen redemption? And I pray the reader to recollect, that redemption applies to persons.

Law added another trial to man—man found it to be unto death. That Christ could not do, because He had life and was holy, and, being born under it, did love God with all His heart; and surely we can say, His neighbour more than Himself. Redemption as an effectual thing comes in when sin and transgression too have made all else unavailable to man. Law as a means of life, founded on the redemption wrought by Christ, is a thing unknown to the New Testament. The sentence I have quoted, “God was too holy to propose any grounds of life to a sinful people except through mediation and atoning blood,” subverts every part of the apostle’s reasoning,87 and confounds law and grace, responsibility and gospel, in hopeless confusion; and the putting Christ under it is that reckless irreverence for Christ which is as painful in

these papers as the false doctrine itself, and even more so.

“The law was in this adverse to imputation.” If so, the redemption was not needed to put them under it. If redemption had taken imputation away, then it was not in question in the law.

But if (p. 6) “every individual was placed … upon his own basis” by the law, on a principle that “superseded … the effects of imputation,” so that God promised to recognize the individual condition of each Israelite, according to that which it actually was, how was it “quite open to Him to punish the nation, and to cause righteous individuals to share in the calamities which fell upon those with whom they were nationally associated”? That in grace and by the Spirit they should enter into it, that I understand. So Christ did. But that it should be quite open to God to do die contrary of what He promised, I do not understand. Further, though the law was not a principle of federal imputation, the terms on which Israel were with God were so as regards the government of the nation to the third and fourth generation. He could not forget the innocent blood shed by Manasseh for all the piety of Josiah.

And here I will remark on the objections referred to. Some “have implied that the Son took not the nature of man, but the nature of the brethren.” (P. 9.) What is the difference? I always thought we had the nature of man till now; and what is more, that I had it after regeneration as well as before. I was a man, and I am a man, I should think. Mr. N. adds “meaning apparently the new nature of the regenerate.” What has that to do with their humanity? Besides, it is nonsense. Christ was

the spring and source of that; He could not take it. I have already shewn that it was the relationship and position of the children and brethren he did take, and that the contrary is the form of Mr. N.'s error. I ask only where have they used this language? As to this, as in every other case, we are left in the dark. Christ's humanity was not superhuman; but it was humanity in superhuman association.

In page 27 Mr. N. says, "It has also been said, that the tracts teach, that it was necessary for the Lord Jesus to extricate Himself from its circumstances, before He was fit to be the Lamb slain. But the tracts teach no such thing."

Again, where has it been said?

Mr. N. then admits, they state that "He was able to extricate Himself." Now Mr. N.'s paper in the "Christian Witness" declares He rose out of the region (not He was able to do so) by His own inherent holiness. The tracts say, He was able, and proved He could; and that He did change from Sinai condition (the state in question) to Zion condition, and that He had to find His way by obedience to a point where God could meet Him; so that the tracts do distinctly teach it in the worst way. I must leave everyone to judge of pleading the word "able to do it, and proving He could" along with the other passages, to shew that it was not said He did.

Further, the tracts, it is said, did not teach He had to do so "before He was fit to be the Lamb slain." Where has it been said they did? The notes published by Mr. Harris teach that He had to go through the suffering process, in order to be fit to be a sacrifice. Mr. N. printed corrections of this, by which the reader was to know

what he did, and did not hold, of these notes; and he corrected the word “Lamb,” changing it into “the One” made perfect; but did not correct, “in order to be a sacrifice,” which was the whole point. That was left untouched by his corrections. And he is very precise in the correction and source of the error (see “Observations,” p. 6); only the real weighty point is passed over with an “&c.”

Page 29.—“It has been said that the doctrine of sin imputed to the Lord Jesus, under the federal headship of Adam, is taught in these tracts.” Where has it been said? Mr. Newton did teach it, and was obliged to retract it, and published the tracts as the careful clearing of the doctrines; and he was charged with holding horrible error still, and extracts given to prove it. The words “federal headship” were withdrawn, and his evil doctrine set on what was considered safe ground.

Everyone owns there was relation to Adam; but does not own, that it was such that He had to find His way to a point where God could meet Him, because He realized a place, Adam’s place, of distance from God inconceivable to us, and Israel’s when worse than the golden calf, as His own relation because of Israel, not vicariously.

Page 37.—“Experiences proper to the unconverted.” Mr. N. does not merely speak of Israel; he declares that Jesus had “the exercises of soul which His elect in their unconverted state ought to have, and which they would have, if it were possible for them to know and feel every thing rightly according to God.” (“Observations,” p. 26.) Now whatever nonsense this may be (for it is a contradiction in terms, because, if they had such, they would not be unconverted), yet, taking it as it is, what

feelings does it give to Jesus? What ought an unconverted man to think of himself, if he thought rightly according to God? Only think of applying this to Jesus, and excusing it! As to the Psalms, the note is inconsistent enough. Christ, according to it, had (only they were perfect) the experiences of the stricken remnant of the unconverted elect. But then we are told that to place in His mouth the Psalms which expressed it, as if they were His experience (which Mr. N. does), is most serious error. Now I say the Psalms in general express the feelings of the godly remnant, into which Christ in spirit enters and gives a perfect expression to. Mr. N. has not told us where these, and some other imaginary objections, are any of them to be found. It would have been better to have referred to and answered the plain printed statements, which everybody could have verified. These are all passed over.

Page 19.—"How, then, could such sufferings unfit Him for His last great act of atonement?" It was not the sufferings, but the position and relationship to God in which Mr. N. placed the blessed Lord, which would have unfitted Him. This "relative position" cannot be imputed; that, as we have seen, is the question.

Page 27.—"He proved He was suffering because of relative position on the cross." But there He suffered instead of others, to whom it was due. In life it was not instead of others. To what was it due?

Page 28, 29.—The tracts do distinctly state that He emerged from the circumstances by changing His dispensational relationship to God, as Israel did at John's baptism.

As to federal imputation and the law being adverse to it, and Christ not being under it, Mr. N.'s corrected statement is ("Observations," p. 7), "They state that He was obnoxious, that is, exposed to the inflictions which, in consequence of the curse of the broken law, had gone forth against Israel."

He had not quoted Galatians 3:13, referred to in the tract ("Observations," p. 7): that he can safely deny; but he had quoted Galatians 3:10, as may be easily seen. ("Remarks," p. 5.) They "had earned by their disobedience the fearful inflictions of God's broken law; for it had been said, 'Cursed is he that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them,' Galatians 3:10." With this it was that Jesus associated Himself. It was His relation because of Israel. In the "Observations" the remark on this is, "Who would deny that Elijah was obnoxious to, and that Elijah suffered under, the drought and the famine?" &c. (Page 7.) And let the reader remember that it is stated in the "Letter," that suffering under certain results of Adam's sin, inasmuch as it was by birth, may be attended by all the consequences of that sin.

The reader may also remark (p. 36) the way in which while Christ is made like all in physical suffering, in moral experience He is said to be peculiar and not like us. Where was the sympathy with us then?

I do not enlarge further on the note (p. 37), but only remark, "before they are received and acknowledged by the Lord as His; before, therefore, they convert." Now they cannot before they are received. This is merely the root of all this grievous error, and connects Mr. N.'s prophetic system inseparably with his horrible views as

to Christ; because he makes the sympathies, associations, and experiences of the Lord to be those of the unconverted Jews, His prophetic system requiring Him to treat them as such; and if He does, the book of Psalms obliges him to put Jesus in that position and relationship to God. But all this is unsound. If this note be well weighed, the real bearing of the whole will be found out, though the contradictions, as in all error, are without end. Let him weigh this word (p. 38), "whatsoever shall be according to truth in their view must be included in the perfect view of the Lord Jesus." Because the whole statement rests on this, that, though He felt perfectly rightly, and they imperfectly, they were in the same relationship as giving rise to the feelings. Hence Mr. N. thinks it dreadful, and accuses his opponents as putting the Lord Jesus in the same condition as that of the stricken remnant of Israel. On his ground of identification with the unconverted it would be so. But why stricken remnant? Israel was stricken. But with the converted remnant Jesus had blessed sympathy. Instead of that, what does Mr. N. give us in the Psalms? The Holy Ghost consecrating the self-righteous ungodly feelings of an unconverted remnant, and inspiring men to utter them, and then giving Christ's own experiences which were not these, and in which He had sympathy with nobody at all. And yet so truly identified was He with this unconverted elect remnant in His relationship with God, that He had (though they had not) the experiences which such an unconverted elect man ought to have. They were His feelings of sorrow in the place, as Himself there. And that is the book of Psalms.

So in page 40: “He was an Israelite; but… distinct, separate, alone, and ever … so regarded by God,” and “exercised according to truth.” “But no one … could suppose that I meant by this, that He felt as a mere Israelite, or as other Israelites did. It was not sympathy nor entering into their feelings. It was the expression of His own; and according to the truth of the place He was in, His own relation to God. But in truth it needs no reasoning: ‘Because of thine indignation and thy wrath,’ are plain and unambiguous words; and if we could not comprehend the reason for such a relation of God to His holy and perfect servant, it would be our place to submit our understandings and bow.” “Observations;” and see page 20, 21. See also “Observations,” page 15, where, after quoting Galatians 3:10, and “law worketh wrath,” &c, it is formally stated, that, under a covenant of law, “they were brought under curse;” and that Jesus was “one of a nation that was exposed to all the terrors of Sinai.” See too “Observations,” page 29. “Still,” says the Letter, “the aspect, and the expressed aspect, of God’s mind towards… Israel was one of love.”

I pass over many other points, only remarking on the words, “taking upon Himself the necessity of dying.” He did take that; but that is not being by necessity under death. No two things can be more different and opposite. Had He been by necessity under death, He could not have taken upon Himself the necessity of dying.

66 It is a great mistake to suppose, that, because people have not intelligently received an evil doctrine, they have not suffered by it. The plain simple notion of Christ is undermined; and power against evil and for good

destroyed, though the soul is unaware of it. The sense of the evil is utterly enfeebled, and Christ practically lost.

67 The unsuspecting pupil supposes that he has got, with unusual simplicity and clearness, at Christ's real humanity and association with Israel by birth; but in page 40 we read, "It is true that He was an Israelite, but it is also true, that He was an Israelite distinct, separate and alone, and that He was so regarded by God." The consistency of this with the tracts I do not touch on here.

68 Vicariousness is now denied in the sense of substitution, but maintained in the sense of being for others; but this is immaterial. He was born under the curse of the exiled family, and abode it, though He had risen by obedience out of that region. That is, He was born under the curse He abode on the cross.

69 I am not unaware of what would be attempted to be said: that this did not refer to the person or natures of Christ; but if being a constituted sinner by descent from Adam does not relate to the person or natures of Christ, what does it relate to?

70 Note here, His being a man did not make Him suffer. Adam, before his fall, was as much a man as after. If Christ suffered, because He was a man, it only means a man under the same necessity and relationship to God as Adam in sin. The reader will do well to bear in mind this. Sin did not make Adam a man, but placed man in a certain position before God. The question is, Did Christ take in His life the position of the sinner, as such, before God? Mr. N. held that He did, and worked His way out of it; sometimes stating He got out of it at John's baptism, at other times at the cross. Here, moreover, it is not

merely that Christ suffered as in the service of God, but because He was a man. No one doubts He suffered, and must have been a man to suffer. But was He by necessity of condition, because He was a man, involved in all the consequences of sin? If it was because He was a man, He was—and so indeed Mr. N. states in his tracts —"exposed to" them, though He did not suffer all. Do not let the reader be misled by the word sinless. Damnation is not a sinful thing, it is very righteous. No penalty, as such, is sinful.

71 This is repeated so often, in far stronger terms, that it is useless to quote the passages. See "Remarks," 14, 22; "Observations," 21, 23, 29, 36, 42.

72 Mark the word "interfered" here. It is important as shewing the way in which Mr. N. rests on the eternal personal place of Christ, so as to put His relative place, as incarnate, on the very questionable ground of not interfering with His acceptability. Was it not positively acceptable in itself?

73 Was it an "arrangement" that His "relation to God" was fully represented by that of Israel after making the golden calf?

74 Note here, whether it was His own relation He was thinking about.

75 Circumstances on earth were not the same as in heaven, of course; but in what way did God regard Him on earth?

76 What would have been so? And note here: His place on earth is not in itself a definite position; but His position is the eternal One, and His earthly state a question of accordance with that. Mr. N. is perfectly

aware of this, and in referring to earth uses terms which seem to be all right but which only affirm integrity in conduct, or original personal position. The title to the latter He had foregone. His conduct is not in question. His relation in this world to God is carefully avoided.

77 Here position is no longer equivalent to circumstances. These changes in the sense of words bewilder the mind as to what position and relation mean, because, if personal position mean His Sonship, this is a relative position. Is that changed? If not, where is another relative position assumed. What is it? Is it one of perfect acceptance? If we take it as Godhead, then it has nothing to do with position, or circumstances, or relationship. Godhead place does not touch or mingle with relative position. Our question is, "His relation to God as a man and an Israelite." Godhead place cannot be brought in here. Mr. N. did at first apply Romans 5:19. That was wrong. What is right? The principles of the tracts, which made Him learn to find His way by obedience to a place where God could meet Him? His own relation (on whatever reason) to God being feebly expressed by the state of Israel after worshipping the golden calf? What was Israel's relation then?

78 But if He forewent what was due to His personal position, what was His relation to God?

79 Note the careful confusion here. "He forwent the title of His personal position the moment He took flesh." What personal position had He then on taking flesh? Any or none? That is, in flesh. Was his personal position solely what He was in Godhead and eternal Sonship? or had He, or did He take, any personal acceptable position

on taking flesh to fulfil His Father's will? did He forego that in taking it, or was there none? This is the point.

80 That is, He never stood before God on earth according to the title of a relative position down here, in personal acceptance. It is said indeed, "as an Israelite under law He had a title to all blessing." (Page 24.) But this was acquired by holiness, not (as we have seen) in His relation as such before God. Another ground is stated (p. 6) in the letter to get out of this difficulty, namely, "the son shall not be punished for the iniquity of the father." But if not, and it was merely under governmental arrangements, by which He inherited a certain position from His mother as Daniel might, how so? This plain question still recurs: What was His relation to God?

81 I must here just remark, in passing, that throughout this Letter we find objections, said to have been raised, quoted from nowhere and nobody, and answers given demolishing them: the objections not being the real ones at all.

82 Did He hereby cease to be man? not at all. It is, though "according to God," in man and as man these thoughts and feelings are to be found. And this extends itself to all the sorrows and the pressure of death itself upon his soul in thought. He had human feelings as to what lay upon Him and before Him, but God was the spring of His estimate of it all. Besides, the manifestation of God was in His ways. We had known man innocent in suitable circumstances; and guilt, subject to misery; but in Christ we have perfectness in relation to God in every way, in infallibly maintained communion in the midst of all the circumstances of

sorrow, temptation, and death, by which He was beset, the spring of divine life in the midst of evil, so that His every thought as man was perfection before God, and perfect in that position. This was what marked His state as being down here this new thing.

83 Hunger, thirst, uneasiness, are not a kind of humanity, but a state of circumstances in which it is placed. That Christ came into these circumstances is undoubted. I have not different humanity when I am hungry and when I am full. But I am placed in a condition in which hunger and starvation may fall upon me if God so permits. Who will say if Adam had not had food he would not have been hungry? But God had not set him in that condition. Further, even as to death, there is much misapprehension. No creature is, in itself, in a state which cannot perish. That is the condition of existence of God alone, “who only hath immortality.” If Adam was not mortal before he sinned, it was by God’s continual sustaining power—we may say, by Christ’s. By God’s appointment, when man sinned, he passed out of that state of continually sustained existence, and was not to continue beyond a limited period in his actual condition of existence. This was not humanity, but man’s state, as such, when Christ came. Now, Christ came expressly to die, and took all this sorrow in its full weight upon His soul; He was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death. But His doing this in obedience, “Lo I come to do thy will,” to glorify God and manifest and accomplish His love, exalt His righteousness and be the suffering vessel of witness to the claims of this necessity, was infinitely acceptable to God, so that His relationship to God as being in flesh, and by being in it, was one of infinite acceptability to

God. But, though He came on purpose to die, because of the ruined condition in which man was, to raise His people, and so was in a capacity of dying, as made lower than the angels, yet it was in such sort that it should be a matter of pure grace in Him to give up His life. He laid it down of Himself. He had authority to lay it down and authority to take it again, still in obedience. “This commandment have I received of my Father.” That was the real condition of Christ’s death. He came to die, but He came to give His life. He had life in Himself. The condition of His existence here was to lay down by grace, obediently, but of Himself, His life. He was not, as of God, in a condition of losing it. He was not in Adam’s condition. For Adam could not lay down as Christ, or take again his life, nor had he life in himself. To speak of Him as liable to death, if something had happened, is mere irreverence—He was in a position of commanding His own death and life, but could do this, because of His perfection, only in obedience to His Father’s will—it is nonsense; because in the supposition is denied the condition of His existence, which was to lay it down; and, as I have said, if Adam had so lived under violence, and been hewed in pieces, would He have survived as a living man? The answer was, That was not His condition of existence. When Christ gave Himself up to the appointed consequences of sin, He took the wrath and the consequences. He came with that purpose, so that it was always before Him. His relationship to God in this (yea, because of this) was of infinite acceptance; not only because He was eternal Son of God, the title of which He did not forego, as towards God, in assuming flesh, but was in His acceptance all through. But the position itself that He assumed was a cause of infinite

acceptance, and in that He stood as man even in what He suffered. “Therefore doth my Father love me.”

84 This was His relative position as regards even Israel. Any other would have been morally incompatible with His being and proper relationship to God. A saint may feel the guilt: into that Christ could enter, but He could not be in it in His relationship to God save vicariously.

85 Mr. N.’s criticism on this is quite unfounded: paraplhsivw", if in any other than an entirely general sense, would have the contrary sense to that which he gives it. In scripture itself it is only used once more, “He was sick nigh unto death.” (Phil. 2:27.)

86 Mr. N. says, this expression is applied to Christ by one of the principal objectors to the doctrine, in a paper in the “Words of Truth;” but, as usual, omits saying where. What may be in the “Words of Truth” I know not, for I have not read them; but be it where it may, it is a horrible and inexcusable statement. Air. N. says it may be in a good meaning. It cannot possibly be so; because Christ, having life in Himself, could never be said to earn it, though what He did may have been such as merited it; but to speak of His earning life upsets His person in a way which no one who knows that person ought to pass as allowable. Mr. N., however, does not tell us where in the “Words of Truth;” and the reader had better reserve his judgment till he finds the passage.

87 No one can be familiar with St. Paul’s Epistles but must see that all his reasonings on the nature and dispensation of law, as contrasted with redemption, are absolutely incompatible with this monstrous statement.

The Bethesda Circular

Beloved Brethren,

I feel bound to present to you the case of Bethesda. It involves to my mind the whole question of association with brethren, and for this very simple reason, that if there is incapacity to keep out that which has been recognized as the work and power of Satan, and to guard the beloved sheep of Christ against it—if brethren are incapable of this service to Christ, then they ought not to be in any way owned as a body to whom such service is confided: their gatherings would be really a trap laid to ensnare the sheep. But I will not suppose this, my heart would not; nor will I suppose that the influence or reputation of individuals will induce them to do in one case what they would not do in another. I press therefore the position of Bethesda on brethren. It is at this moment acting in the fullest and most decided way as the supporter of Mr. Newton, and the evil associated with him, and in the way in which the enemy of souls most desires it should be done. The object of Mr. Newton and his friends is not now openly to propagate his doctrine in the offensive form in which it has roused the resistance of every godly conscience that cared for the glory and person of the blessed Lord, but to palliate and extenuate the evil of the doctrine, and get a footing as Christians for those who hold it, so as to be able to spread it and put sincere souls off their guard. In this way precisely Bethesda is helping them in the most effectual way they can: I shall now state how. They have received the members of Ebrington Street with a positive refusal to investigate the Plymouth errors. And

at this moment the most active agents of Mr. Newton are assiduously occupied amongst the members of Bethesda, in denying that Mr. Newton holds errors, and explaining and palliating his doctrines, and removing any apprehension of them from the minds of saints, and successfully occupied in it. Mr. Müller has declared openly that Mr. James Harris was doing a work of darkness, the steps he took in exposing Mr. Newton's error, though he had not given himself the trouble to enquire, from those acquainted with them, the circumstances under which it took place. Mr. Müller stated to the saints that Mr. Newton had retracted publicly before God and the world, with the fullest confession, the error he had held; which every one acquainted with the facts knows to be as contrary to those facts as any statement can possibly be. And I must add that Mr. Müller, in justifying Mr. Newton in this way, without informing himself by either studying the tracts or reading the answer to, or enquiring of those who were dissatisfied with, Mr. Newton's retractation, was evidently acting with the utmost prejudice, and misleading the saints by it. It is remarkable to shew the practical working of it that as Mr. Muller was stating this in the assembly, a member of it present said to one sitting by them, That is not so, for Mr. Newton was diligently persuading me of the truth of his doctrine, as I was sitting by his side at tea the other evening.

A paper was read, signed by Messrs. Craik and Muller, and eight others, to the body at Bethesda, in which they diligently extenuate and palliate Mr. Newton's doctrine, though refusing investigation of it, and blame as far as they can those who have opposed it. I do not charge Mr. Muller with himself holding Mr. Newton's errors. He

was pressed to say in public what he had said in private of Mr. Newton's tracts, and at first refused. Afterwards he declared that he had said there were very bad errors, and that he did not know to what they would lead. Upon what grounds persons holding them are admitted and the errors refused to be investigated, if such be his judgment, I must leave every one to determine for themselves. I only ask, Is it faithfulness to Christ's sheep? Further, while it is true that Mr. Craik may be by no means prepared to assert that Mr. Newton's doctrines are all according to the truth of God, and that I have no reason to say that he is not sound in the faith, yet it is certain that he is so far favourably disposed to Mr. Newton's views, and in some points a partaker of them, as to render it impossible that he could guard with any energy against them. The result is, that members of Ebrington Street, active and unceasing agents of Mr. Newton, holding and justifying his views, are received at Bethesda; and the system which so many of us have known as denying the glory of the Lord Jesus (and that, when fully stated, in the most offensive way) and corrupting the moral rectitude of every one that fell under its power—that this system, though not professed, is fully admitted and at work at Bethesda. This has taken place in spite of its driving out a considerable number of undeniably godly brethren, whose urgent remonstrance was slighted; in spite of the known confessions of the brethren once involved and teachers of Mr. Newton's doctrine, and now through the Lord's mercy delivered from it; in spite of the strong and urgent statements of Mr. Chapman, of Barnstaple, who above all enjoyed the confidence of the brethren at Bethesda; and in spite of all that has passed in the way of discovery of moral dishonesty connected with it. I had nothing whatever to

say to the original movement of the brethren who objected at Bristol, and was long wholly ignorant of it, but having stated to Mr. Muller that I should gladly go to Bethesda, I was, on learning the facts, obliged to write and say I could not. This led to a correspondence, and at last to my seeing the brethren, Muller and Craik, so that all this has been, as far as I am concerned, fully before them. There has a great deal taken place and passed very painful and unsatisfactory; but I go on the broad ground of faithfulness to the whole church of God, and each individual sheep beloved of Christ, that (as far as we are concerned) they may be guarded against what so many of us know to be horribly subversive of His glory, and all moral rectitude in His saints. Now, beloved brethren, I see in scripture that one effect of faith is (whatever difficulties it may produce, or however it may seem to obstruct the removal of them, thereby forcing us to wait on God) to make us respect what God respects; I do not therefore desire in the smallest degree to diminish the respect and value which any may feel personally for the brethren Craik and Muller, on the grounds of that in which they have honoured God by faith. Let this be maintained as I desire to maintain it, and have maintained in my intercourse with them; but I do call upon brethren by their faithfulness to Christ, and love to the souls of those dear to Him in faithfulness, to set a barrier against this evil. Woe be to them if they love the brethren Muller and Craik or their own ease more than the souls of saints dear to Christ! And I plainly urge upon them that to receive anyone from Bethesda (unless in any exceptional case of ignorance of what has passed) is opening the door now to the infection of the abominable evil from which at so much painful cost we have been delivered. It has been

formally and deliberately admitted at Bethesda under the plea of not investigating it (itself a principle which refuses to watch against roots of bitterness), and really palliated. And if this be admitted by receiving persons from Bethesda, those doing so are morally identified with the evil, for the body so acting is corporately responsible for the evil they admit. If brethren think they can admit those who subvert the person and glory of Christ, and principles which have led to so much untruth and dishonesty, it is well they should say so, that those who cannot may know what to do. I only lay the matter before the consciences of brethren, urging it upon them by their fidelity to Christ. And I am clear in my conscience towards them. For my own part I should neither go to Bethesda in its present state, nor while in that state go where persons from it were knowingly admitted. I do not wish to reason on it here, but lay it before brethren, and press it on their fidelity to Christ and their care of His beloved saints.

Ever yours in His grace, J.N.D.

P. S. While I go upon and press the plain broad ground of the bounden duty of guarding the sheep of Christ from the secret bringing in of that which horribly denies His glory and corrupts and demoralizes His saints, I ask if it is not a monstrous thing that the brethren at Bethesda, on the ground of refusing to investigate, should force hundreds of brethren and numerous gatherings of them, to receive those from whom they have separated after the most painful and trying enquiry, as holding doctrines subversive of Christ, and guilty of conduct unrepented of, and which Christians could not associate with? And they have gone farther than not investigating it—they have allowed the most elaborate eulogies of Mr. Newton

before the assembly, and refused permission to touch upon the doctrine or shew its evil.

The Christ Of God, The True Centre Of Union

The cross may gather all, both Jew and Gentile; but they are gathered to Christ, not to the cross; and the difference is a most important and essential one, because it is of all importance that the person of the Son of God should have its place. Christ Himself, not the cross of Christ, is the centre of union. The two or three are gathered to His name, not to the cross. Scripture is uniform in its testimony as to this.

But further, where saints are gathered in unity, without any questionings, they have the truth and holiness to guard. It never was, nor I trust ever will be, the notion of brethren, that the truth of Christ's person, or godliness of walk, was to be sacrificed to outward unity. It is making brethren of more importance than Christ. And even so, love to the brethren is false; for if true, it is, John assures us, "love in the truth, for the truth's sake." Supposing a person denied the divinity of Christ, or the resurrection of His body, still declaring his belief in the cross—supposing he declared his belief in the cross and resurrection, but declared it was only a testimony of God's love, and no substitution or expiatory value in it, as many clergymen of high reputation now do—is all this to be immaterial? I shall be told that no true believer could do this. In the first place, a true believer may be seduced into error; and further, the test offered becomes thus the opinion formed that a man is a true believer, and not the plain fundamental truth of God and His holiness.

If it be granted that the gathering is round the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is quite true; but what person? Would it be equal if He were owned to be God, or if it were denied? If He were the Son, the object of the Father's delight at all times, or if He were a man or really risen from the dead? If it be said, All this is supposed, then neutrality is a delusion and denies itself. For what I insist on is, that I must have a true Christ, and that I am bound to maintain the truth of Christ in my communion. I am aware that it is stated we can deal with conduct (with morality), but not with these questions. But this is just what appears to me so excessively evil. Decency of conduct is necessary to communion; but a man may blaspheme Christ— that is no matter: it is a matter, not of conduct, but of conscience. It is hinted, that perhaps, if it be a teacher, he may be dealt with. In truth, the apostle desires even a woman not to let such a person into her house. It is not therefore so difficult to deal with. Just think of a system which makes blasphemous views of Christ, which may amount to a denial of Him, to be a matter of private conscience, having nothing to do with communion! And here is the very root of the question.

I affirm that that is not a communion of believers at all which is not founded on the acknowledgment of a true Christ. Where the truth as to this is commonly held and taught, I may have no need for particular enquiry. But that is not the case here. If I find a person even in such a case denying the truth as to Christ, communion is impossible, because we have not a common Christ to have communion in. But here all faithfulness is thrown overboard. No call to confess a true Christ is admitted: it is a new test or term of communion!

We are to meet as Christians; but a man is not a Christian in profession who professes a false Christ. I cannot judge the state of a person's heart while his profession is false. I may hope he is only misled, but cannot accept his profession. If wholly or not willingly ignorant, it is another matter: but we have to do with the case where, heretical views being held, they are declared to be matter of private conscience; that a false Christ is as good as a true one, if a person's conduct is good— we can judge only of the last! Now this principle is worse than false doctrine; because it knows the falseness and blasphemy of it, and then says it is no matter. I do not own such meetings as meetings of believers; for fundamental error as to Christ is immaterial for communion—a matter, not of conduct, but of conscience.

"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth, the Lord Jesus, and believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Suppose a person held Christ was a mere man, and quoted the passages to prove it that God raised Him, and made Him Lord and Christ, would he be received? If not, you do try whether a man has the faith of God's elect: otherwise a Socinian is admissible as a believer; or you make your opinion of his being a believer the test, entirely independent of the faith of Christ. It is said, You can only require a person to say he receives all in the scriptures. The supposed Socinian would accept such a test at once. They do so. Why should you ask even that? A man may be a believer, and a rationalist in theory (sad as such a thought is), and not accept all the word of God, and say, I am a believer in the cross: you have no right to make a difficulty. If after this you object to any doctrine, or insist on any

truth, you have not even scripture to lean on against his denial of it. Scripture says “whom I love in the truth,” and “for the truth’s sake.” The other principle says, That is no matter. You think the person spiritual, a believer; the truth of Christ is no matter—a false one is just as good.

I add no human document to the divine; I make no term of communion besides Christ. God requires that those who have blasphemed Christ should not be admitted. I am told that it is a matter of conscience, &c, and people cannot read doctrines to know whether He is blasphemed or not. These blasphemers have been received deliberately and avowedly, upon the ground that no enquiry is to be made; and therefore the plea of additional bonds or terms of communion is all dust thrown in the eyes. Is it a new term of communion to affirm that faith, faith in a true Christ (not a false one), is required for communion, and that blasphemers of Christ are not to be received? That is the true question. If persons think they are not safe in reading the publications, how are they safe in fellowship and intimacy with those who have written or refuse to disown them? I confess I do not admire this argument. Simple believers do not hesitate, reasoning minds do. Ask a truehearted believer if Christ had the experience of an unconverted man? He would soon say, I will have nothing to do with one who says that. A reasoning mind might make it a mere matter of personal conscience. Is the truth, of Christ’s person and of His relationship to God a variety of judgment on a particular doctrine? Here is the whole question—value for Christ, and the truth as to Himself.

Definitions are not required, but that when blasphemous: definitions have been made, the blasphemers should be refused.. Is it the Shibboleth of a party to reject such doctrines, as that Christ was relatively farther from God than man when they made the golden calf; and that He heard with an attentive heart the gospel from John Baptist, and so passed from law under grace? Or is it faithfulness to Christ to extenuate them by saying, that in such deep doctrines we shall not express ourselves alike?

It is not real love to the members, nor love for Christ's sake, to despise Christ so as to bear blasphemies against Him. The truth of His person and glory is a test for those who are faithful to Him. I cannot talk of liberty of conscience to blaspheme Christ, or have communion with it. Christ, not opinion, is the centre of union; but I never meant, nor do I mean, that a true Christ and a false one were equally good as a centre, provided people are amiable one with another; for this means that union is man's amiability and the denial of Christ. What do I want of union, if it be not union in Christ, according to the power of life, through the Holy Ghost?

The business of those united is Christ's glory. If Christians ever unite on a condition of that not being essential, their union is not christian union at all. I have no reason for union but Christ, the living Saviour. I do not want any union but that which makes Him the centre, and the all and the hope of it. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren;" but to make this a plea for indifference to Christ's personal glory, in order to be one with him who, calling himself a brother, denies and undermines it, is, in my mind, wickedness.

J.N.D.

Letter To The Rev. Mr. Guers

On The Subject Of His Note On The Errors Of Mr. B. W. Newton.89 I have just read the note inserted in "Irvingism and Mormonism," page 120:—

"Mr. Benjamin Newton combated the Irvingite error in England; but in combating, he was unhappy enough perhaps to yield to it a little in expression more than fundamentally. He owned it afterwards and even bumbled himself for it in a paper which he entitled: 'A Statement and Acknowledgment respecting certain doctrinal errors.' In this document, dated November 26, 1847, he declares that what drew him into the error was a false view of Romans 5, but that a deeper study of this passage was afterwards used to rectify his misapprehension. He understood and taught from that time that, Jesus not being in a federal relation (in a relation of alliance) with Adam, Romans 5: was not at all applicable to Him; that the sin of our first father could not be imputed to Him, and that if the Lord participated in certain consequences of the fall, such as hunger, thirst, pain, death, it is that, having voluntarily taken human nature in the womb of the woman, He had personally associated Himself with a race condemned of God. Such is the idea that Mr. Benjamin Newton develops at length in the above-mentioned paper. (Some persons none the less persist in attributing to him until this day an error which he publicly disavowed already five years ago.)"

Your animosity must have been very great, my brother, against "some persons," to engage yourself, in the desire of blaming them, in becoming guarantee for the

orthodoxy of Mr. Newton, and in compromising your own by making yourself thus at one with his views on the point to which you allude. The displeasure with which you regard those brethren has made you bold, even, it seems to me, a little rash. There is hardly any longer a person in England who justifies the doctrine of Mr. Newton. Those who take pleasure as much as you in blaming “some persons” do so while declaring that they are much more faithful than themselves in rejecting the errors of Mr. Newton and in abstaining from all fellowship with him. There is a long time that he hides his doctrine; it is even said (may God grant that it may be so!) that he begins to own that he has been in error. There remains to him only a little surrounding of personal friends, and a great number who would hail with joy and thanksgiving his return to the truth by the grace of the Holy Spirit! For my part, much as I have loved him, spite of faults, and who never knew, as a man, how to suppress an old affection (you ought to be a witness of it, my brother), for me, his restoration would be a subject of profound joy.

But where it is a question of souls and of Christ, there are other considerations than the pains of an affection shut up in the heart, the circumstances of which render the expression impossible. The truth by which souls live, the Christ that they are called to adore, are of more importance than personal affection. Yet, my brother, if you had preserved more in your heart those affections, you would have said, Ought I to condemn, designating them as “some persons,” brethren without hearing them? You might have had useful references on this subject; you should not have despised the help that more complete information would have afforded you. You have

not read, I hope, all that has been published on this subject. I will not believe that you could have sought to justify, as you do as much as you can, the doctrine of Mr. Newton, apart from a mistake frankly owned on his part on the subject of Romans 5:19, if you had known what was taught on this point for some years and what was published to justify and explain his views. But if you have not read it, you have pretended to judge the merits of a serious controversy with regard to the person of Jesus without even taking knowledge of what he whom you justify has written on it, or of what has been said in reply to him.

You might have had the confessions of the three associates of Mr. Newton in the dissemination of this doctrine for a very long time—of Christians who have been brought with grief and pain of heart to own that, seduced by Mr. Newton, they had taught errors which overthrew Christianity. You might have known that these friends of Mr. Newton and others who had had their eyes opened had said that he should retract, not his application of Romans 5; 19, but the groundwork of these doctrines; and that he had formally and positively refused it. You might have possessed the notes of his teaching carefully circulated by his disciples wherever this could be done with assurance— disciples who, having been brought out of the error, communicated those pieces to others, for the purpose of warning Christians and putting them on their guard. You might have had the publications of Mr. Newton himself.

I am about to give you, my brother, some quotations from these writings. First, I will translate some extracts from notes of teachings spread by his disciples and received by these persons as the truths that he has

taught; and afterwards some extracts of tracts by Mr. Newton himself—tracts that he published, when he was accused of teaching errors, for explaining and justifying himself. In the first we shall find the doctrines of Mr. Newton such as they are in fact disseminated; in the second we shall possess his views, such as he published them when he wished to set himself right with Christians on this point.

With regard to the first extracts, we have them confirmed at bottom by the fellow-labourers of Mr. Newton as being their doctrine; and one of them has said that there were things more evil still.

As to those that come in the second place, Mr. Newton himself is responsible for them. At the same time it will be well to add some details with regard to those two tracts. Mr. Newton withdrew them for the purpose of considering them anew. He never retracted their doctrine: quite the contrary, he published a third tract, in which he declares the principles of the two first justified, though he might have removed some ambiguity in certain expressions or modified them. However Mr. Newton does not flinch from explaining or defending the most minute statements of the tracts. He declares that the great truths which relate to the person and to the expiatory work of the Lord Jesus are preserved intact in these tracts.

I will present you now with the extracts: first, extracts from notes of the teachings of Mr. Newton. They are taken from “Observations on the Doctrines of Notes of Lectures on Psalms 23, 31, 38, concerning the sufferings of Christ, &c, by J. G. Deck.” “He had continually to be exercised as one put in the distance and cast off, sorely

tried by Satan. The result depended upon His own exertions, for redemption was not yet accomplished. He had to cry for everything He had to receive—for things that came to Him from God in consequence of His conduct in them. Ours is a very different condition; to us all blessings come in virtue of Him, but every blessing He received was made to depend upon Himself; and without His faithfulness His blessing would not have come—so entirely was His place that of a man finding His way from the distance back to God; for nearness to God was not given to Him as it is to us now. He stood merely on His righteousness, receiving the reward of His integrity. He had to wait and cry for it, so that there was an exercise of spirit that cannot be in us. He had to find His way from this distance to God; but we are born into the place in which Jesus now is, and from whence He pours out blessings to us. Accordingly, in Psalm 119 (which gives the earliest of His experience, during all the time of His growing up, until He came out in His public character), He was waiting on God for His shepherd care. 'Unless thy law had been my delights, I should have perished in my affliction.' His place was that of one who desired the shepherd care, as of a lamb distant from the fold, perishing for want of care. He was made to wait for it; the answer to His cry was not immediate, to be reminded as it were of the place in which He had cast His lot, in becoming connected with the family of Israel, on whom the curse had fallen. To such a man there could be no acknowledged claim, but it became a mercy that He should be allowed to find out a way by which He could please God." (On Psalm 23, p. 12.)

“Hear Him saying, ‘My soul cleaveth to the dust.’ The soul naturally could never rise higher.”

“The baptism of John was the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins past; that afforded an opportunity for Israel to be forgiven, and a new account opened, so as for fresh ground to be taken, so that any who repented of the sins of Israel might have all past sins blotted out; that is the way that many preach the Gospel, as though it were only the remission of past sins, not present or future: That was John’s baptism: and if any person in Israel were able to take and maintain new ground; to get rid of past sins, and keep himself clear of future ones; it would have been of great advantage to him. Until that time Jesus had been under the weight of all the sins of Israel, and because He belonged to that nation. He could never have taken new ground, except that it could have been said that past sins might be forgiven; but He did take and maintain it afterwards, so it was of great use to Him. The baptism of John afforded means by which Jesus was able to take new ground on the earth.”

I lay aside many other things.

On Psalm 38: “He was not allowed to suffer only once, or for a few years at the end of His course, but through the greater part of His sojourn here, He was exposed to suffering as described in this psalm, much more I believe than after. This psalm belongs to the period in the history of our Lord, when He was living in retirement, before He came publicly forth to serve: the requirements and interests of His service were, I doubt not, a relief to Him after having gone through many a long year’s experience, such as this psalm contains.

‘There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger. For mine iniquities are gone over mine head, … I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly. I go mourning all the day long.’ All these things He was made to pass through before He became like the ground flour, or like the ear of corn roasted before the fire: that made Him fit to be owned, as He was when the Holy Ghost descended from heaven, a voice was heard from thence, which said, ‘This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’

“But the exercises of the soul of Jesus were of a most peculiar character, for He was always allowed to meet them in His weakness, and to find wrath in them: there was ever upon Him and against Him the wrathful countenance of God, and He was allowed to meet the sense of this; strong in His own integrity, but in the weakness of humanity, always able to say to God, ‘In innocency I have washed my hands. I follow the thing that good is.’ This was His struggle,” &c.

“In such circumstances there are two things we would naturally desire—to find support and consolation in those whom we desire to love for the Lord’s sake; to find comfort and solace from them; and moreover, we should find much consolation by being helped and distinctly sustained by God Himself: then we may say, if I am sustained by the comfort of those dear to me, and if more than all the Lord sustains me, I do not much mind opposition; I will leave it in the hands of the Lord; but if instead of this it pleased God to confront us with His terrors as He did Jesus with His wrath, how different would it be! He placed Himself against the Lord Jesus, rebuked Him in His wrath, and chastened Him in hot displeasure, so that His arrows stuck fast in Him, and His hand pressed Him sore. ‘There is no soundness in

my flesh,' He says, 'because of thine anger,' &c. So here we find indeed a peculiar relation of God to Him; here was affliction and disease sent to Him, so that His beauty was made to consume away like a moth; and that under the chastisement and rebuke of God. Whenever suffering comes it is painful, but if as rebuke and chastisement from God to whom we were looking for help, it is bitter indeed: this was the case with the Lord Jesus, not because of any iniquity or sin in Himself, but because He had identified Himself with others, connected Himself with humanity in a fallen world, and God was against it: and more than that, He had become identified not only with man but with Israel, the chosen part of mankind, blessed with instruction and light which they had sinned against and despised, so heavy wrath from God had gone out against them. Jesus became connected both with man and Israel, and their sins and iniquities were like a garment put upon Him: so all the rebukes of God against the world and Israel were as arrows made to enter into His soul! this was the reason why God set His face against Him. He had connected Himself with others; and if the cup of bitterness belonged to them, He must share it with them. This was the real and true experience of the Lord Jesus; and it became manifest to the eyes of all around, so that lover and friend forsook Him. They did not understand why He who once increased in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man, should be brought to a condition from which men would naturally shrink. Therefore every tongue moved against Him, they reviled, mocked, and despised Him, but He 'as a deaf man heard not, and as a dumb man opened not His mouth;' that is, He felt so crushed that He did not mind what they said; it could not be more bitter than what He

was enduring. He knew it was of no use to vindicate Himself or reprove them for their ignorance and cruelty, so He tried not to hear what was passing around Him; all He said was, 'In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust!' Here was His faith: this was the object of the Lord's dealing with Him, to bring out this faith. When there was no success in His ministry, no lover or friend with Him: God Himself against Him, and His hand so displayed in vexing Him; as for the eye of the world to see its results; when those who had loved, forsook and stood aloof from Him, and all who hated Him, rejoiced and mocked, and there was not one thing to relieve Him; no conscious strength in His own soul, none of that sustainment which the saints of God know; in the absence of all that He could say, 'In thee, O Lord, do I hope,' and in conclusion, 'O Lord, my salvation:' so His faith never gave way; if it had, His perfectness would have been over."

On Psalm 31.

"He was emphatically God's righteous servant. But there was also another in which He stood, as one who felt He was laden with sin before God. He could say, 'Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up.' It was most needful that He should be in this place to have the true experience which fallen man has, our experience. For what is the great characteristic of our condition? Is it not that we are placed at a distance from God on account of sin? This was one great element in the experience of the Lord Jesus. Therefore we find such words as these: 'My strength faileth me.' Instead of being treated as the righteous servant, He was pressed upon and hated by those around; He felt as if His bones were out of joint, through the chastening of the hand of

God upon Him, and that because of iniquity. He was able to say, ‘Mine eye is consumed with grief; yea, my soul and my belly.’ All that indicates the intensity and depth of His feelings, and the inward consuming of that terrible power which comes from God against sin, which withers man’s strength, and causes his ‘beauty to consume away like a moth’— this was the kind of discipline He had to receive from God Himself, these were the real feelings and sufferings of His soul, the effects of which were manifested. His eye really ‘waxed dim,’ and from what persons saw, they felt He was accursed from God; and the consequence was, they fled from Him; so He who was admired in youth and wondered at, and who grew in favour with God and man, who was thought to be something great in the world, was in process of time forgotten by those who once knew Him; as He says,’ I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind, I am like a broken vessel.’ He became like an earthen vessel perishing under some rude blow; and all this while was being consumed under the heavy hand of God. In such circumstances, still to trust in God, and cry to Him, was most difficult; but this was a part of die perfectness of the Lord Jesus. Two things are necessary to perfectness of spirit, and were connected with Him: —First, that perfect brokenness of spirit which is proper for fallen man in this world, as He says, ‘I have trusted in thy mercies.’ This was different from saying, ‘O God of my righteousness!’ So He was made to feel entirely as if He had been a sinner, much more acutely than we ever can, for we know not what distance in wrath is. He felt this and remembered God’s mercies. This was the reason why He was represented by the finest ground flour; that is, something ground as fine as possible under the millstone, by the pressure of the instrument.”

Such are some extracts from doctrines gathered, or from notes taken with much care at His teachings, and which were dispersed among all those who were under his influence or whom they sought to reach. The fellow-labourers who have renounced it own it to have been what they had taught. Their confessions are published.

It will be remarked that it was principally before the baptism of John that all this took place: after that event Jesus was able to put Himself on a new ground by the pardon which was found there offered to Israel. Before, He was at a distance from God. He was not a sinner, but His relation with God, as a man and an Israelite, was that of a sinner in distance and under the curse. Of this He made experience and in a manner more painful than we, so that in proportion as years elapsed, His strength was exhausted under the influence of the distress of His soul, and sickness consumed Him. This was not the expiatory work of the cross; it was the grinding the flour for the offering that was to be made of it. It was the experience He made of His relationship as born in this world, a man and an Israelite.

I will now cite the words of Mr. Newton himself, with the remark that I insist, like the author himself, not on words but on the matter of the thought which runs through all his teachings.

In the retractation of Mr. Newton he declares positively that it was not by imputation of Adam’s sin that Christ suffered during His life; and that he ought not to have said anything which would attribute any of His sufferings to what was imputed to Him. You will understand, my brother, that it is no question here of the sufferings of Jesus on the cross, of His expiatory death.

There is no question of them here, though in appearance the words of Mr. Newton go up to that. I do not cite them the least in the world to draw this consequence from them. It would be unjust, because they are His sufferings during His life which alone are in question. I apply that which he says purely and simply to His sufferings during His life. Those sufferings did not spring from imputation.

Having made this preliminary remark, I will cite the words of Mr. Newton. The tract of Mr. Newton himself against Irvingism had attributed those sufferings to imputation, while saying that He was there since His birth. He was born under the curse of the exiled family, a curse He endured by imputation (vicariously incurred). Imputation is now retracted. Alas! the other part of the doctrine is not at all so. Mr. Newton had applied Romans 5:19 (“by the disobedience of one many were made sinners”) to Christ—that is to say, that Christ, being born man, was constituted sinner by the sin of Adam, though He had none in His own person. He has retracted the doctrine that this had place in virtue of the imputation of the sin of Adam, and he no longer applies the passage to the Lord Jesus. I will say a word on this retractation lower down; now having shewn that it is no question of imputation, I will cite what is said in the tracts of Mr. Newton, of which he has affirmed the great principles in a tract published since the retractation. There he declares that the doctrine of imputation is in opposition to the radical principle of the (two) tracts, namely, that of sufferings by voluntary association.

Now then see what is, according to this doctrine of Mr. Newton, the position of Christ by voluntary association; for I believe that in fact he has laid down his doctrine

much more distinctly by excluding from it the application of Romans 5 and the idea of imputation—doctrine which does not agree well with the doctrine of the tract, namely, voluntary association. He had made confusion between transmitted consequences and imputation! Let us take the transmitted consequences, leaving aside the doctrine of imputation.

In the Psalms we find not only the sufferings of those hours of public service, not only the sufferings and the reproach which belonged to Him as servant ordained of God, but sufferings which pertained to Him because He was a man and because He was an Israelite. He was made sensible under the hand of God of the condition into which man had sunk and yet more into which Israel had sunk in His sight.

“He was born into the midst of the fallen family of man… But He had not merely become connected with the sorrows and sufferings of man. There was Israel… They had fallen from that ground of professed obedience, and, like Adam, had earned by their disobedience fearful inflictions of God’s broken law, for if it had been said, Cursed is he that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them… His faith, His prayer, His obedience, all contributed to preserve Him from many things to which He was by His relative position exposed, and by which He was threatened… He was made experimentally to prove the reality of that condition into which others, but more especially Israel, had sunk themselves by their disobedience to God’s holy law, a condition out of which He was able to extricate Himself, and from which He proved that He could extricate Himself by His own perfect obedience … and then to see Him emerging out of all the miseries and

hindrances of Israel's condition. … In consequence of His position, He would be obnoxious, that is, exposed to all the inflictions that the hand of God might be directing against that evil generation … God pressed these things on the apprehension of His soul according to His own power and holiness, and caused Him to feel as a part of that which was exposed to the judgments of His heavy hand… He had to realize the condition into which man and Israel had fallen… The difference between Sinai, the mountain of blackness, and Zion, the mountain of light, and grace and blessing, the place of the church of the firstborn, might be used to illustrate the difference between the two dispensational positions held by the Lord Jesus in the midst of Israel previous to His baptism, and that which He dispensationally and ministerially took when anointed by the Holy Ghost… and as if in token of this great change in His dispensational relations, for I anxiously repeat, that there was no change in Him personally, heaven, which had not before been opened over Him, was opened over His head… If He was made to realize the distance into which man had wandered out of the presence of God; and if He realized also the distance of Israel … I believe it to have been chiefly, if not exclusively before His baptism. Observe, that I am speaking of the exercises of His heart from God … the manner in which He was directly exercised by God."

"The Lord Jesus was caused to appreciate to the full the relation in which Israel (and Himself because of Israel) was standing before God. We may hear of Sinai or think of Sinai, but Jesus realized it as the power of an actual subsisting relation betwixt His people and God … years passed over His head thus. … He was not found in

dissociation from others. He was standing in closest association with those dispensational relations to God, was marked by the darkness and lightnings and voices of Sinai… Sinai marked the relation of God to Israel when Jesus came— and the worship of the golden calf (though that would but feebly represent their ripened evil) may be taken as marking their relation to God. And since God in exercising the soul of His servants must exercise them according to truth … we might be very sure even if the evidence of scripture were less direct than it is that the Lord Jesus was caused to appreciate to the full the relation in which Israel (and Himself because of Israel) was standing before God." ("Observations," p. 29.)

"But we should form a very inadequate conception of the living experiences of the Lord Jesus if in addition to the sufferings which flowed spontaneously, as it were, from the condition of man and of Israel, we did not also recognize a yet more close and searching dealing of God with His servant, whereby His sensitive and perfect soul was made to feel, in a manner inconceivable to us, the reality of the circumstances around Him… How should we feel, imperfect as our sensibilities are, if God, according to the power of His own holiness, were to press upon the apprehensions of our souls a truthful sense of the present and future condition of ruined man? The Lord Jesus was as much alone in His living estimate under God's hand, of the circumstances of human life here, as in enduring wrath upon the cross… He… was also when here made to estimate according to the sensibilities of that nature which He had taken the (to us) inconceivable distance of humanity from God, and when thus exercised, though personally holy and

beloved, He was made to feel that His association with those thus standing in the fearful-ness of their distance from God was a real thing, and that it was so regarded by God." ("Observations," pp. 34-36.)

"Man was as yet in his distance from God. There was as yet no glorified humanity on the right hand of the throne of God. The mighty power whereby God raised Jesus from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, was not yet put forth … and Jesus as man was associated with this place of distance, in which man in the flesh was, and He had through obedience to find His way to that point where God could meet Him, as having finished His appointed work—glorify Him, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places: and that point was death—death on the cross—death under the wrath of God." ("Remarks," &c, pp. 31, 32.)

Do you believe, my brother, that Christ being associated with man was, not by imputation but by transmitted consequences, in the distance from God in which man was found in the flesh, and that He had to find His way to a point where God could meet Him? What place is left here for expiation, if He could not Himself meet God save on the cross, under wrath?

Holy in His person, He was, according to Mr. Newton, associated by His birth with man and with Israel; and He was treated as being Himself in this relationship, not by imputation, but as associated with those who were found there. 5 "His," says Mr. Newton, "was no mere pretended, imaginary association." ("Observations," p. 36.)

What do you think of it? It is no question of expressions that one can modify, or from which one can remove the

ambiguity. It is a doctrine carefully stated, clearly expounded in detail; the same in the notes of pupils and in the careful exposition of Mr. Newton when he justified himself in three successive tracts against the accusation laid against him. A letter which affirms the principles of the two tracts, while denying at the same time the doctrine of imputation, was subsequent to the retractation and taking up the point. Christ according to Mr. Newton was in this position by His birth, as a man and as an Israelite. God made Him feel this position as being Himself a part of what was under His judgment. It was His own relationship with God, not for His own sins, but as associated with Israel by His birth. He escaped many of the consequences by His piety. Do you believe that? But He was exposed to all. He had to, and did, extricate Himself from this position by His obedience; nevertheless He passed under grace at the same time of His baptism by John; notwithstanding He had to find a way by obedience to the point where God could meet Him, but, besides, this point was wrath on the cross. What do you say of this?

The last extracts that I have just given are from tracts of Mr. Newton himself, tracts that he wrote with care when his doctrines had been attacked and to screen his doctrines from those attacks, and at the time when the retractation appeared. The third tract, in which he confirms the great principles of the two preceding tracts, was written after his retractation. Now I am going to add some extracts from notes of one of his lectures, where his doctrine appears in the form in which it was assiduously put in circulation by his adepts, wherever they believed themselves sheltered from an indiscretion. The doctrine is no other; the only thing that

is of any value in the extracts I am going to give is that they give the doctrine in a manner more explicit and thus help to make understood the force of expressions more carefully arranged in their forms. They are notes from the teaching of Mr. Newton on Psalm 6.

“For a person to be suffering here because he serves God, is one thing, but the relation of that person to God and what he is immediately receiving from His hand, while serving Him, is another, and it is this which Psalm 6 and many others open to us. They describe the hand of God stretched out, as rebuking in anger and chastening in hot displeasure, and remember this is not the scene on the cross … but in this Psalm Christ is not at all standing in the place of sacrifice for sin… This was only one incident90 in the life of Christ … so that to fix our eyes simply on that would be to know little of what the character of His real sufferings were. Now before He came to the cross, there was one great dividing point in His history, and that was, when we first read of Him in the Gospels coming to John to be baptized, when He came publicly forward in the sphere of things, as the servant of God, in the sight of Israel and the world; that was the great dividing point in the life of Christ—only three and a half years of His life passed after that… In the Gospels we have His outward history during those three and a half years, but nothing scarcely respecting the preceding years of His life; they were almost passed over in silence; so we should gain little acquaintance with the character of the Lord’s experience, sufferings, or history by considering simply what is told us in the Gospels… Supposing we belonged to a family which was banished to a distant land and there subject to every hardship and sorrow, and we were to go and form part

of that family, we must of course drink of the same cup and partake of their sufferings. This was what Christ did. I do not refer to what were called His vicarious sufferings, but to His partaking of the circumstances of the woe and sorrow of the human family, and not only of the human family generally, but of a particular part of it, of Israel." "But now the curse had fallen on them. 'Cursed shalt thou be in the city,' &c… These were the character of the curses which had fallen on Israel, because they had transgressed the law and broken the everlasting covenant; so Jesus became part of an accursed people, a people who had earned God's wrath, by transgression after transgression … so Jesus became obnoxious to the wrath the moment He came into the world. Accordingly we find many of the Psalms speaking of this… Psalms which do not apply to the cross or to the period of His manifested service, but which speak of Him as a man living amongst other men, with the terrors of God compassing Him about. I regard this Psalm as one of the earliest experiences of the Lord Jesus… Observe this chastening in displeasure, not that which comes now on the child of God, which is never in wrath, but this rebuking in wrath, to which He was amenable because He was a part of an accursed people, so the hand of God was continually stretched out against Him in various ways. He was chastened every morning. 'My loins,' He says, 'are filled with a loathsome disease.' Now we do not read of such chastening after He began His public ministry, but before that, I doubt not, He was often so afflicted… So it must have been a great relief to Him to hear the voice of John the Baptist saying, 'Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Here was a door open to Israel at once. They might come and be forgiven. So He was glad to hear that word. He heard it

with a wise and attentive ear and came to be baptized because He was one with Israel, was in their condition—one of wrath from God. Consequently when He was baptized He took new ground, but Israel would not take it. He stood alone nearly, and the moment He took that ground, the Spirit was sent down. God's seal was set upon Him: 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' … He was able to cure sickness and heal diseases, so that the last three and a half years were by far the happiest in His life, for He was not afflicted by the hand of God as before… What gives the character to Gethsemane is weak humanity and all the power of Satan allowed to be brought upon Him… I should regard this as the most terrible hour He ever passed through… He dreaded not the cross as He did Gethsemane; the cross was the place where He was made distinctly the sacrifice for sin."91 You see well, my brother, that the point is not imputation: the kind of suffering was well distinguished before the retractation even. They are already transmitted consequences. Such are the doctrines, assiduously taught, orally and by manuscripts, long without the knowledge of the Brethren—doctrines which have given occasion to attacks on "certain persons." What think you of it?

Now you make it a reproach against these persons for not taking account of the retractation. It was proposed to Mr. Newton by his own friends, several of whom had got their eyes opened, to sign a retractation of the substance of his doctrine. This he peremptorily refused, but he published the retractation of which you speak, which I have before me. I am about to make some extracts from it which will shew, that, while retracting the application of Romans 5 and the doctrine that Christ

was under the wrath of God by the imputation of Adam's sin, he affirms positively the substance of his doctrine, and will have it that Christ inherited the consequences of sin by His birth doctrine, in which lies precisely all the evil. However that be, he says it is only the manner wkh regard to which he was wrong. "If due care had been taken to discriminate between the mode in which the consequences of Adam's transgression reached mankind through federal headship, and the manner in which the Lord Jesus took several of those consequences upon Himself, but not through federal headship, the error which I now have to confess would have been avoided."

"If I had watched this, I should have carefully avoided the referring that part of Romans 5 to the Lord Jesus, and should have stated that His connection with these consequences was in virtue of His having been made of a woman and thus brought Himself into association with a race on whom these penalties were resting."

In a letter of 51 pages published since his retractation, Mr. Newton disavows formally the doctrine that the position in which Christ was found here below was the effect of the imputation of the sin of Adam. He declares that the true doctrine of imputation is entirely opposed to the radical principle of the tracts (those from which I have made extracts), namely, that of voluntary association… "If I had held this doctrine, almost all that I have said in these tracts would have been upset in place of being what it is now. I have explained elsewhere how I have held it, in giving account of the fact that Christ had been associated with certain results of the sin of Adam, in consequence of His relation with Adam by Mary. I have ill-explained the thing and have used

theological terms wrongly and have made a false application of Romans 5; in other words, I have confounded between transmitted consequences and imputation. I have owned elsewhere the sin of this negligence, &c… with regard to the tracts, it is a question of facts and each will judge for himself, up to what point the relations of the Lord are, or are not, rightly stated."

Thus, my brother, we no longer accuse Mr. Newton of applying to Jesus Romans 5, which says that by the sin of one many were made sinners. That was making a bad use of theological terms, that was the sin of negligence. But what as to the doctrine of the tract? You are in a position, according to Mr. Newton, to judge of it? In speaking of Romans 5 he has wrongly presented the manner in which the anger of God rested upon Jesus. He had attributed it to the imputation of Adam's sin. Now it is a transmitted consequence on account of His relation with Adam as born of Mary, a consequence which caused Him to hear with joy the proclamation of pardon by John the Baptist. Is it a retractation of the doctrine of the tracts to let everyone judge it and to explain that the position of Jesus is not by imputation but a transmitted consequence? He declares that, whilst confounding from negligence his doctrine with that of Romans 5:19, he never really held the doctrine of imputation with regard to Jesus according to Romans 5:19. I believe it, but the doctrine of the tracts, disentangled from that conclusion, remains fully confirmed. To my mind, the doctrine of imputation to Jesus during His life is an error, but an error that one can fall into and yet be sound in the faith; but to say that He was under the wrath of God, as a member of the family of Adam,

through His birth from Mary, and that grace and pardon were a relief to Him, are doctrines which deny the truth with regard to the Saviour.

You ought to know that many Christians do not believe in the doctrine of the imputation of Adam's sin to other men as forming part of original sin, and only believe in transmitted consequences through their birth of Adam's race.

You will understand then that it is not a question here of saying that the divinity of the Saviour and His humanity are believed in, and His expiation on the cross (although this latter truth is entirely destroyed by the doctrine that we are exposing; for if Jesus found a way to God, and if it is only upon the cross, under wrath, that God could meet with Him because He was man, however innocent He might be, He could not make expiation). It is a question of the relation of Jesus with God outside substitution. Neither is it a question of denying the consequences, while holding the doctrine which leads to them; it is a question of what is taught.

Now you can understand, my brother, why "certain persons" have attacked this doctrine, and why they have not been contented with the retractation. You have put your seal to the teaching in question (in supposing the retractation of the application of Romans 5 and of imputation). You have justified Air. Newton; you have made yourself responsible, in the eyes of the church, for having given credit to his doctrine. I am grieved to have been obliged to put, before any Christians whatsoever, that this is the fact. Simplicity which is in Jesus is a precious thing. You have this doctrine at least submitted to your consideration; you have accredited it, you went

out of your way to do so. This then is what you approve of; or must I believe that, carried away by your animosity against “certain persons,” you accredited it unwittingly in order to have the satisfaction of throwing the blame upon them? If the church is preserved from it, I am content, however it may be. I remain, ever, your affectionate brother, J. N. D.

I think that I shall do well, in order to complete the evidence I have to present to you on this subject, to add the summary that one of Mr. Newton’s fellow-workers in the teaching of this doctrine made of it in the retractation which he has published.

The doctrines of this system of teaching may be summed up thus:—

I. That the Lord Jesus at His birth, and because born of a woman, partook of certain consequences of the fall, mortality being one, and, because of this association by nature, He became an heir of death, born under death as a penalty.

II. That the Lord Jesus at His birth stood in such relation to Adam as federal head, that guilt was imputed to Him, and that He was exposed to certain consequences of such imputation— as stated in Romans 5.

III. That the Lord Jesus was also born as a Jew under the broken law, and was regarded by God as standing in that relation to Him; and that God pressed upon His soul.the terrors of Sinai, as due to one in that relation.

IV. That the Lord Jesus took the place of distance from God, which such a person so born and so related must take, and that He had to find His way back to God by

some path in which God might at last own and meet Him.

V. That so fearful was the distance, and so real were these relationships by birth, and so actual were their attendant penalties of death, wrath, and the curse, that until His deliverance God is said to have rebuked Him, to have chastened Him, and this in anger and hot displeasure.

VI. That because of these dealings from God, and Christ's sufferings under them, the language of Lamentations 3 and Psalms 6, 38, and 88, &c, has been stated to be the utterance of the Lord Jesus while under this heavy pressure from God's hand.

VII. That the Lord Jesus extricated Himself from these inflictions by keeping the law; and that at John's baptism the consequent difference in Christ's feelings and experience was so great as to have been illustrated by a comparison of the difference between Mount Sinai and Mount Sion, or between law and grace.

VIII. That, beside all these relations which Christ took by birth, and their attendant penalties and inflictions, and His sufferings under the heavy hand of God, it has been further stated that He had the experience of an unconverted though elect Jew.

Here you have a summary of this doctrine given us by one of those who has taught it himself, in conjunction with Mr. Newton. Everyone can see that it is a carefully matured system, and the different testimonies we possess leave no obscurity as to the foundation of the doctrine, whatever modification may have been applied to the expressions.

Two other brethren who taught these doctrines with Mr. Newton have published their retractation; but, at this moment, I am not in possession of their writings; they admit the same things.

The second article is the one, and the only one, to which Mr. Newton's retractation of 1847 applies.

This is the testimony of one strongly opposed to me, respecting the tracts, the retractation, and the letter published by Mr. Newton since the retractation:—

"The third tract of Mr. Newton had been published, his two preceding tracts had been sanctioned after having been considered anew; his retractation, or confession of November, 1847, was thus, save in words, annulled, and worse than annulled. The errors, whatever be otherwise their bearing, without any doubt touch the foundations of our faith, and by this means overthrow, not only the unity of the church, but its very existence."

89 Vevey, printed by E. Buvelot3 1853.

90 Mr. Newton has explained later that he was accustomed to use this word as having the force "of event." This was to own at best that he had said what I quote.

91 Mr. Newton has modified his expressions since then. I cite them here to shew that it is not a question of the cross.

On Aitkenism

Mr. Aitken's system may be briefly stated:—

"Spiritual life and forgiveness, or salvation, are communicated by faith, or in accordance with faith; where a man has repented fully, and, crying to God for salvation, goes out of self for it and believes in the atonement. But divine life or regeneration is quite another thing, possessed by few, communicated and sustained by the sacraments, but which is possessed only in the degree in which, by personal efforts, we die to self. This is the portion of an elect few who form the bride of Christ (not His spouse), the Church of the firstborn, who will reign with Him. We get the Spirit of adoption on receiving salvation; but we are born of God only by baptism, and thus, if it be developed by our own will or efforts, we are united to God and become God-men, not in the same degree but in the same manner as Christ."

All this is pursued out as a system with various adjuncts needless to mention, with a neglect of scripture or indeed proof of any kind, which ignorant assumption or uncommon self-confidence alone could account for. Those are in a nearer relationship to Christ, he says, who are in the Church (the Establishment), though dead in trespasses and sins, than a saved person who has spiritual life outside it. The baptized child receives life and is in a state of grace provisionally by special favour, though he has not faith; but in point of fact he always loses it, though he need not, and then is saved by faith, but is not regenerate. How this is afterwards procured does not clearly appear, and is not stated in the volume

already out. Self-denial and sacraments are his general idea; but as baptism is the one for giving life and he cannot be baptized over again, we are left in the dark. You may ask but never expect proof of the difference between spiritual and divine life. Evangelicals are complained of who treat salvation as the end, and it is affirmed that we cannot have spiritual life and forgiveness, which are by faith alone, without being sure of it. Again, a separatist cannot have divine life or be of the bride of Christ, though he is of the body by baptism in spite of himself, for that tie is indissoluble. A man may lose spiritual life and salvation, but he cannot cease to be a member of Christ's body, and he is lost all the same. He reads "Ye are they who have followed me in the regeneration."

The real energy which Mr. A. has to press salvation, from what he had before he had adopted all this, while pandering to the prejudices of the priestly caste, takes effect on others. In Nehush-tan he taught that the idol—justification by faith—must be destroyed. Now he writes this and "Tractarianism:" only, he says, Tractarians themselves are evidently in a state of nature and lost. The theory of persons possessing the Spirit of adoption and not yet born of God is as unscriptural as can be. "We are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" … "and because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." "We have received not the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father." "The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God," &c. These passages (Gal. 3 and Rom. 8) upset the whole system at once and altogether, based as it is on our being saved and having the Spirit of

adoption, but not being really born of God, or sons, this coming sacramentally, that by faith. His notion is that we receive sacramentally divine life from Christ. But John says, “To as many as received him, to them gave he power (or privilege) to become sons of God, even to as many as believed in his name, which were born… of God.” … “Of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace,” that is, of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

If we take the figure of baptism, the statement that it is regeneration, while salvation is by faith, is overthrown by scripture. “Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins” &c. “According to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration” “The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us.” Nor can it be alleged that this is the provisional salvation tacked to it in the case of infants, for adults are in question. It is the merest bubble of his own mind for one acquainted with scripture. His own prayer-book denies such distinctions. The prayer is that the infant may obtain remission of his sins by spiritual regeneration. Nor will the allegation that salvation is provisionally attached to it for infants hold good, for it is asked equally in baptism for riper years. It is prayed that they also may receive “remission of their sins by spiritual regeneration.” And to this John 3 is applied, which speaks of being born of the Spirit, and just as Peter who tells the repentant Jews to be baptized for the remission of their sins.

That we are made God-men is neither more nor less than an abominable blasphemy; and as to being made partakers of the divine nature, the apostle does not say a word of baptism but of exceeding great and precious

promises whereby we are so made. The whole work is full of unscriptural inventions.

On the other hand, I agree that it is terrible to make salvation, in the sense of being safe, the end of all. I agree that fasting and self-denial are excellent in their place; but all these distinctions of divine life and spiritual life, and subjection to ordinances as if the means of life come from the vagaries of the human mind or worse, not from God.

The rest of the passage in Titus 3 shews that the distinction of eternal life and regeneration is unknown to scripture. “He saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that, being justified by faith, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” Here eternal life, justification by faith, regeneration, salvation, are all brought together in a way that makes Mr. A.’s reasoning hopelessly untenable. There might be conversions; because, while adding all his nonsense about sacraments, he preaches (though in an Arminian way) repentance toward God and salvation by faith in Christ—indeed as to the last with much more positive reality than the evangelicals.

Christ, The Banished One

(To the Editor of the Bible Treasury)

Dear Brother,

I do not at all desire to make your periodical the vehicle of controversial papers; but allow me to draw your attention to a paper in a magazine92 supposed to be exclusively occupied with edification, or what was intended for it. It is so utterly without basis, or attempt to found its assertions on scripture (the only two or three it quotes it quotes falsely on the point in question), that I should not have thought it worth an answer, but for the bold presenting of the doctrine which it is its object to circulate. In this way it may be useful.

“Not merely was He,” it is said, “the rejected of men,… but He was the outcast, the condemned One… As such, His true place was outside the city of God; outside the dwelling of the Holy One. If permitted to resort to Jerusalem, He can only do so as a stranger or wayfaring man, who comes in with the crowd during the day, but retires at night. If allowed to frequent the temple, He can only come as far as the outer court, on the common footing of a sinner—just as the publican might do. He might stand and see the daily sacrifice offered.” (Page 314.) For whom? let me ask in passing. Was it with a consciousness that it was not for Him—that is, that, as to His relationship to God, He could go into the holiest, or ignorant as to this, and in His relationship supposing He needed one Himself? The writer has brought the point pretty much to the test by this way of putting it. What was the blessed Lord’s sentiment when He saw the sacrifice offered?

I continue: “He might watch the shedding of the blood, and the consuming of the victim; but only as one of the crowd. He might stand, on the day of atonement, and see the two goats chosen by the high priest; He might listen to the confession of sin over the head of the one, and mark the pouring out of the other’s blood; He might see the high priest take the basin, and carry the blood into the holiest, Himself standing on the outside; and, though the Blessed One, waiting amid the crowd to receive the well-known blessing. But more than this He might not do. Were He to go beyond the circle thus marking off the limits within which He was to walk, He would not have been acting as the sin-bearer, nor submitting to be dealt with as an outcast and a curse for us.” (lb.) I shall notice this: but I continue my quotations. “He is so completely identified with the sinner, the outcast, the banished one, that He is not only deemed unworthy to live within Jerusalem, but unworthy even to die within its walls. As the great sin-offering, He goes without the camp, there to complete His sin-bearing work, and to sum up the testimony which His whole life had given, namely, that He was standing in the sinner’s place, enduring the banishment of the banished one, bearing the curse of the cursed one, submitting to the condemnation of the condemned one, and never for one moment contradicting or modifying the testimony intended to be given by His life to His sin-bearing character and work.” (lb.) Is that all the cross was? The writer must be singularly absorbed with his doctrine to speak of it in this way.

“The one hindrance to His exercise of this, His divine right of entrance into the holiest of all, was our iniquity, which was lying on Him. That kept Him out. Until that

was fully borne, He could not enter either the sanctuary below or the presence chamber above. In taking our sin upon Him, as He did from the moment of His incarnation, He had consented to forego for a time His right of entrance into the Father's presence, and into that place where the glorious symbol of that presence dwelt." "It was as such (the outcast) that we find Him walking in Solomon's porch; thus proclaiming to all who truly understood His character and work that He was acting as the sinner's substitute." (Page 325.)

One sentence that I have omitted I will quote here. "He was Himself the true sacrifice, the bearer of sin. As such He lived and died. In all that He did, and in all that He abstained from doing; in the places which He visited, and in the places which He abstained from visiting, He kept this in view. He was loaded with our sin, our curse, our condemnation, our leprosy; and, as such, He must keep at a distance from the holy and the clean." (Page 314.) "Let us then look at Christ in these two different conditions… 1. As walking in Solomon's porch—He walks there as our substitute; our substitute as truly as when He groaned in Gethsemane or died on Golgotha. 2. As one consenting for a season to be shut out from the presence of God, that we might enter and dwell in that presence for ever, He stands, or walks, or sits outside the sanctuary. Thus it is that He bears our banishment; He takes upon Him not merely the penalty of suffering and death, but the penalty of exclusion from the house and home of God. That penalty He has endured; that exile He has under-gone; that substance He has experienced; and all this, as the substitute, bearing what we should have borne." (Page 325.)

The difficulty of answering the paper, from which I have here given extracts, is, that it is such a mass of absurdity, that it is hard to know at which end to begin. I refer to it, as I have said, only as an audacious attempt at circulating the doctrine it contains.

In the beginning, it is said, there were several reasons why Christ could only have access to the outer court, and had to keep outside the holy and most holy place; Dr. Bonar then gives three: Personal, He was of the tribe of Judah; Ceremonial, He had no blood to offer;93 Typical, He was loaded with our leprosy. This is found in pages 313, 314. When in the full flow of his subject, he says, “the one hindrance to His exercise of this, His divine right of entrance into the holiest of all, was our iniquity.” Then in page 325, the two others are forgotten. It may be alleged he was only speaking in the latter place of Him as God. But, then, if the holiest of all was really then the dwelling place of God, and God there so that He could not approach, as Jehovah He was there. But this is not true: the house was empty, swept, and garnished. His own body was the temple where Jehovah dwelt. There was no shechinah in the second temple.

It is alleged that He never went to the holy places of Israel. Who says He did not? But let that pass. Did He come here to turn Israel back to old shadows, and typical service, and places counted holy by them? But among others He did not go to Bethlehem. What profound sense there is in this! If this was because it was already a holy place, He became the leprous and unclean thing in the holy place. Because it was so—and all the imperial world was set in movement to have Him made leprous there— I suppose to desecrate it! If it was His birth that had sanctified it, then He could not go to a

holy place because of what He was when He had consecrated it by being that! Is it possible to conceive greater nonsense than all this?

He did not go into the temple, because it was impossible, and out of God's then order, and inconsistent with every Jewish and every Christian thought. If spoken of as God, He was there as far as God was there; but, as I have said, His body in this sense was the true temple: He calls it so. If as man, He was not a priest: there were other priests to do it, as the epistle to the Hebrews tells us. As come, He was not there to set up Judaism, but to submit to its order; as born under the law, His entering into the holy place would have been a gross violation of it. Was He there to establish the earthly system as a divine thing, to have His place and title as Son in an earthly sanctuary?

We are specially referred to Solomon's porch. It was the common place of assembly in the temple. Was His being there a proof He was a substitute under a curse? All the apostles were afterwards with one accord in Solomon's porch. Were they all substitutes under a curse? I will speak of the doctrine. I speak now of the ridiculous absurdity of such reasoning.

But further, it is still more absurd; because, if He were a leprous man, and keeping this always in view as to holy places, other holy places lepers might have gone to as much as anyone else; but the really holy place, in a Jewish sense, which a leper could not go to, was the temple, and there He came, and was in the crowd of the clean, for none else could go there. It is painful to have to meet all this folly, used to make a leprous man of the Lord. Leprosy was defilement, not merely a type of guilt;

our Lord, therefore, took a defiled place. Clean persons could not have gone into the holy of holies: there we are told He could not go because He was leprous. Leprous persons could not go into the temple, or be amongst the crowd of clean Israel; but there He was, and that is a proof that He is leprous! and, strange to say, He drove the defilers out, because it was a holy place.

But the true answer is simple. He came not to build up the holiness of Hebrons or Bethels: He went into the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphthali, Galilee of the Gentiles, because it had been prophesied of Him, that the poor of the flock, who sat in darkness, might see that great light, and light spring up on those in the shadow of death. He was there because He was light, not because He was leprous. He left Judea because the Pharisees had heard that He made and baptized more disciples than John: was that as a leper, or did His disciples baptize, not Himself, because they were not leprous and He was? It is asserted, without the remotest foundation, that He did not sleep in Jerusalem. He visited Jerusalem only during the day, retiring from it at night to Bethany, as one cast out! That was only the last week, when He had judged Jerusalem (but that was the time He rode into the holy city as its king: was this as a substitute and leper?) and when He cleansed the temple, because it was defiled.

If the reader ask what scripture is alleged for His being a substitute, or avoiding holy places on this ground—which there was no ground for doing—the only scripture is the one emanating from Dr. Bonar's private assertion. In God's word there is not a single trace of it. Dr. Bonar does not attempt to allege a symptom of scripture—for the simplest reason: there is none to allege. It is simply

an unholy fancy of Dr. Bonar's. But he does quote some scriptures as to Christ's state during His life: I will examine them.

"He was made sin for us:" this is referred to His life. But it is He who knew no sin whom God made sin for us. Hence, through the eternal Spirit, He offered Himself without spot to God. He was not made sin when "that holy thing" was born of the Virgin Mary. When it could be said of Him, as a man "who knew no sin," then He was made sin, "a curse for us." "As such, His true place was outside the city of God;" but He went into it, and into the temple, and did not stay outside; that is, according to Dr. Bonar, He went out of His true place. But He was made a curse for us. But scripture says, Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, as it is written, Cursed in every one that hangs upon a tree. That is, He was a curse as crucified, not in His life.

"The most holy place was, we may say, the type of that very bosom of the Father out of which the only-begotten Son came forth." It was nothing of the kind. Dr. Bonar confounds God in His throne in government and the Father's bosom; but let that pass. Dr. Bonar's doctrine hangs on this—that He came forth out of the Father's bosom, and could not go into it. Now, the only passage which speaks of the Father's bosom, is a careful statement that He did not come out of it. "The only-begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." He was competent to reveal God, because He had not come out of it at all. His going into the empty earthly place of God's throne is fit only for Dr. Bonar and his school. Not only so, but scripture is careful to connect this presence in heaven with His

manhood, and shew that as such, though bodily on earth, He was personally in heaven. “No man hath ascended up to heaven but he who came down from heaven, the Son of man who is in heaven.” So that He was in heaven at the time Dr. Bonar says He was taking the sinner’s place of exile outside the blessed heaven where He had dwelt from everlasting.

One scripture more Dr. Bonar quotes, if quoting it can be called. “Such,” he says, “is the efficacy of our Substitute’s life and death, that we have boldness to enter into the holiest.” This is not quoting scripture, not ignorance, but falsifying scripture.

Hebrews 10 is solely occupied with the sacrifice of Christ. The point on which chapter 9 had insisted was that there was no forgiveness without blood-shedding, and that Christ must have suffered often if He had offered Himself—“often” excluding all idea of forgiveness but by death. Chapter 10 then sets aside Jewish offerings, and substitutes a Christ come to do God’s will, but speaks only and exclusively of His offering; by the which will we are sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all: thereupon declaring that we have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He has consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, His flesh. That is, Dr. Bonar leaves out the one point on which the word of God insists; and introduces what it does not introduce but excludes. I can only say the word of God is pure. “Add thou not unto his words lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.” All this I must call wickedness.

And now the main point—Christ—is the “banished One bearing our banishment.” Banished by whom? Banished whence? Is that, Christian, your thought of Christ, that He was banished from heaven? Is that the way—is it in that spirit scripture speaks? or, that He came in His own love, and was the blessed and holy One given in love, sent of the Father? Is it not the infinite preciousness of that gift that exalts the love of the giver? Was He given as a precious one, or banished? Forsaken He might be when He was made sin, as to the anguish of His soul; but banished, never! Did He cry, Why hast thou forsaken me? at that moment, having been forsaken all His life? yet hardly to be said forsaken at any time, for He was never near God—had to keep at a distance from what was holy—experience distance and the penalty of exclusion from the home and house of God—“outside the blessed heaven where He had dwelt from everlasting!” Was that the Son of man who is in heaven? He could tell of heaven, which no one else could (He declares to Nicodemus), inasmuch as He was still in it though come down. This, Dr. Bonar interprets, by His being banished and excluded from it.

And, mark the result: He could look on in the crowd at the offerings, coming as the publican might do, on the common footing of a sinner; He might listen to the confession of sin over the head of the scape-goat, waiting amid the crowd to receive the well-known blessing. This, because He was excluded, because He was loaded with our leprosy! But, if He was their sin-bearer, why in the crowd looking at another sacrifice, and waiting for the well-known blessing? Blessed for whom? For the crowd, of which He was one in virtue of the sin-offering. Is this Dr. Bonar’s view of Christ,

standing as the Substitute for the crowd, for He died for that nation—and yet one of the crowd looking on, in respect of His own state, on another sacrifice, founded on which blessing was to come on Him as one of the crowd? If He carried the sin there, if it was already laid on His head, why was He with the crowd looking to another sacrifice and seeing the sins confessed on it? and why Himself waiting to receive the blessing? I suppose, because He needed it; or, at least, that it was real. Did He need the blessing flowing from atonement? How could it be real for Him, when He knew the very sin it professed to put away had not been there at all? It was resting, in all its weight, on His own head. Think of the Son of God waiting in the crowd, as a Substitute, to receive the blessing flowing from the atonement, Himself really bearing the sins all the time, which were not put away; and, to complete the confusion, excluded as a leper, because they were on Him, from the holy place in which He nevertheless was!

But the confusion is too horribly mischievous to do anything else than to point it out in its naked character. This article may do good. It will shew the true bearing of that which clothes itself in pious forms, though here, if one has any sense at all, it can hardly be said to do so. I do not attempt an elaborate article: these one or two hints are enough to shew its character. I do not see the smallest trace of divine teaching, but a man left to himself in a special way to expose the folly and evil of his own inventions.

92 The Christian Treasury, part 7, July 1, 1861. “The Banished One bearing our banishment.” By the editor (Dr. Horatius Bonar, Kelso).

93 It is hard to tell why. It was a typical high place and typical blood shedding sufficed, and that He could have offered. There was only one reason, He could not have the blood of a suited sacrifice to offer. He was not the typical high priest, nor a priest at all judicially; nor did any one go into the most holy place save the high priest, nor with blood into the holy place, save for the sin of the high priest or the whole people; but that shews the gross absurdity of the whole reasoning from beginning to end. To think that Christ should need His blood to enter the earthly sanctuary is worthy of this school alone.

Brief Analysis Of The Epistle To The Hebrews

In Connection With The Priesthood Of Christ:

With Reply To Some Tracts On The Latter Subject.

When the will is engaged in any doctrine, it leaves one but a faint hope of its being given up by him who holds it. Still I would not abandon that hope altogether, as regards the author of the “Remarks on the Intercession of Christ,” and at any rate the enquiry into the truth on the subject may be useful to many souls. I confess I have been surprised at the statements in the tract. If anything had been needed to convince me of the totally unscriptural and unfounded character of the doctrine, this tract would have supplied it. Scarcely a single principle or statement is scriptural or sound. But God’s grace is almighty, and I can only heartily desire and pray for the clearing up of the mind of one whose Christianity I should not bear to doubt.

The theory is, that the Epistle to the Hebrews is for the remnant after the Church is gone, not for us Christians; and that Christ’s intercession is simply His presence before God for us in the worth of His work—nothing active; that there is no exercise of any priesthood after the pattern of Aaron’s on the part of Christ. I could hardly have thought any one could have made such statements. But they are made. “The only priesthood of Christ is Melchisedec, and that is for blessing, not intercession. The intercession, as I have before said, is His maintaining us before God in all the value of His own person and work.” “Israel will be in the land in

unbelief, keeping the commandments of Moses— this epistle takes them up on that ground and tells them Christ is the end of the law," &c. "Christ is indeed on the right hand of God—He is there by right and title; but He is there also for us, and so He is there presenting Himself as the Head and the representative of the redeemed. It is His presence intercedes or avails for us." "Some who would not say quite so much [that Christ had a double priesthood], yet say that though Christ is a priest after the order of Melchisedec only, yet He exercises it at present after the character of Aaron… Thus they make the word of God of none effect by their tradition." Referring to Christ's work and the Spirit's, the writer says, "Still, one is a finished work abiding before God in all its finished perfectness, the other is that which is carried on from age to age in the world; and from day to day in the heart of the believer; and the two works, for they are two, are effected by different persons and differ greatly in character; one is completed, the other not; and it is because one is completed and not to be added to and is ever in its completeness before God, that the other is being carried on by that other person." "And certainly, if we take the testimony of the book itself, it is clear that it is the world (or, habitable earth) to come whereof we speak, and that is assuredly connected with Israel, not the Church being gathered." Again, "Melchisedec priesthood is prominently presented, and from Psalm no we know that to be coincident with the rod of strength out of Zion." And, quoting from me as to this priesthood, he says, "it is blessing and refreshment after and consequent upon the destruction of all enemies; it is not that which Christ the Lord now exercises." "And the way in which they [these matters] are here treated … shews that it is not

the Church as being gathered that is contemplated, but that which follows after the Church is caught up to meet the Lord in the air."

My purpose is to go through the Epistle to the Hebrews sufficiently to see what its true aim and bearing is, and then I will take up particular statements to shew how utterly groundless they are. But before I do this I have one remark to make, and that is, that the notion that our church position as such is the whole, or even the highest we have, is quite unfounded. Mistakes connected with this I will note in their place. I only notice the principle now. Our union with Christ casts its preciousness on every part of our blessings, and the last thing I should be inclined to do is to compare these where all is sovereign grace. But in itself this is not a relationship with the Father. With Him we are individuals, we are sons. Christ owns us as brethren, is the Firstborn among many brethren. Our union with Christ, though divine, is with Him as man, as made Head over all things. See Ephesians 1:22, 23, and so Ephesians 2. And all our relationship with God and the Father is developed before that, and this in the epistle where church privileges are peculiarly taught, and many of the most precious exhortations to practice are on this ground: see chapter 5:1 for example.

We speak of what belongs to the Church, according to the common use of language, when we really mean what belongs to those who compose it. And this has no great practical harm when it is not used to make the idea, exclusively as such, our only blessing. I might say, The corporation are very good men, when I mean the men that compose it. But when an idea newly acquired gets hold of the soul, men are apt to be exclusively full of it.

It shuts out other important truths. If any one has been filled with the sense of the importance of the doctrine of the Church, I think I may say I have. But conscience is individual; justification is individual; sonship is individual; communion, in perhaps its most important and certainly necessary part, is individual. Take all the writings of the apostle John, and, unless one allusion to a local body, you would never know that a church existed. I never lose, or at any rate never should lose, the consciousness of being a member of Christ; as I have said, it throws, when I have it, its light on all. I add the idea of unity in the body to union in the family. I am one with all those who are my brethren. But surely there is a vast flood of unspeakable blessing in John, in whose writings the thought or name of the Church never comes. I speak of the Gospel and Epistles. All is individual there. Those who enjoy it belong to the Church, and do not put themselves out of the Church mentally in enjoying it; but it is not, for all that, the less individual.

This principle will be found to be of large application. Thus justification is not found in Ephesians. It speaks of the new creation according to God's counsels. The sinner has to be justified, not God's new creation. Yet every word blessedly confirms the doctrine of Romans—Galatians also; but the subject is taken up differently. Romans deals with man's responsibility, and the Ephesians with God's counsels. They meet in Christ and in the cross, and nothing can be more deeply instructive to heart and soul, but they are distinct.

But I turn to Hebrews. Now I fully admit, and have often stated, that the Epistle has the Jews as a people in view, Christ having died for the nation; and it is interesting to

enquire in its place as to the bearing of this on the remnant, after the Church is gone. I will try and touch on it briefly; but our present enquiry is, Does the Epistle apply to Christians?

The Epistle to the Hebrews at the time it was written was written to somebody. To whom? Either to Christians who at the same time were Jews,94 or to unbelieving Jews who rejected the Saviour. The answer to this question is an answer to the whole theory. No doubt there are interesting and important details to consider after it is answered. But if it was written to Christians the whole theory is proved false. I have not to enquire as to my use of it and to whom it may apply. I have learned to whom it did apply—to Christians, and though specially addressed to Jewish Christians (for such there were, Christians jealous of the law and frequenting the temple, and offering sacrifices) and adapted to their case; yet available for all Christians, in the doctrines by which it acts on these Jewish Christians, though not as to the circumstances in which they were found, for we are not in them; though we may be in very similar ones, when the professing church has judaized.

I repeat then my question: To whom was it addressed when written? Were the unbelieving Jews then "partakers of the heavenly calling?" If not, it applies to Christians. Had the unbelieving Jews taken joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing that they had in heaven a better and enduring substance? Had they to consider the end of the conversation of their departed rulers whose faith they were to follow? Who had an altar which they had no right to eat of, who served the tabernacle? The unbelieving Jews? Why, they are in express contrast. Christians, christian Jews, were therefore to leave the

system which they up to that time had been walking with. I ask any sober person to read chapter 13 through and say, Was the epistle addressed then to Christians or not? If it was addressed to Christians, as Christians, and because they were such, the question is answered and set at rest: most interesting for Christians to enquire its import and value for themselves, but as belonging to themselves and addressed to themselves.95 But I anticipate a little the details, and will enquire now regularly what proofs the Epistle gives of being addressed to Christians, though not speaking of church privileges as such. The writer places himself amongst those he writes to. This is not denied, and is clear from the beginning of the second chapter. Was the writer among the unbelieving Jews? For it was addressed to some one then. Those addressed had received the teachings of the apostles. There was danger of letting them slip; but they had heard and received them. He speaks of the world to come, but was not in it, for Jesus was sitting at the right hand of God, all things being not yet under His feet. But he speaks for himself and those he writes to: “We see Jesus… crowned with glory and honour.” This last is an important point. Besides His divinity—it is that which the first chapter insists on—it is characteristic, specifically characteristic of the whole Epistle. I mean that Jesus was sitting at the right hand of the majesty in the heavens: not, after the destruction of His enemies, a priesthood of blessing on His own throne. Thus, in the wonderful statement in chapter 1:3: the groundwork of the epistle, the place Christ is found in, is, having “by himself purged our96 sins, he sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high.”

The position which makes the basis of the whole Epistle is Christ's present position, not his Melchisedec position, but a heavenly Christ sitting at the right hand of God on high. So when the writer has gone through his doctrine on this subject, he gives the summing up of it: —"We have such an high priest who is set at the right hand of the majesty in the heavens." When His position is considered in reference to His manhood, as we have seen, all things are not put under His feet; He sits at the right hand of God till they are. We see Him crowned with glory and honour. He suffered being tempted here, that He may be able to succour those that are tempted. Neither the position nor the service has any possible application to a Melchisedec priesthood on earth. Temptation and conflict will not exist then. The Melchisedec priesthood, the writer agrees and insists on, is, in its exercise, after the destruction of all enemies; Satan will then be bound. Antichrist's time is not the time of Melchisedec's priesthood; and the exercise of Melchisedec's priesthood is not the time of temptation. Further, the object in view is bringing many sons to glory. The remnant are not the object of this purpose. The place of Christ, the service of Christ, and the object of God all refer to the saints at this present time, not, as such, to a Jewish remnant to be blessed on earth, or to a Melchisedec priesthood in its acknowledged exercise as such.

Does chapter 3 teach us any other doctrine, or the same founded on the same truth of Christ's heavenly present glory? Christ is as Son over God's house. That is the position in which the Epistle views Him, not in a Melchisedec one. And note here, He is the high priest of our profession, compared to Moses and Aaron; that is

according to the doctrine of chapters 1 and 2. Whose profession? The unbelieving Jews'? An unbelieving remnant when the heavenly saints are gone? A Christian, more than a Christian, we are told, writes the Epistle, and says, "our profession,"—and this means unbelieving Jews, or an expectant remnant!

But I prefer at present to follow out the direct teaching of this Epistle, which makes all clear, if anything can, if there is spiritual intelligence. Further, then, in this chapter it is said, "Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." To whom does this apply? For whom is it written? Are unbelieving Jews, however inclined to listen, the house of Christ as the exalted Son of God? Are they to hold fast their profession, the beginning of their confidence and rejoicing of hope, firm to the end? The Jewish remnant is not, further, a partaker of the heavenly calling, but of the earthly. In a word, thus far we have Christ, not as Melchisedec priest, but as sitting at the right hand of God, the high priest of our profession; and those addressed are "partakers of the heavenly calling," and are to hold fast their first confidence. We, says the writer, are His house if we do. "Made partakers of Christ," which in English might embarrass a soul, offers no difficulty, but the contrary. It is final partaking with Him in glory, according to chapter 1:9, where "fellows" is the same word. Some remarks on how far this chapter may subsequently suit the remnant in its use of the wilderness history I will make when I refer to that point.

In chapter 4 it is said, "For we which have believed do enter into rest." Does "we which have believed" (pisteuvsante") apply to unbelievers? and this

of the rest of sons whom God was bringing to glory? Again I read, “Seeing then that we have a great high priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.” Whose? Whose then? The unbelievers willing to listen, or even the Jewish remnant after the Church is gone, have no profession to hold fast which a Christian could call “ours,” when he referred to having a high priest in the heavens. This priesthood moreover, a present priesthood which “we have,” has nothing to do with a Melchisedec priesthood; it is a priesthood for the time of need, a priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, tempted in all points like as we are, except sin; so that we can come boldly to the throne of grace for mercy and help in time of need. This is priesthood, and not Melchisedec priesthood, after enemies are destroyed; but what enables us to come boldly to a throne of grace for mercy and help.

In chapter 5 the “for” of this first verse shews that the Aaronic priesthood was founded on this very principle. It is not Christ’s priesthood itself, as the fifth verse very clearly and positively shews; but it takes the Aaronic priesthood as a sample of the thoughts of God in priesthood, clearly not Melchisedec priesthood. It was different from Christ’s, inasmuch as the Aaronic priesthood had sympathy while in, and because they were in, the same weakness as the others who drew nigh to God; whereas Christ’s priesthood is exercised in the heavens. The partaking of the sorrows, when here, fitted Him for it, as chapters 2:1854:15, 16 shew, and chapter 5:7. But these took place in the days of His flesh before He became a priest. He became that when perfected on high, for “we have a great high priest that

is passed into the heavens." This makes the place and nature of His priesthood as clear as possible. He was tempted and suffered here below, as we suffer, to be fitted for it, touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but He exercises it on high. These two points are the fundamental and essential ones of the doctrine of the Epistle, while it clearly states that it is for us. He is the high priest of our profession. He is the author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him. That those whom the apostle thus addresses were Christians will appear in the strongest light from what is here and afterwards said of them—Christians in danger of being led away by Judaism and of apostatizing.

"For the time ye ought to be teachers." (Ver. 12.) What had time to do if they were unbelievers or Jews? or how could the writer say to the Jewish remnant after the Church was gone, that they for the time ought to be teachers? Ye ought to be teachers. Who? The unbelieving remnant?

And now let the reader remark here what lies at the root of all this question.

We have seen, as clearly as scripture could make it, a priesthood based on Christ's being exalted at the right hand of the ma jest}' in the heavens on the one hand, and on His having been tempted and having suffered and having learned obedience here below in the days of His flesh on the other; the priest of our profession who has the heavenly calling; a priest, as we shall see, who is entered into the heavens as our forerunner; and able, as having suffered, to help those who are tempted; and this priest is the priest according to the order of Melchisedec. (See chap. 5:7-10.) We have the whole

process of His perfecting for priesthood; and then He is saluted of God a high priest after the order of Melchisedec.

Is it not perfectly clear that, though personally the priesthood be not after the order of Aaron, but a new one, the exercise of the priesthood is not after the similitude of Melchisedec? Save what belongs to the person, not one element of Melchisedec priesthood is here found. The priest is in heaven, and profits by sufferings experienced here below to succour a tempted and suffering people. So that we come boldly to the throne of grace.

I add to this, that it is after He has perfected the work of propitiation, chapter 1:3 to chapter 2:17, where reconciliation should be propitiation (iJlavskesqai); but His priesthood is wholly and expressly on high, and He is on no Melchisedec throne, no throne of His own at all, but on the Father's throne, on the right hand of the throne of God; not after His enemies are all subdued, but expecting till His enemies be made His footstool. His priesthood is this; not Melchisedec priesthood in its place or exercise.

I remark, further, that though the application of every blessing —all the work of God in good from creation on —is by the Spirit, yet that this truth is not taught here. The person who feels for us has had experience, so as to be able to feel for us. "Who is able to succour the tempted" is not the Spirit here, but Christ, and Christ as priest. And this is a most important thing. For the heart of the Christian Christ is an object of affection, which the Spirit—though we are indebted to His working for every blessing—cannot be.

I pursue my enquiry into the contents of the Epistle. They for the time ought to be teachers; and (chap. 6) the writer will not go back to Jewish elements. How does he speak of the responsibility of those he addresses? He will go on to perfection (that is, the estate of full age: it is the same word as in chapter 5:14, “full age”) with those he addresses. “For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God.” Is this the state of Jews disposed to listen then, or of the Jewish remnant in the last days? Falling away from having enjoyed their privileges is the thing contemplated. But these two categories of persons had never enjoyed them at all. And this is the aim of the whole epistle—to guard against falling away. The nation had crucified Christ—they might be forgiven it as an act of ignorance. But these, after the enjoyment of christian privileges, did it for themselves; then there was no help. But in spite of this so solemn warning, he hoped better things of those he addressed, for they had brought forth fruits of grace. He could not think they could fall away from their privileges; for fruits of life had been shewn. Only he desired that every one of them might shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope to the end. Is that addressed to a then unbelieving remnant, or to Christians who had received all fulness of privileges, and whose fruits made their teacher fully hope they would not abandon them? What was falling away from unbelief? The best thing they could do was to give it up. What was the same diligence to be shewn to the end in unbelievers? And what was the hope that belonged to

them? It entered in within the veil whither the Forerunner was entered for them, even Jesus. That is not the hope of the remnant, any more than the beginning of the chapter was the state of the remnant. Their hope is deliverance. The forerunner is for us entered within the veil. We hope to be with Him in heaven. Jesus is gone in: we are to follow Him there. Yet this is He who is made a high priest after the order of Melchisedec.

The inspired writer then unfolds this priesthood of Melchisedec; but of the exercise of the priesthood not a word. All relates to His person, and the setting aside of the law by the setting up of another priest. There is large allusion to the history, or to His person and personal dignity; but not a word as to what He did. But we have the bringing in of a better hope, by the which we draw nigh to God. Who? the unbelieving Jews ready to listen? Of whom does the writer say, “We draw nigh unto God;” and “He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them? “Here we have an ever living priest, by whom we draw nigh to God, able to save through and through to the end (not because He has perfected us by His offering, infinitely precious, unspeakably precious, as that is; not because He has died for us, though that be the ground of all, a ground even for the Father’s love to Him; but) because He ever fives to make intercession for us. It is what He is active in, as life, that is here before us.

Appearing in the presence of God for us is another thing, and otherwise expressed in this epistle. (Chap. 9:24.) And really “ever living to appear,” has very little sense. That He is able, since He ever lives, to do

something which requires activity, is plain enough; but “ever living to appear” is not a sentence which could commend itself to any sober mind taught of God. But ejntugcavnein does not mean that; it means “to intercede.” If he who has given occasion to this paper likes to take the dictionary sense given by his correspondent as a general idea, I have no objection: —“talking with, or getting to the spirit of another.” This is, activity; not appearing before another, but talking with that other, getting to his spirit, if we are so to express it. And I insist distinctly, that the use of it in Romans 8 is a very distinct and plain proof of its meaning. The Holy Ghost in us does not appear before God for us. He is active in us, and makes us groan, and God recognizes it as His activity in us— finds the mind of the Spirit in us; for He makes intercession for the saints. This is activity. It is talking to another, even to God, in a groan; and, if I am reverently to use such an expression, “it gets to His spirit.” God apprehends His mind when even we cannot, and recognizes it as His, accepts it. He talks to another, and it gets as far as we may venture to use the words, it gets to His spirit—it reaches God’s mind and heart.97 Christ ever lives to intercede for us on high. I say “for us,” not as sitting in heavenly places, but as coming to God by Him. I say “us,” “for such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, made higher than the heavens”— “became us” because we belong to heaven—go in spirit into heaven in our coming to God. We have not to do with a priest on a throne on earth, or on His own throne anywhere; but with One who is now made higher than the heavens.

Such is the priesthood of Christ always in this Epistle, a present priesthood, a priesthood in heaven, a priesthood on the right hand of the majesty in the heavens, exercised there; a priesthood, not after the order of Aaron as to person or descent, but our Lord, priest on high after the power of an endless life, personally similar to, and after the order of, Melchisedec, but never introduced as exercising His priesthood after the pattern, or in the place, of Melchisedec; always, from chapters 2 and 3 as compared and contrasted with Aaron's, to lift Jewish Christians (for they were Jewish Christians specifically) then from Jewish habits of association with that which was on earth, in shewing a present priesthood exercised above the heavens, and to preserve them by grace from falling away from the heavenly things to what they were used to; and, I may add, to bring them out from, what they had hitherto stayed in, the camp—outward association with Israel and a judged system, and by teaching, which, for us, is based on the truth, in its continual exercise, that He ever lives to do it, now as then. It is the exercise of a continual priesthood after He had offered up Himself once for all.

It is well that the reader should remark, that though the sacrifice has been stated (it is spoken of in the very first chapter, so in the second, as it is again here), we have not one word as yet of being made perfect in fact or in conscience, but the priest's fitness for tempted exercised souls down here—a priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He is gone on high, but we have no perfecting by sacrifice, no appearing as yet in the presence of God for us. Though the value of His priesthood for tried ones, and its fitness, are fully

stated, as yet it is not our perfectness, before God, but help for the feeble and tried, who need help and mercy. It is to this last that priesthood is applied, and priesthood at the right hand of God, on the right hand of the throne of majesty on high, not at all on any Melchisedec throne. And this application of the priesthood of Christ to our infirmities and help in time of need is the more remarkable, because, when the author of the epistle comes to speak of perfectness through His offering and His appearing in the presence of God for us, he does not speak of Him as priest at all; the reference to His priesthood is wholly dropped. Though contrasted with the Jewish priesthood, infirmities, help, intercession, ever living to make it, and these alone are identified with His priesthood— save the fact of propitiation in chapter 2, which is admitted to be an exceptional case, in which the high priest represented the people (not a proper act of priesthood, though of the high priest on the day of atonement); and, on the other hand, when our perfecting by His offering of Himself, and His appearing in the presence of God for us, are spoken of, priesthood is wholly dropped. There is distinct and marked contrast. That is not priesthood, intercession is, according to the Epistle to the Hebrews.

In chapter 8 we have the whole doctrine of the priesthood summed up before the unfolding of the worth of the sacrifice, and His appearing in the presence of God for us, are gone into. We have an high priest set on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens, a minister of the sanctuary, a purely heavenly one. None of this belongs to Melchisedec. The priesthood spoken of is solely while Christ is on high. It is in the sanctuary—that is, in heaven itself—exercised

in that of which the tabernacle man pitched was the shadow, made according to the pattern of things in the heavens, a heavenly priesthood in a heavenly sanctuary. This is so distinctly the case, that if He were on earth He would not be a priest. (Of Melchisedec's exercise of priesthood on His throne no trace or hint is found.) There were priests who served to the example and pattern of heavenly things; we have to do with the heavenly things themselves. And Christ has obtained a more excellent ministry. When and where according to this chapter? What is—"But now hath he obtained?" What, as to the priesthood and ministry of Christ, "replaces here? "—the heavenly things and a heavenly service and a heavenly sanctuary as a present thing, or a Melchisedec priesthood after all enemies are put down on earth? Is that shadow and pattern, according to which it is exercised, the sanctuary set up by Moses, or the Melchisedec service? For a calm and straightforward mind there can be but one answer. It may be said he speaks of the covenants. He does. But to what end? Solely here to shew that the old is passing away and ready to vanish, that the Jewish Christians might not hang on to it. The new covenant is surely not made with us at all. The basis of it is laid in Christ's blood, as the institution of the Lord's Supper shews, and we have all the advantages of it (but a great deal more), and Paul was a minister of it.

But this allusion to the pattern of heavenly things has led the inspired writer to the whole order of the sanctuary, to unfold the worth of Christ's work and sacrifice. And here let me make a remark not without its importance in the study of the Hebrews. The mention of the temple is carefully excluded. That was connected

with royalty, with the establishment on earth of what was practically Melchisedec rule and priesthood, the rule of the Son of David. The tabernacle only is mentioned; this was the pattern of heavenly things. The temple is never given as such, whatever analogies there may be; the tabernacle is. Even when he speaks of the system as having still its standing (chap. 9:8), it is the tabernacle, not the temple. It is the camp they were to leave, and come outside. The analogy of Christ's service is distinctly, definitely, and declaredly after the similitude of the Aaronic service in the tabernacle, not after any Melchisedec service. The pattern is what Moses gave, but it is in heaven, and in heaven only and specifically. It is a present thing, specifically a present thing, as He is in heaven now; not a future thing as Melchisedec is. He is entered in, not come out. (Chap. 9:12.) The veil is rent, the way into the holiest is open, and the blood of Christ purges the conscience. And the apostle speaks to those to whom the epistle is addressed, who are partakers of the heavenly calling, and can say, He is the high priest of our profession. The heavenly things themselves are in question. Christ is entered into heaven itself now to appear in the presence of God for us.

In this, as we have seen, though compared with what Aaron did, there is no mention of priesthood. It is another matter. In chapter 4:14 we have the analogy strikingly stated: "a great high priest that is passed through [not into] the heavens," as Aaron through the court and holy place into the sanctuary. But here we have no priest but Christ appearing in the presence of God for us. He has appeared, not to restore Israel and the world, but to put away sin by the sacrifice of

Himself. He has been once offered, not to redeem Israel, but—in contrast with death and judgment, man's portion as a child of Adam—to bear the sins (not of Israel, but) of many. Does this mean that He did not die for the nation, or that the remnant will not be restored on the ground of this sacrifice? Surely not. But the passage speaks of other things.

In chapter 10, still in express comparison and contrast with the law, the application of Christ's sacrifice is gone into; but it is fact and efficacy—no priesthood now. It is application; we are sanctified. It is taught as that which is known by him who teaches it, a present thing. The position of Christ is still the opposite of that of Melchisedec. He is expecting till His enemies be made His footstool. It is not a reign and kingly priesthood after they are destroyed. It is only heavenly; He sits at the right hand of God. The sanctified ones, already spoken of, are perfected for ever. He is not, as Aaronic priests were, standing ever renewing inefficacious sacrifices; but sitting at the right hand of God, because His is complete, and those having a part in it perfected for ever; that is, not merely for eternity, but in uninterrupted and unbroken continuity, just as He sits there. It is those who have part in it while He is sitting there. And the Holy Ghost is a witness of it, to the writer and those he writes to, as a present possession of peace. And mark the consequence. We brethren, "have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus." When and where? Jews under Melchisedec? And now we come back to the high priest. Where? In the holiest in heaven, or in the house of God, whose house (we have read) are we if we hold fast, I suppose, what we have got.

It will be remarked, that with chapter 10:18 the doctrine of these two chapters ends, and exhortation begins. We are to draw near with full assurance of faith into the holiest, having a high priest over the house of God. I will suppose for the moment, what clearly could not possibly be, that this exhortation was addressed to unbelievers disposed to listen, which is the theory of the deniers of priesthood as to any present application. I ask, Was not that into which they were brought the christian position? Those living men could not be brought into the residue position in the last days; they could be brought, if anywhere, among Christians. That, then, to which they were called, was where Christians were: a rent veil; access into the holiest by it; a purged conscience; full assurance of faith; and a great High Priest over the house of God. I do not believe that this is the position of the remnant in the latter day at all, but I leave that aside. It is the position of Christians now, for it is what the then listeners, according to the theory, were called into.

When we go on with the chapter it becomes evident, beyond all possible question, that it is the christian position. “Let us hold fast the profession of our faith.” Does the writer of the epistle identify himself with unbelieving Jews in the profession of a common faith? What were the unbelieving Jews to hold fast? “The profession of our faith” in the mouth of a Christian must be christian faith; and if it be “our,” he must write to Christians. We (who?) are to “provoke one another to love and to good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together”—who is that? Was it a Jewish assembly, or Christians and unbelieving Jews together? Besides, it supposes that the knowledge of the truth had

been received; and, as in chapter 6, if the Spirit, whose presence distinctively characterized Christians, and Christianity was received in vain, so here, if the one sacrifice which characterized it was departed from, there was no remedy, no room for repentance. Only judgment remained. They were christian professors, and enjoyed the advantages of Christianity, and if they cast them away, there was nothing else to come but judgment. What distinguished the remnant is that there is deliverance to come, because they have not had these privileges, and had not cast them away. What characterized any Jews disposed to listen then was the same fact, they had not had them. What characterized those to whom the writer addressed himself is that they had. They, if they departed from the faith—drew back, had trodden under foot the Son of God, counted the blood of the covenant wherewith they were sanctified an unholy thing, and done despite to the Spirit of grace—there was no remedy left. Are unbelieving Jews, however disposed, as to their position, sanctified by the blood of the covenant? What does verse 32 mean? “After ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;” and “knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance?” What is the confidence they were not to cast away? In a word, they were not of those—the writer hoped—who drew back to perdition, but of those who believed to the saving of the soul, and certainly had the privileges from which they could draw back.

I resume the proof from these exhortations. The Epistle — the practical exhortations were addressed in fact to some one. Those to whom they are addressed are illuminated, had received the knowledge of the truth,

are exhorted not to forsake the assembling of themselves together (they had taken joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing they had in heaven a better and enduring substance), and even not to cast away their confidence; were not to be of those who drew back, but believing to the saving of their souls; in a word, were believers, or at least professed believers, and believers then were Christians. Profession left them in danger of drawing back to Judaism, and gave occasion to warning in this respect; but, if Christians, Christians had and therefore have a great high priest over the house of God —a priest gone into heaven, and who exercised his priesthood there, and, as here described, there only—a priest who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and who ever lives to make intercession for us: our perfection by His offering, and His appearing in the presence of God for us, not being connected with His priestly service.

What remains of the Epistle, after such evidence, needs not very enlarged reference. In chapter n I notice one passage— “God having provided [or foreseen] some better thing for us, that they [Abraham, &c] without us should not be made perfect.” Is it for Christians or for the Jewish remnant that some better thing than Abraham’s heavenly portion is provided? Is not the perfection resurrection glory, not blessing under Melchisedec?

All the exhortations in the beginning of chapter 12, if they mean anything, are addressed to Christians. They were not come to Sinai, but to the full heavenly and earthly blessing, in which the Church of the firstborn and the Old Testament saints are included. Here alone we have the Church in the Hebrews. They were come to

Jesus. It will be said, To Jesus, mediator of the new covenant. Quite true: and I do not doubt that this refers in accomplishment to the millennial earth. But they were come to Jesus, and this is the essential point; and it is a Jesus not coming back from heaven, but speaking from heaven while He is there. Chapter 13:8, 9, clearly shews with whom they were in connection. The Christ they had been taught to know, by those whose faith they were to follow, was the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. I do not connect the verses as in the English Bible; but it is quite clear that the faith a Christian exhorts to follow is christian faith, and here suggests Christ as the One whose un-changeableness should guard them from strange doctrines: grace, not Jewish meats, was to be their portion.

But further, “We,” says the writer, “have an altar of which they have no right to eat who serve the tabernacle.” Who had an altar in contrast with the Jews? the unbeliever willing to listen? Of a future remnant there is no idea or question. The writer declares that he and those with whom he was associated had (had then) an altar, a place of worship, where the food of and communion with God was, at which those who held to (now by-past and soon to be judged) Judaism had no right to partake. Who had, who could then or now have, this but Christians? Judaism as a system is then rejected as being a religion for this earth, a camp of God (now left of Him) here. Such a religion was now rejected. When the blood was carried within the sanctuary, the body of the victim was carried without the camp. The true sanctuary, heaven (as is expressly taught in chapter 9:11, 12, 24), is one essential element of the position spoken of; abiding rejection of and by worldly religion,

made for or suited to the flesh, “outside the camp,” or the earthly holy city, is the other. This is distinctly Christianity. The remnant at the end look for and will have the restoration of an earthly system, and the Lord’s presence and throne in Jerusalem. The system into which men are called in this epistle (and, if Christians, are, and warned not to fall away from) is exclusively and uncompromisingly christian and heavenly, in contrast with what the remnant could have at the end, founded on this same work, but established in a restored throne on earth and a holy city here, not a rejected Saviour and a heavenly throne. Verses 20, 21, are most clearly addressed to Christians, and outside all old and new covenants; and the rest, as the whole chapter, suppose that in faith, joy, hopes, interest, and warnings, the writer and those addressed are alike Christians, though the latter Christians in danger of slipping back into Judaism, from which they are called finally to separate themselves. The result of this survey of the Epistle to the Hebrews is, that our being perfected by the offering of Jesus Christ, and His appearing in the presence of God for us, is not referred to priesthood, but that there is a priesthood of intercession available for us because the priest can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; and, having suffered, being tempted, is competent to succour those that are tempted. That this priesthood is exercised in heaven specifically, in its whole character and nature, and only there, is here brought forward as that which became us; that the comparison and contrast of this priesthood in its exercise is wholly with the ordering and service of the tabernacle. The priest is according to the order of Melchisedec, but of the exercise of a Melchisedec priesthood there is no mention, hint, or trace. It is a priesthood exercised in

heaven only, into which Christ is entered as Aaron into the holiest made with hands. It is addressed to Christians formally and expressly in all its parts; if it reach over—as a groundwork of Israel's future hopes, as what is taught in it surely does—it has no direct application to them, save as Christ's present position and His accomplished work secure these hopes; and as it does not take proper church ground (that is, our sitting in heavenly places in Christ), it can reach over in certain parts to their hopes and blessings as an accessory. But the hopes given in the Epistle are not theirs, but heaven and glory. Further, it is written to christian Jews, that is, to Christians from among the Jews, and who in fact clung to their old thoughts, and feelings, and system, and were in danger, if not kept of God, of falling back into Judaism, which was ready to be judged, and are warned moreover to come out and leave their connection with it—warned that the faith of Christ, which they had, and Judaism could no longer be connected as it had been, many thousand Jews, as we know, holding fast to their ancient law.

I now take up some of the remarks which have given occasion to this paper.

The first goes to the root of the whole matter. I have touched upon it, but it is too important to pass over, namely, that church position is our only position. That we are never out of the position of those who belong to the Church is quite true, but that is not church position. Church position is the unity of the body which thus sits in heavenly places in its Head, inseparable from it and so perfect. Now, this position belongs to all true Christians, but they are not always viewed in this position. Were it so, all individual relationship with the

Father would cease. Christ would have nothing to do with calling us brethren; could not be the Firstborn among many brethren; has ceased to be the good Shepherd; as, on the other hand, individual responsibility has ceased; we cry no more, Abba, Father. None of these things have to do with the body, though they belong to those who are in the body.

But, further, the Epistle to the Romans, save chapter 12, does not apply to this position, but to individual responsibility, and individual death to sin, and individual position and privilege. The Colossians, though the doctrine is once referred to, does not set us on this ground. In that epistle we are dead and risen with Christ, but not sitting in heavenly places, but taught to look up there. The Philippians never takes this ground at all, yet the whole of it is individual christian experience, of one down here, but, as down here, of the highest practical kind. Sin is not mentioned. He did not know whether to desire life or death; decides his case when, thus, self has no place at all, by that which is useful for the Church; never does but one thing, has but one object; and as Christ had always been magnified in him, so he hopes He ever will be. Yet church position is never thought of. In church position I am always perfect. The moment I am an individual, my responsibility comes in and liability to failure. The author of the tract speaks of “nation,” “family,” “brethren,” as belonging to Israel, but, though to be used as principles, not the right way of dealing with souls. (“Remarks,” p. 16.) “Nation” of course is Israel. The word “family” is not used that I remember, though oi\ko" is; but children continually. And as to “brethren,” it is, every one knows, the common term for Christians in the Acts and Epistles: “all

the holy brethren," "our brother Timothy," "the brethren," "I beseech you, therefore, brethren." This is so true that it is only after His resurrection that Christ so addresses them. "Quartus, a brother." I should be wasting my reader's time in quoting passages—let him take a Concordance and see if it be not the habitual name given to the saints. The remark I refer to is only a proof how an absorbing idea has led away this brother from scripture.

Another very serious mistake which I refer to as a general principle is, that God owns no kind of relationship with God out of Israel on the ground of profession. The words are these in page 9: "I repeat, Israel and Israel only, ever had any link with God upon the ground of profession without the reality of internal life." "It is not now Jew or Gentile, but Christ's or the world's." Link is a vague word: real link of course there cannot be. But if it be meant that men are not dealt with as in a recognized relationship with Christ, it is a very dangerous and mischievous mistake. The house of God may certainly be built with wood, and hay, and stubble here on the earth. The apostle warns the Corinthians that Israel were baptized to Moses and partook of the same spiritual meat and drink, referring to baptism and the Lord's Supper, yet fell in the wilderness, and they were to take heed by their example. In John, we read that he who hates his brother is a murderer and has not eternal life. The seven churches are all treated by the Lord as on the footing of churches, though judged, and the last spued out of His mouth. Peter tells us that judgment begins at the house of God. But more, in Matthew 24 the servant who says, My lord delays his coming, is treated as a servant. The lord of that servant

comes; and he has his portion with hypocrites. The servant who had one talent is treated as a wicked and slothful servant, and is judged as a servant, cast out as an unprofitable servant. The scripture is full of relationships, bringing judgments according to those relationships, where no internal life is. It is the whole history of Christianity in this world, going on to judgment as such. Involved in it is the weightiest and most solemn thought which can affect the Christian on the side of evil and its consequences, when himself at peace with God.

Another important principle is, our personal standing before God and the Father as regards Christ's work. Nothing is thought of in the tract but perfection of standing, and with this is connected the total exclusion of Christ from all loving service for the saint. His presence in heaven secures us, the Holy Ghost works in us; but Christ has nothing to do for us at all: no care, no love in exercise, no advocacy. His presence secures us, but He does nothing up there, and the Holy Ghost does all down here. So that He does nothing anywhere. This is a serious statement. Such is the doctrine of page 19 of "Remarks," &c, which allows no intercession or advocacy unless to propitiate God. "The intercession or advocacy needful and consequent upon failure in the walk, as it is put in the tract, must be to propitiate God, because Christ is up there and we down here. If imputation of sin is impossible (which is true, for Christ is there for us as having put away our sin), it is something in the heart of the saint that is needed: and one down here to do that needed thing. Now that is just the place and work of the Holy Ghost, and nowhere do we read that it is the work of Christ for us in heaven.

The Holy Ghost tells us—witnesseth within us—of the permanent, perfected work of Him who is our 'Guardian' in heaven, and so maintains us there before God in all the virtue of His own person and work, notwithstanding our failure down here; and the practical result of this—the Spirit's witness to this—is to lead the soul, not only away from the failure, but back to communion with God."

"Again, I ask, in what way can Christ's intercession or advocacy restore the soul, as the tract says, unless the Holy Ghost work in the soul, giving it an apprehension of what has been done afresh before God for its failure? I say 'afresh' because it says 'there can be no thought of imputation' of sin which is put away for ever, and therefore it must be some fresh thing done (even if connected with atonement), something with respect to the special act of failure, and done after its commission."

"I apprehend the intercession of Christ before God for us is continued and uninterrupted; and in virtue of this, the Holy Ghost continues His work in the world, and in the saint, however the world may reject, and the flesh in the saint may lust against Him and His work. The repeated intercession of Christ, on each and every occasion of failure, involves the remembrance of sin before God, and so touches the perfection of His work which has put away sin, as well as overlooks also the present work of the Holy Ghost in the saint. Three points of solemn moment."

Now this is all a mistake. It is not to propitiate; it is no continued and uninterrupted. The last phrase I allude to may mislead the reader. The author believes no

intercession in the ordinary sense of the word; he says “The only priesthood of Christ is Melchisedec, and that is for blessing, not intercession. The intercession, as I have before said, is His maintaining us before God in all the virtue of His own person and work.” (Page 21.) And “He is there also ‘for us,’ and so He is there presenting Himself as the head and representative of the redeemed; it is His presence intercedes or avails for us.” The repeated intercession of Christ on each failure is denied —is a fresh work. I have only to quote 1 John 2 to shew the falseness of all this. “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins.”

I do not see how we could have a more complete answer to the author’s statement on every point. The righteousness is there in the person of Christ, the propitiation is accomplished in all its perfectness. Both are supposed to be complete and perfect, and then if any man sin, that is “in each and every failure,” we have an advocate with the Father. The paravklhsi" or advocacy of Christ is set in activity when there is failure; “if any man sin, we have.” The presence of the righteous One is perpetual; the propitiation, a finished work. If further were needed, it is Christ, not the Holy Ghost, whose work is referred to when any man sins; it is not our looking to some fresh work, but something which avails us when we sin. God forbid that it should be thought I do not recognize the Spirit’s work graciously dealing with, and in, and bringing back, the soul, or right thoughts in it. I believe every good thing in us is wrought by the Holy Ghost, but I say that this passage refers us, when a

man has sinned, as an occasional evil thing, to Christ's advocacy as restoring, not to the Spirit's work.

And let my reader here note the subject in question in John, and he will at once see the bearing of it, and the difference of John and Hebrews. The subject in John is communion or fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. Not access to God, but communion when grace is known in the full revelation of the Father and the Son; the names of grace and eternal hfe in John. Our fellowship is with them; common thoughts, joys, feelings, however weak and feeble we may be. It must be so. The Holy Ghost cannot give us different ones from the Father and the Son's. We delight in Christ; we know the Father does. We delight in the Father's love, so does the Son, a holy, blessed, wondrous thought, and which will only keep us humble when it is real. But God in His nature is light; and if we say we have communion with Him, and we walk in darkness, we he, and do not the truth.

I cannot say I have no sin, I cannot say I have not sinned. But I need not go on sinning, I may walk in the Spirit. But suppose I do not: the righteousness and propitiation remain in all their value or the link would be wholly broken, my acceptance gone. That is not so, but my communion is wholly gone, at least for the time. It were a blasphemy to talk of communion with God when I have sinful thoughts or acts. What is now to be done? Christ is above, as advocate for the occasional failure, not to win righteousness—He is the righteous one there: not to propitiate (His propitiation for our sins is all complete) but as advocate with the Father. It is not the Holy Spirit's work I am referred to, however surely He thereon works in us, as I all-thankfully acknowledge.

In every point the author is wholly wrong. The repeated intercession on each and every occasion of failure does not touch the perfection of His work, it is founded on it. It does not involve the remembrance of sins before God in the sense here spoken of and as scripture speaks of it. It refers to the loss of communion by allowance of sin, which is most certain. Restoring and chastening both suppose God's taking notice of sin in us when such there is. His not remembering sins does not, thank God, refer to that as if He would allow sin in us, but to His imputing or bearing them in His mind against us.

Even as to intercession in connection with priesthood the writer is all wrong. He tells us that (p. 21) "the only priesthood of Christ is Melchisedec, and that is for blessing, not intercession." But I read in Hebrews—He "hath an unchangeable priesthood, wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost who come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." That is, priesthood is connected with intercession, and intercession the work of priesthood, such as Christ has it now.

I have already spoken of what intercession means in scripture. The reader has only to look out the passages and see, Acts 25:24; Romans 8:27-31; 11:2; Hebrews 7:25.

The difference between Hebrews and John is not without importance. Hebrews speaks of access to God, coming to God; John, of communion. Hebrews shews that, being perfected for ever, we have boldness to enter into the holiest, Jesus appearing in the presence of God for us. Now this is always so. We have always access. When we have sinned it is there we have to go— go to confess and

humble ourselves in the dust; but to go there because there is our place with God. There alone sin is fully judged. But that is never in question, and that is the subject of Hebrews: the veil is rent, and we are perfected for ever. Hence priesthood in Hebrews applies to infirmities, help, mercy on the road; blessed thing too! Whereas communion is interrupted, and in respect of this sin does come in question: hence the advocacy of Christ does apply to this, and this is the subject in John.

I enter now into some more details of the “Remarks.” I read, page 6, “He is there presenting Himself as the head and representative of the redeemed. It is His presence intercedes or avails for us.” Which?—Head or representative? The two ideas are wholly distinct. As Head we are one with Him, members of His body, of His flesh, of His bones—part of Himself. There is no representation—we are part of Himself. If He represents us, He is there instead of us, for us. Thus in the Hebrews, which the writer tells us is not properly for us, He appears in the presence of God for us, because union and headship are not contemplated. And this is confusion as to the whole point in question. I believe we are united by one Spirit to Christ in heaven: that is the eternal counsel of God. I believe He represents me as a responsible being here on earth; first, for everlasting righteousness secured in Him, so that nothing is imputed to me, and I have a place before God according to His title in righteousness; and, secondly, to secure help and assure me of living sympathy in my responsibility, and for communion; and if I fail, as an advocate with the Father to restore my soul, the good Shepherd who knows His sheep and is known of them.

The use of Hebrews 5:1, 2 is a great mistake. It is the description of what high priests taken from among men are, as Aaron, in contrast with Christ. They had the same infirmities, and at the time of their priesthood. And as regards the sacrifices for sin spoken of, the careful doctrine of the epistle is, that this He did once when He offered up Himself, and that it is accomplished before He enters into the regular exercise of His priesthood. It is a mistake as to the whole teaching of the epistle. It is asked, “What is that which subsisted de facto, not by divine authority, not yet actually set aside, which Christians were called to come out of?” (Page 10.) It was Judaism at Jerusalem. It did subsist de facto till the destruction of Jerusalem; had no real divine authority after the cross, but was left by the patience of God, not yet set aside; and Christians, that is, Jewish Christians, had remained in it by thousands, nay, wanted to subject Gentile Christians to it, though God did not allow that; and the Jewish Christians were now called to come out of it. A great many of the priests even, it is said, were obedient to the faith. This was now to close.

I have already spoken of the contents of page 11. It is wholly contrary to scripture. Though the same truth may be found scattered about and referred to as known, no epistle takes Ephesian ground but the Epistle to the Ephesians itself—not even Paul’s. As to John, he never alludes at all to church truth. All is individual, though he teaches that “as he is, so are we in this world.” Let the Christian read Philippians, the most experimental of all epistles, in the third chapter running on to win Christ in glory; the second, looking for his mind on earth; the Church or church truth is never found in it—could not be; surely it is blessedly consistent with it. But this is

what I contend for: that he who is in the Church can be contemplated in the exercises of his soul on other ground, though not on ground inconsistent with it. If we know what it is to be in Christ and united with Him, we all know that there is another ground I am on. There I am perfect always; in fact, down here, a feeble creature, the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. I have eternal life, for I have Christ; yet "the end" is "everlasting life," and I am to lay hold upon it. I am sanctified, yet look to be sanctified, body, soul, and spirit, and follow after holiness: God chastises me to be made partaker of His. I am saved and called with a holy calling; yet things turn to my salvation, and I work it out, or should do so, with fear and trembling, though knowing God works in me for it.

The pre-occupation of page 14 is singular. I do not again go over the ground that the Christian can be contemplated individually, and even in his imperfections, and his actual state here below, none of which are the Church as such; but I refer to what is said: "If we take the testimony of the book itself, it is clear that it is the world or habitable earth to come whereof we speak, and that is assuredly connected with Israel, not the Church now being gathered." Is it not strange to see this passage quoted when its object is to shew that this was not the object of faith for those to whom the epistle is addressed, but what came before that time?—Christ in a position the opposite of that of Melchisedec. "Howbeit," the writer continues, "we see not all things put under him." That is, this habitable earth to come is not the present subject of your faith and attention; "but we see Jesus made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour."

Christ is to be viewed in a place where He cannot have that of Melchisedec. So far from all enemies being subdued—a phrase which the author quotes with approbation very often—they are not yet put under His feet. Can anyone find a single passage in which the world to come, or the Melchisedec priesthood in its only exercise, is spoken of in the epistle? I know of none. I affirm, that its uniform object is to make those addressed see that the Aaronic priesthood is set aside, and that they must look up to where Christ is now, having a heavenly calling, and see Jesus where He must wait till the time comes when all things will be put under His feet, when He will have the Melchisedec throne and exercise the Melchisedec priesthood, which He cannot do now—the time when the world to come will be there. The author makes that priesthood to be, "most definitely" … one of "blessing and refreshment after and consequent upon the destruction of all enemies." That is clearly not the priesthood spoken of in Hebrews, for He is a priest at the right hand of God; and such a high priest became us who is made higher than the heavens, and ever lives to make intercession for us, whatever it means, as priest. But what the author admits Melchisedec priesthood to be is clearly not the present condition of things, declared not to be so in the Hebrews. Yet Christ ever lives to occupy a priesthood now! We have a high priest, sitting at the right hand of God, a high priest over the house of God, a priest who makes intercession for us, where it is admitted the exercise of Melchisedec priesthood is impossible. Nor is this view of Melchisedec priesthood a casual admission of the author's.

In a second tract, which I had not seen when I began this, I find what follows. In pages 20, 21 of that tract he quotes a series of passages, nine in number, closing with, “it [the Melchisedec priesthood] is not that which Christ the Lord now exercises;” and adds, “with all this I fully agree.” So page 23. It is admitted there that Christ does not exercise Melchisedec priesthood now. Is there none exercised in Hebrews? Let the reader now read chapter 2:17, 18; 3:1, “of our profession,” “whose house are we;” chapter 4:14-16, “let us hold fast our profession;” chapter 5:5-10; 3:19, 20; 7:14, 24-27; 8:1, 2, 4 (this is now, and not Melchisedec, for if on earth He would not be a priest; but He is a priest now, set down on the right hand of God: the Lord as Melchisedec will be on earth and a priest upon His throne); 10:19-22, and what follows. Let my reader, I say, now go through these passages and say if a priesthood is not now in exercise, when the Melchisedec, it is admitted, cannot be. It is in vain to say, that if the priest is after the order of Melchisedec, the present exercise of the priesthood must be. That is just the question which is to be answered by the Hebrews, not by “must be.” The writer says that scripture speaks of two priesthoods—Aaronic and Melchisedec. As regards the Hebrews, at any rate, it is a mistake, it is more exact than the author is aware. It never speaks of Melchisedec priesthood, and on our present question this is of all importance. At least I have found no passage, and I have searched too in the “Englishman’s Greek Concordance.” It speaks of a priest after the order of Melchisedec, that is, of Christ personally, as after the order of Melchisedec, but never of a Melchisedec priesthood. That would bring the idea of its exercise as such—has brought it to our brother. The priest is after his order, but there is absolutely no

Melchisedec priesthood in the Hebrews. Whether priestly service is spoken of, every one must judge after looking at the passages I have referred to, which treat of our profession, of holding it fast, of our Lord, of not drawing back to perdition, of a heavenly calling, of which those addressed were partakers.

Our heavenly calling, let me add, is not, as the author would have it, in itself our union with Christ at all. And it is very important, as I have learnt some twenty-five years, to make the difference. Those who have the heavenly calling may be united. But union with Christ is not a calling but a state, an acquired place and position. Through the calling we may, in God's counsels and by His power, be come into this union; but I believe there are those who are saints of the high places, at least there will be, but who never will be in union. At any rate, a calling is that to which we are called by faith, and is never in itself union, though those called may be united. We are called to something, and our spirit and our walk are to be conformed to it. I may be actually, in a certain sense, in it in Christ, but this is not my calling. My calling is that which God has set before my soul, as that which is to form my soul, by my heart being set upon it as given to me by grace, and by grace called to it; and scripture constantly deals with the soul on this ground.

I do not desire, God forbid, that any one for an instant should forget or lose the consciousness of his church standing. I doubt a good deal whether the author has ever got fully hold of it; it ends in perfectness of standing in his tracts in general, at any rate. The Lord grant that all that have it, and he too, may hold the consciousness of it always fast in their mind; but we know in part, and we prophesy in part, and we have to

learn various parts of truth, and to learn them separately, and to learn ourselves and our dependence, what the flesh is, and what the Lord is. Now, I desire to learn this as united to Him, that is, when standing in grace, never losing sight of my union.

But the scripture teaches me these things, and many things I have to learn; never as denying the fulness of grace in union, never inconsistently with it, never taking me off that ground; nay, I believe other truths can only be rightly learned on this ground, I mean as consciously on it. But scripture has other truths to teach me. It teaches me of the blessed person of Christ, of what He was on earth when I was not united to Him; and it teaches me these truths separately, in part, as it is the only way a poor creature like me can learn them; and I bless God for that patient grace with such as we are who so teaches us. The question is not at all, then, whether I get out of the consciousness of union, but of what Christ is for me in every respect while I am in union, as I have said before. I am justified individually from my sins. It must be individually. When I see the blessedness of that, do I give up the consciousness of union? God forbid. But justification from my sins is not union. It is a part of the blessing which belongs to me, who by grace am united to Christ, necessary for it but reserved too—if not in the same fulness that the light of union casts on everything —for those who are not united. Jehovah tsidkenu will be said by others; but it concerns my conscience, and conscience is always and must be individual. Responsibility to God is distinct from God’s counsels, though when united we have a new responsibility according to our new position. The title of Christ as Lord, as Son of man, is not union. I do not go out of

union to learn it, nor of the consciousness of union; but the truths I have are learned, as truths, apart from union, as before my mind. All is learned by us ejn mevrei: so scripture teaches me one truth in one epistle, another in another. In Philippians, as I have said, the saint is running a race, is down here, not sitting in heavenly places—is otherwise looked at; in Colossians, risen but not sitting in heavenly places, but having his hope there. None of these take the saint out of union, or faith in it, or consciousness of it; but they teach him different truths, and these truths do not contemplate him in his union with Christ.

I pass over the remarks in John 13 and 17, because it is a question of spiritual discernment. I only ask the reader to look into the passages and say whether the Lord does not contemplate His ascension on high; as is said, “These are in the world, and I am no more in the world, and I come to thee.”

But another question must occupy me a while. That subject is the Holy Spirit’s work and place in this respect. I have said, and I repeat it because of its importance, nothing good is in us but by the work of the blessed Spirit. The presence of the Holy Spirit characteristically distinguishes Christianity, and is the main truth revived among “Brethren” in the present day. The counsels of God, of the Father, are the source; the work of Christ, the sure ground; the coming of the Lord, the bright and blessed hope of our blessings and state; but present realization is all by the Spirit. So in restoring, as to communion, the good thoughts, I doubt not, are wrought by Him.

The author of the tracts complains that those who have written on the priesthood of Christ have not spoken of the Spirit. They have not perhaps, I know not, spoken of it there; though, as to my own teaching on it, I know I have always referred to it in connection with 1 John 1, 2. But so far as it is the case, the reason is simple—they were treating another subject. But the author of the tracts is wholly wrong in his statements on the subject, and very seriously wrong. He shuts out Christ wholly from the care of our weakness as priest and from the restoring of our souls. Christ in heaven secures our position by His work and the fact of His presence, he tells us; and having obtained the Holy Ghost for us, the Holy Ghost, he says, works this restoration in us. Now, I repeat, as a general truth, the Holy Ghost works all good in us. The author thus states it: “Now that is just the place and work of the Holy Ghost, and nowhere do we read that it is the work of Christ for us in heaven.” (Page 19.) This restoring is solely by the Holy Ghost witnessing to the perfectness of Christ’s work and the accomplishment of reconciliation. (“Four Letters,” p. 31.) “The Spirit’s witness to this is to lead the soul, not only away from the failure, but back to communion with God.” “As to Christ, it cannot be that having perfected for ever those that are sanctified He has aught more to do.” (“Four Letters,” p. 17; see pages 6, 7 of the same.) All work and activity of Christ is excluded. “If the Holy Ghost has to make good in the soul some fresh or additional service, what are we to say about the finished work?” “Has not the Father given all things into His hands, what more then can He ask for?”

Now Christ’s finished work, and our being perfected by His one offering, has made us perfect before God; I add,

our being dead with Him has set us free, and we are in a new position and a new responsibility consequent on and in this new position. God has been pleased, not only to make us perfect in Him in His sight, but to leave us here to manifest the life of Christ, to have our senses exercised to discern good and evil, to learn and unlearn too. He has started us by redemption in a life of exercise in the wilderness, and in conflict in Canaan. We need constant help, not merely the knowledge of our position by the Holy Ghost, but a strength that is made perfect in weakness; we need restoring of soul if we have failed, perhaps messengers of Satan, thorns in the flesh, to buffet us. That is not the Holy Ghost. To whom did Paul go that he might get rid of it? Who answered him? Whose strength was made perfect in his weakness?

Our perfectness is just the ground and starting-point of an exercised life here, which, when that perfectness is known, is never meant to raise the smallest doubt or question as to it; but in which, because we are perfect, we are wholly free to learn good and evil—what God is, the fulness of Christ, and be conformed to Him by His word. The Lord stands by us and strengthens us. The grace of Christ is sufficient for us. His grace is with us; He Himself is with us; He does not leave us comfortless. Is all this, and much more than this, having nothing more to do? Paul had obtained mercy of the Lord to be found faithful. It is, I trust, unnecessary to quote the passages in which grace is attributed to or sought for others from Christ. Can the author produce one passage where the Spirit is so spoken of? This destruction of the living solicitude of Christ because we are perfect, and in that which is our place because we are perfect, is, I confess (I trust I have not used a hard word in all this

paper), terrible to my spirit. Does the Lord Jesus Christ Himself not comfort our hearts and make us perfect in every good word and work?

But I go further and I ask, Is there a single passage98 where restoration is ascribed to the Spirit, or His work referred to in restoration? There may be some, but I cannot recall any. Joy, love, peace, power, liberty, the love of God shed abroad in the heart, the earnest of the inheritance, changing into Christ's image from glory to glory, intercession, in the sense of evil around, according to God, are ascribed to Him; witness with our spirit that we are sons of God; fellowship: but I cannot remember any passage which refers to our restoration in which He is spoken of. And the reason is simple. He is the power of God in us, and the power of good. Sympathy and solicitude, however divine, are attributed to Him who has been tempted in all points like as we are; who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; who, while His love is divine, is a man, not ashamed to call us brethren. Hence it is attributed to Christ. Christ washed the feet, and it was not what He was doing then that He referred to. When He speaks of Lord and Master, it is the lowliness of love and service to others in which we are to imitate Him. But it was only afterwards they were to know the import of what He did. They were washed, and needed only to have their feet washed, which might pick up dirt in their path.

In the Hebrews the operation of the Spirit is never spoken of; sympathy, grace, and help are, when Christ's priesthood is spoken of, His priesthood at the right hand of God; for there it is explicitly that He is priest; there only in the Hebrews; there as diligently taught as the main subject of the Epistle. In i John i:2, when the blood-

cleansing is spoken of, our failure is not. The author says, and he is right, We may be and walk in the light; and, alas! not walk according to it. And the difference is important in its place. But this last is not spoken of at all in the passage. What is said in the passage is: “If we walk in the light, as he is in the light … the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” When failure is spoken of (chap. 2:1, 2), the Spirit is not at all spoken of, but the advocacy of Christ is.

It is strange how scripture is neglected to follow a system in this tract. Thus we are told, “But now of them as a nation [the italics are the author’s] it may be said ‘by one offering he hath perfected for ever’ even them. They are perfected in Him … But as a nation they are not yet sanctified.” But the passage says, “He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” Pages 24, 25 are the simplest contradiction. If “when it [our walk] is in the light, it is perfect.” The case supposed in John has no room according to the author’s statement. The passage says, “If we walk in the light as he is in the light… the blood cleanses.” The author says, “our standing is in the light; our walk should be, but is not always;—in that case, the Holy Ghost, we see, uses the blood to cleanse.” The statement is wholly without foundation in the passage. The author’s, if our walk is not in the light, the Holy Ghost uses the blood to cleanse. What is said is the contrary. It says, If we walk in the light, it cleanses.

The attempt to separate the work of Christ and the Spirit, as the author does, is quite unscriptural. “If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his,” and “if Christ be in you, the Spirit is life;” but then Christ also is our life. Their work in many respects may surely

be considered apart. But we have seen how much the work of Christ, and the Lord by His grace, is spoken of in scripture. To say it is either He or His Spirit absolutely, is unsound. Even when on earth Christ could say, “the Father that dwelleth in me He doeth the works,” and yet He wrought, and yet He by the Spirit cast out devils.

We meet in page 29 with the same totally unscriptural denial of the work of Christ in us in grace, of which the scripture is quite full. Is the good Shepherd’s voice dumb and unheard for ever? A priest’s office was not merely to offer sacrifice. This is another unscriptural mistake, from following a system, and necessary for the author’s. He offered incense within, as well as sacrifice without; indeed it was not as priest, the author admits, properly speaking, he offered the sacrifice.

Again we meet this terrible phrase, “He [Christ] has emphatically sat down as having nothing more to do.” I appeal to every page, so to speak, of the New Testament, referring to what took place after He went up on high, whether He is not presented as active in grace. The statement in page 31 as to the quotation from “The Three Appearings” in page 30 of “Remarks,” is unfounded. It is not said in the passage quoted “forgiveness asked.” The Holy Ghost, it is said, brings back the soul in the sweet sense that the sin is forgiven. The author’s own words are, “the Holy Ghost, we see, uses the blood to cleanse.” (“Remarks,” page 25.) Does he not, in his view of the matter, give the sense of it? “Cleansing it” is much more than “the sweet sense of it.” The statements of pages 25 and 31 do clash completely.

Many things I might notice, but I feel that my object is sufficiently attained in considering the great principles in question. The contradiction in page 14 of “Four Letters” is no contradiction at all. Christ is not a priest according to the order of Aaron; His priesthood is not according to that order; but the exercise of priesthood in Hebrews is wholly according to that type. He enters into the holiest not without blood, only here His own; that was what Aaron did. Aaron did not make himself a priest, nor did He. Aaron passed through the tabernacle into the holiest, so did He into a better, made without hands. Aaron was consecrated to offer to God, so must He have something. Aaron was a minister of the sanctuary, so is He. They served to the example and pattern of heavenly things, He in the heavenly things themselves. The tabernacle and its service were the pattern and type of the heavenly things in which Christ now ministers. The epistle compares Him to Moses and Aaron. He is the high priest of our profession. Now take the Melchisedec priesthood in its exercise as presented. It is, after all enemies are subdued; that in Hebrews is expressly not so; they are not under His feet. Melchisedec offers no sacrifice; Christ has: Melchisedec goes into no sanctuary; Christ does here: Melchisedec is a priest upon his throne; Christ here is not, but on the right hand of the majesty on high: Melchisedec brings out blessing on earth; Christ here does not: with Melchisedec, the rod of God’s strength goes out of Sion; here it does not. Though every way superior the priesthood of Christ in Hebrews has every element of the Aaronic priesthood as a type, which is stated to be a pattern of these heavenly things in which Christ is exercised; not one of the Melchisedec. As far as any analogy or change of law goes, the analogy is much

greater when an earthly Jerusalem is restored, the change much greater when all is in heaven.

94 See Acts 21:20.

95 I am aware that the author says, “Were there not at that time a Jewish remnant, some of whom might listen to these last words of exhortation, own Jesus, and be brought into church position?” But this alters nothing. However God might dispose their hearts to hear, they were still unbelievers—had no part in Christ—and belonged to that part of the nation which had refused Messiah. The question is, Is the Epistle addressed to believers or to unbelievers? I do not even admit that the remnant in the last day will be in the state of those here spoken of. These were yet unbelieving, with a full present Christianity; those, though not a freed people knowing salvation, will be a repentant and expectant people, otherwise prepared to say,” Blessed is he that cometh,” &c. But, though confirmatory of what I say, this is not the question. These were unbelievers: is the Epistle addressed to such?

96 I do not insist on our sins, as the reading is questionable. It would otherwise be—having made the purification of sins, He sat down. I insist on the position, which is the basis of the Epistle.

97 Ejntugcavnw never means anything else in scripture than active intervention. It is used five times: Acts 25:24; Romans 8:27, 34; 11:2; Hebrews 7:25. The reader can easily see if these are active interventions or not.

98 I will not go into Acts 9. It might be said it is miraculous. But let the reader read it through and say if Christ has nothing to do. We may have lost much of this blessed familiarity. But is the love of it lost?

I have no doubt that as, we know, the blessed Lord died for that nation, so His present abode in heaven as priest preserves the title and hopes of Israel as a nation till He comes and confers upon them the promised blessings by His? presence, when His enemies here below will be put down. We have not seen and have believed, and have a higher and far higher blessing, a heavenly one in God's rest above. Connected with Christ by the Holy Ghost while He is hid in God, and made heavenly in our place and character, we shall, besides far higher blessings, reign with Him; but they—with indeed all the earth, but they especially —will be reigned over, and enjoy in the highest way the privileges which flow from His immediate government, and the place nearest Himself on earth. They have not the heavenly portion, surely not the Church's; but Christ is to gather all things in one, in heaven and on earth, and they will have the highest on earth. Those who have suffered like Him somewhat, the remnant, will learn at least one heavenly song, and be His companions wherever He goes, connected with His royalty in Sion, while those born in peace, it appears, will not learn it. (See Rev. 14.) Hebrews 12:22-24 gives a summing up of the whole in heaven and in earth.

Now, as the Epistle to the Hebrews reveals Jesus to us as He is now in heaven for us on earth, and has the Jewish people as connected with Messiah specially in view, it is quite natural that—though it reveals Christ's present place in heaven and His intercession there, inasmuch as their future blessing as well as the security of every blessing depends on His presence in heaven—it should leave open and give room for the application of the efficacy of the place He holds to that people in the

latter-day. It is not an accommodation, not the proper subject of the apostle; but it is an accessory thought and extension of its application, for which room is purposely left in certain passages; and the omission of the relationship of sons with the Father, and of the Church as such with Christ, adapts it to this end. And it is this view of Christ's present position in heaven, which is meant by all this period being foreshadowed by the great day of atonement. Till the high priest came out, Israel could not know that the sacrifice had been accepted, and waited as a people who could not draw, in any way, nigh to God till the sacrifice was accepted. But for us who believe, while He is yet hidden within, the Holy Ghost is come out, so that we know His work is accepted, and that He sits at the right hand of the majesty in the heavens, expecting till His enemies be made His footstool; and hence we have assurance. But His work is accepted for them as a nation, and in virtue of it they will enjoy all their promises, only they will believe when they see. Then He will be king and priest upon His throne. So Moses and Aaron went in and came out (Lev. 9), and fire came down and the people worshipped. The blessing from the priesthood alone was a distinct thing.

This leaving of room for blessing to the Jewish people, through the sacrifice and priesthood of Christ, is referred to, I may say fully, already in the "Synopsis." Christ is on high, securing the blessing for the people, and the people for blessing; but He is not yet revealed, and by the Holy Ghost we know and are connected with Him there. I do not say united: this, thank God, is true too. But we are associated with Him there in hope, desire, communion; have heaven open, as Stephen, and

see Him there; and by the Holy Ghost are changed into His image from glory to glory. The Christianity preached, unfolded, and enjoyed before Paul's commission was not done away by it, though the doctrine of the Church was committed specially to him to complete the word of God. The turning point of the revelation made at Jerusalem was in the death of Stephen. Then that part culminated, and the then present Jewish hope finally closed, and the full doctrine of the Church and new creation shone out in Paul's conversion, at least in principle and in its elements. But the church and Christianity were already there upon earth, and the admission of Cornelius by Peter, after Paul's conversion, was the proof that in its earthly administration God would not allow a disowning of, or separation from, what He had begun to build, as it is impossible and out of question in its heavenly completeness. But the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. It was no mistake, no work to be undone, any more than the admission of Cornelius after Paul was called, though the doctrine of the Church was not yet revealed.

This position of Christ exalted on high we have in the first two chapters of Hebrews, and though directly applied, as we have seen, to Christians, yet, as never entering on distinct church ground, it can go back to Jewish Christians on the ground they had been upon, to call them out of it as to its connection with Judaism which they had insisted upon, make them recognize in a heavenly Christ the reality of the shadows of the law, which were only patterns of things in the heavens, of which the heavenly things themselves to which they were called were the reality, and look at Christ's position

as that which was available for the future blessing of the people through faith. It is not that blessing, nor their state in the blessing. That is under Melchisedec, while this is Christ on high, but it is Christ in the position that secures it for them. Thus, in chapter 2, it is certain that it is for Christians. He is bringing sons to glory, and those referred to are the separated remnant of Isaiah 8 (we know historically now, the Church); but in what position do the passages quoted view them? Signs and wonders to both houses of Israel. It is the blessing of Israel as such? No; it is while God hides His face from them. It is now, but with a testimony that the Lord Jesus, as interested in them, waits for Him who does hide His face. He took up the cause of the seed of Abraham. This applies to us, we know, but in language which leaves application open to others too, who are such according to flesh and faith.

The third chapter is distinctly addressed to Christians. They were to exhort one another, which no unbeliever could. But “while it is called to-day” it will continue till the great tomorrow, when the Lord appears for His people. So in chapter 4: there remains a rest for God’s people. God forbid that this should not apply to us, a heavenly rest—God’s rest. Still a rest for God’s people can go over to the tried and exercised Jew. Compare Psalm 15, which refers to Jews.

The priesthood as now exercised could not apply to the unbelieving, save in the fact stated of securing them by His presence in heaven. Its exercise is only for believers, applies to them only, but as it does secure Israel’s promises, it holds the matter open, so to speak, so that die blessing will come. The fact of Christ’s presence in heaven, which is made our part of the matter, is theirs

too: only that for us it is present perfectness, because we are sanctified; for them, it is holding the matter sure, while God hides His face from them. But the exercise of priesthood applies to us only. The word and promise may be applied by us in hope for them, and be available to them when the time comes. A rest remains to them as a people, as well as to us, and in such cases heaven and glory are not spoken of; and the rest is spoken of in language blessedly applicable to us, but which can be used as to them; for rest in itself is not glory.

Chapter 8 gives a striking example of thus leaving room for future blessing, while not going beyond the ground of present dealings in grace. We have the two covenants, both made with Israel and Judah; Christ the mediator of the new, a minister of the heavenly things themselves, as Paul was a minister of it (in spirit, not in letter, and the Lord founded it in principle, as to God's part of it, in instituting the Lord's Supper); but no new covenant made, only the old ready to vanish away; preparation for blessing fully made, but no blessing there yet; that is, no Melchisedec, but Christ in the heavenly places, according to the pattern of the tabernacle into which Aaron entered. This is developed in chapter 9. Christ is come an high priest of good things to come, of the whole blessing reserved for heaven and earth in millennial times, spoken of in chapter 12. The blood of the covenant is shed; Christ is entered into the heavenly places, into God's presence for us; not yet come out to bless. But then, no church privileges as such are touched upon, the rapture is not spoken of, and consequently the teaching has such a shape as that, while full blessing for us, and the deliverance of heaven and earth by power, (though not our entrance into the

cloud, Luke 9, nor the Father's house, John 14) are before us, yet it is such as the redeemed people when brought in by God can wait for; not confined to them, could not be when the blood was spoken of, but which when called and wrought in by God they will enjoy. In contrast with judgment, not in the sovereign counsels of privilege, He will appear to them that look for Him without sin to salvation.

The hortatory part of the Epistle affords and can afford no reference to future hopes; it must address itself to those who were in the present circumstances to which the exhortations could apply. But the motives given afford a remarkable and complete summary of the whole blessing of heaven and earth, to which I have already alluded. I refer to chapter 12:22-25. The first point is only a general principle: Sion in contrast with Sinai; not itself Melchisedec, the Son of David, but grace triumphant by power; not the temple, not the tabernacle (this last was at Shiloh where Solomon went), but, when Ichabod was written on the people under the old covenant, God coming on in grace to deliver—a principle which applies alike to us and to the remnant, which is the ground those who stand on Mount Sion with the Lamb will stand upon, but which is the principle to which every Christian can say "we are come," as is said here.

Nor is this all; it is in fact accompanied here by the full introduction of both parts of the fruits of grace, the heavenly, and the earthly. All is ours, and blessing secured to the remnant by blood, but nothing in actual possession—characteristic of the whole epistle and of our position. After Sion we have, the city of the living God the heavenly Jerusalem, an innumerable company of

angels, the general assembly, the church of the firstborn whose names are written in heaven. Thus far we have our proper place, but unfulfilled: only the church of the firstborn named, as soon as heaven is looked to. That is purpose according to grace. Now another side of truth is referred to: “God the judge of all.” This leads us to the Old Testament, where responsibility was developed, and even to Christ’s earthly history. Thus the spirits of just men made perfect is our next element, but as yet no resurrection. Old Testament saints entered into perfection personally, but no glory in the resurrection of the body.

Further, and here we descend to the earth and coming blessing, Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, but no new covenant yet, only the Mediator there; then lastly the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel. Abel’s blood cried from the ground for vengeance, but in Christ, the blood of that better Abel (whom Israel had slain, yea, called His blood, in their unbelief, to rest on their own and their children’s heads) called in God’s sight in grace for mercy and blessing, and that for the Cain who had rejected and slain Him with wicked hands —to call them (blessed time!) from their vagabond estate to the blessings that grace had given them so rich a part in, though on the earth.

Thus this passage, while it puts all de facto in the present state, looks out—inasmuch as the Mediator and the blood of the new covenant are there—beyond present things: the branches reach over the wall; and, while for us what is heavenly will be fulfilled, being come to grace, we can look on to what will belong to Israel when the time is come. I have only touched on the great principle here, as helpful to clear up the Epistle.

More indeed will be found in the “Synopsis of the Books of the Bible.” But I am not aware of any connection of the priesthood in exercise with Israel’s hopes at all. The word, and the place Christ is in, do refer to them; and the fact that He is mediator of the new covenant, and that the blood of sprinkling has been shed, does. The exercise of priesthood is for those who are in relationship.

I add two cautions. The Epistle to the Ephesians tells us what we should always be, our true and holy standard. Let us surely dwell upon and keep ourselves there. That to the Hebrews gives us what we need, the comfort called for in the midst of weakness and trial. Let us thank God that it is there, not as the measure of our relationships with God, but our comfort when we feel our weakness in them. I would urge, as much as any could, the keeping of the faith of the soul and the thoughts of the heart on Ephesian ground. Another important point is, that priesthood has nothing to do with obtaining righteousness. It is exercised by One who is our everlasting righteousness in heaven, and on that ground.

Further, we do not go to the priest: he goes to God for us, and we to God. On this point scripture is clear, however God may bear with weakness. Priesthood is, in its present exercise, for those who are reconciled.

Superstition Is Not Faith; Or, The True Character Of Romanism

Superstition is the subjection of the mind of man—in the things of God—to that, for subjection to which there is no warrant in divine testimony.

The objects of this superstitious reverence or fear may be (1) such as (being mere creatures) were themselves subject to man's power, or at least to his mind; or (2) they may be the creatures of his own imagination; or (3) such as exercise a real and evil malignant influence over him, as Satan and the evil demons; or (4) they may be creatures good and excellent in themselves, and even such as are in a position superior to man, and instruments of divine power or testimony. But for subjection to these, or for any kind of worship rendered to them, or for employing them in religious service on our behalf, there is no warrant in divine testimony.

Of the first class of superstitious reverence, the worship of animals—as among the Egyptians—or of the sun, moon, and stars—one of the earliest forms of idolatry—are examples.

Of the second, a vast mass of the religion of the Greeks is an example—as fauns, satyrs, Pan, &c; whence even it is called mythology, or the doctrine of myths or fables.

Of the third class is serpent-worship, and the worship of the powers of evil, found in many countries of Africa; and, in a general way, the whole of heathen idolatry, as the apostle testifies (1 Cor. 10:20), alluding to Deuteronomy 32:17, "The things which the Gentiles offer, they offer to devils or demons, and not to God."

In the last class we have that of which the apostle speaks in Colossians 2: “a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels.” So the apostle John was himself tempted to fall down and worship before the feet of the angel, who had been God’s servant in the communication of the apocalyptic visions: the angel replying, “See thou do it not, for I am thy fellow servant.” Also setting the saints above in heaven, in the place of mediation, in which God has not set them; or even men on the earth, in virtue of their office, as if they were priests (that is, really, mediators, having another kind of prevailing power with God than other men).

All these, though differing in character, have this in common: —they are the subjection of the mind of man, in the things of God, to that for subjection to which there is no warrant from divine testimony. This is superstition. Faith, on the contrary, is the reception of a divine testimony into the soul, so that God Himself is believed.99 The consequence of either of these (consequences as opposite as the nature of that from which they respectively flow) is sufficiently evident. The object of our superstitious reverence gets between our souls and God, and in practice supplants Him, and takes His place. God is, indeed, never entirely forgotten. Even among the idolatrous heathen there was a vague idea of one supreme God, shewn, as Tertullian has remarked, by their habitual exclamations; and some of the philosophers insisted and enlarged on this, though without any true knowledge of Him.

Still, the whole practical condition of men depended on the character of the superstition with which their hearts were immediately in connection. The Athenians might rear an altar to the unknown God, but they did not rise

morally by this ignorance. Their state was what the state of those must have been who worshipped a Jupiter, a Minerva, and a Venus, or who were in daily association with their altars.

The introduction of the one true God may be in a greater or lesser degree; but it remains true, that in general, where any object intervenes between us and God, He is so far hidden; and the effect upon men is, that they are lowered to the standard of what they reverence. God's presence (whatever their fears) does not act immediately upon their consciences as light, or elevate their hearts to Himself as love.

Now, though this power over the imagination of things which divine testimony does not authorize our reverence of is often called faith (though it be merely connecting the religious element of man's nature with what is not God, and is no real revelation of God), it is really the opposite of faith. Faith brings God present to the soul. Faith is, as we have seen, the reception into the soul of a divine testimony. Now, the grand object of this, especially in Christianity, is the revelation of God Himself. In every case a divine testimony carries direct divine authority, and is, so far, a revelation of God. The consequence is, faith brings the soul into God's own presence; and hence everything is judged in the light itself, for God is light. All a man's works, all that is in man, is brought into the light, the man's conscience having His perfect light for a measure by which to judge himself. But as God has in Christ revealed Himself in love, faith, which embraces His revelation, produces a sweet and blessed confidence in God Himself, known as love; as a Saviour who has given His own Son, who has by Himself purged our sins. Thus, while all is judged by

the believer's conscience in the light of God's own presence, it is all put away according to the demand of that holiness; and we are at peace with God, and can walk with Him in newness of life.

So that faith puts into immediate connection with God; a connection founded on His own testimony, which is received by the operation of divine power in the soul; and hence also has its practical existence in real confidence of God Himself. The soul is reconciled with Him; and God becomes, by the revelation of Himself in the testimony He has given, the moral measure of right and wrong to the soul which is elevated to connection with Himself through Jesus. Hence it is exactly opposite to superstition, though this latter assumes its name and forms, and may be connected, as it ever is, more or less, with the idea of the true God.

This last circumstance leads us to another important remark: that, while superstition hides the true God, and wholly falsifies our notions of Him, this connection in the mind of the superstitious object of reverence with the idea of the true God attaches the authority of His name and supreme power to the object of our superstition, and sanctions, by that authority, all the moral degradation involved in our connection with it; save in so far as natural conscience revolts, and tells a truer tale of God than the superstition. But then alas! the tendency of this last is to exalt man above what he has made religion, and to produce infidelity and even atheism, if atheism were possible to man's mind, which I do not believe. But it tends at least to make men reason as atheists against the superstition which revolts their conscience, and which they know is contrary to what even conscience would know of God. Human will is always atheistical, for

it is not subject to God's will, and will seek to reason against the existence of what it does not like; but God has a testimony in conscience, which, after all, the will can never get over. Where men have reduced what bears the name of God below the standard of natural conscience and feeling, the mind will use this, if it dare, to throw off the authority of the God it dislikes.

An objection may present itself before going farther—that what I say of immediate association with God by the reception of divine testimony sets aside ministry. I answer, Not in the least. Ministry of the word is a divine ordinance, for the purpose of bringing the testimony of God to the soul of man; and, if in real divine power, the effect is to bring, by the living word, God Himself in Christ present to the soul, so as to place it in the light and bring it to have immediately to say to God. Priesthood places itself between the soul and God; real ministry brings God, by the word, present to the soul. This is the essential difference between the true character of each.

It is evident that faith must be founded on the testimony of God, otherwise it is not God who is believed. Further, it must be founded on His testimony alone. I must believe, because God Himself has spoken, or I do not believe God. "Whoso," says John Baptist, of the blessed Lord, "he that received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true." So "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness." God graciously added in the former case miracles to confirm the word, as it is written, "Confirming the word by signs following." But faith was in the testimony of God. Indeed, if only founded on the miracles, it was without value. "Many believed in him when they saw the miracles which he

did; but Jesus did not commit himself to them, for he knew what was in man."

Such then, practically, is faith. It is the soul's reception, by divine power, of the testimony of God; who is thus known by it, as He has revealed Himself, and in whose presence consequently it walks, God having graciously revealed Himself as a Saviour, so that it is in peace in the presence of the Holy One, and in communion with Him. I do not enter here into the way in which He has revealed Himself, blessed as this subject is above all, because it is not my subject now—the knowledge of, and communication with, the Father, through the Son, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, as the portion of a soul which has found peace through the blood of the cross. Such is the Christian's portion; but I turn to a now needed and less happy subject.

I do not farther pursue the subject of superstition or attack the forms in which it more particularly shews itself; but I shall shew that the Romanist system is not founded on faith, but the contrary. I have introduced what I have said of superstition to shew that things may be received as true, connected with the worship of God, or our religious habits, which are the opposite of faith; and, as far as they go, destructive of it.

A person may be sincere in his convictions, may fancy God has taught them to others; but if he does not believe them himself on God's testimony, it is not faith; it is not believing God. Now I shall shew, in the following brief remarks, that Romanism is really, in its main doctrines and practices, infidel (not avowedly perhaps, but really) in all that concerns the ground of our soul's fellowship with God. I pray my reader's quiet and attentive

consideration of my remarks, before he rejects this judgment of it. Christianity is the revelation, not merely of God's law or God's will, but of God Himself; and God is love. Hence, we find in it the perfect revelation of His love in the gift of His blessed Son; so that the believing soul, however poor and guilty, should know God as such, and as such toward itself (sin being perfectly and for ever put away for the believer, that he may approach God without fear; for such fear has torment, and love would take away torment for what it loves). Yet God cannot bear sin in His presence, nor indeed can the renewed and repentant soul bear it either; hence the God of love has put it away through Christ, in order to admit us to His presence. Thus God has reconciled us to Himself, to enjoy His perfect and gracious love; the same love supplying all the grace needed for us to maintain our fellowship with God in our weakness here, so that even this weakness itself should become the means of our mercifully knowing all His goodness, and the interest He shews in blessing us. Hence die apostle John thus speaks of the Christian, "We have known and believed the love that God hath to us." Christian faith, then, believes in this love. And everything that is put in between us and God, who exercises it immediately towards us; or tends to shew that it is not so free and perfect; or to militate against that entire, perfect putting away of sin by the blessed Saviour, which makes God's perfect love consistent with His absolute holiness: all such inventions are denials so far of the revelation of Christianity—of what God really is towards us. They are so far infidelity. There is one between us sinners and God; that is, Christ. But He is the revelation of this love; and the Accomplisher of that which, by putting away sin, would enable us to enjoy it; and the Intercessor through

whom we obtain daily needed grace to do so. It is in Him, who, while the lowliest, most gracious, most accessible man, was God manifest in the flesh, God blessed for evermore—it is in Him, I say, we know God.

All that obscures God's love, or the perfect efficacy of Christ's work, is infidel as to God's only full display of Himself.

Between the Romanist and the Christian who believes that the system which the Romanist maintains is not the truth of God but a vast system of apostate error, two questions are at issue. One of these questions is, Are the doctrines which the Romanist system teaches true? The other is, What is the authority in which man can confide in order to know that he possesses the truth? In both, the Romanist system is really infidel. I say the system, because I do not deny that some poor ignorant soul may believe in spite of the system, though its faith be all but overwhelmed by its errors. A man's constitution may, through mercy, resist poison; but this does not say that the drug, from whose effect he has escaped with that constitution ruined, is not poison.

If the scriptures be taken, as having the authority of God's word, as being inspired by Him, as every true Christian acknowledges, the Romanist system of doctrine cannot be maintained for a moment; but my object now is to notice not the errors only, but the infidelity found in it.

I proceed to the proofs of this. The scriptures teach that, Christ having by one offering perfected for ever them that are sanctified, there is now no more offering for sin. (Heb. 10:14.) The whole Romanist system is based on, and identical with, the doctrine that there is in the Mass

an offering for the sins of the living and the dead. The scripture teaches us that the only ground on which we can stand in the presence of God is that the blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin. The Romanist believes that there is a purgatory needed to complete this cleansing, unless for some rare soul in an unusual state of sanctity. Now these two Romanist doctrines are really infidel as to what God has taught for our peace.

God has said that Christ's offering of Himself was a work so perfect and so efficacious, that it needed not to be repeated, and indeed that it could not be repeated, because, in order to such efficacy, Christ must suffer. He has declared that without shedding of blood there is no remission, and hence, that if the offering of Christ had to be repeated, Christ must needs have suffered often; but that the efficacy of His one offering of Himself was such, that it needed not to be repeated. Now, if I pretend to offer this sacrifice again, and declare that such offering is necessary and right, I deny the efficacy of Christ's one offering of Himself on the cross; that is, I am infidel or unbelieving as to the efficacy of the one offering accomplished by Christ on the cross once for all. And this is the more clear and decisive, because the apostle, in the passage of the Episde to the Hebrews to which I refer, is contrasting the repetition of the Jewish sacrifices, because of their inefficacy to make the conscience perfect, with Christ being offered once—and once for all—because His sacrifice made perfect for ever those that were sanctified. (See Heb. 10:11-18.)

And further, in accepting the Romanist doctrine as to the sacrifice of the mass, I am infidel as regards the authority of God's word, which declares that there is consequently no more offering for sin. For the Romanist

pretends that there is still an offering for sin; for he pretends to have one in the sacrifice of the mass. That is, he is an infidel as to that which is the foundation of Christianity, namely, the offering of Christ on the cross. I am well aware that he teaches that the mass is an unbloody sacrifice. But this excuse is of no avail, for the declaration of scripture is, that there is no more offering for sin. Yea, it is not only of no avail, but it makes the matter worse; for the Romanist doctrine declares that this unbloody sacrifice is efficacious for the remission of sins; and the scripture declares that without shedding of blood there is no remission (Heb. 9:22); so that the Romanist doctrine contradicts scripture expressly. And note, that this doctrine of an unbloody sacrifice is infidel as to the nature of sin. God declares the nature of sin to be such, that nothing less than the sufferings of Christ could expiate it; they pretend that an unbloody sacrifice, in which Christ does not suffer can put it away.

Again, the word of God teaches that “the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth from all sin.” Blessed truth! just what our conscience needs, in order to have boldness to go before God, and enter into His presence, as knowing Him to be a gracious and loving Father. Now the doctrine of purgatory teaches me that the blood of Jesus does not thus purge me; that I must go and suffer in some fire, of which they themselves can give very little account, in order to be purged before I can appear in God’s presence; and remark here, this purging fire is for the faithful, for those who have profited by all that which what they call the church has at its disposal for the good of souls. A good catholic, as they call him (who has confessed to a priest, received absolution and the viaticum, and extreme unction, everything that can be

done for him by what they declare to be the church), goes to purgatory after all, and will (in every case he can) have masses said for the repose of his soul, though the church has done its best for him while living.

This is the more strange, because their authentic doctrine declares that extreme unction wipes away the remains of sin, “abstergit peccati reliquias.” It is strange that, after absolution, and the viaticum, and extreme unction, each of which is alleged to be efficacious to clear a man from sin, he should go into the torment of purgatory after all. Is this all the efficacy which belongs to the church’s acts—that, after she has done all she can in order to their being cleansed, she lets the souls go into a place of fire, whose efficacy does not flow from her at all? And remark here, that she then offers the mass to get the soul out of the purgatory which God, they say, has sent it into, out of which she was not able to keep it by all she did for it when in the body! Are these the Lord’s ways, or like the Lord’s power? But this only in passing. I can understand that a conscience troubled by sin and fearing wrath, will fly to anything to get relief, where the true efficacy of Christ’s precious blood to cleanse it and give it peace, is not known.

But why all these efforts and means to relieve and quiet the uneasy soul, why the doctrine of purgatorial fire to cleanse and fit the soul for God’s presence? Because the great and precious truth, that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin, is not believed. If it does so, why go to purgatory (that is, a place of cleansing, for such is the meaning of the word) to get it cleansed? That is, the Romish system is infidelity as to this great and precious truth also of God’s word.

But there is infidelity too in it, as to something more than the truth; there is infidelity as to God's love. What is the text constantly quoted to lay a ground for purgatory?—"Agree with thine adversary quickly, whilst thou art in the way with him, lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison; verily I say unto thee, thou shalt not come out thence till thou hast paid the last farthing." Is it thus God has met us in the gospel? That the unrepenting sinner will meet with the just wrath due to his sins every true Christian owns; but such a use of this text is really denying the efficacy of Christ's work. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And that we might be forgiven, Christ has died upon the cross. But this doctrine of purgatory teaches that we must pay to die very last farthing—that God will exact it of us. It is infidelity as to that grace which has given Jesus to bear our sins in His own body on the tree; so that every repentant sinner should know that God loved him, so as not to spare His own Son, but gave Him as a propitiation for his sins; and that Christ has, by the sacrifice of Himself, put away die sin that justly alarmed his conscience; or, as the scripture expresses it, "He has by Himself purged our sins." (Heb. 1:3.) The doctrine of purgatory is really infidelity as to the efficacy of Christ's blood; for, if this has cleansed die true Christian from all sin, he does not want purgatory to effect his cleansing. It is infidelity as to the authority of God's word, which declares that His blood does cleanse us from all sin, and that Christ, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high; and it is infidelity as to the precious love of God, who gave His

Son to do it, that we might have peace in our souls through His name.

Again, the doctrine of the mediation of the Virgin Mary and the saints is also really infidelity. The scripture declares there is one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus; and what does it teach us as to this doctrine of Christ's intercession? It teaches us that that divine and gracious person, the Son—who is one with the Father, who is God over all, blessed for evermore—came down so low and in such grace, that the poorest and vilest sinner, whose heart grace drew to Him, found free access to Him. was never cast out. If it was a woman in the city who was a sinner, if Jesus was in the house, she was emboldened to go in, and count upon that tender goodness which inspired confidence to the heart, while it awakened the conscience in the deepest way and gave a horror of sin. That is, we are taught that such grace, such tenderness, was in Jesus, in that holy One, who had become like unto His brethren in all things, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest, that He condescends to all our infirmities, and sympathizes with all our sorrows, entering into them as none other could, with a heart such as none other had. We are taught that He suffered, being tempted, that He might be able to succour them that are tempted; that He was tempted in all things like unto us, without sin; so that we have a merciful and faithful high priest, who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and hence we can come boldly to a throne of grace; that He ever liveth to make intercession for us. This is what my heart learns of the blessed Jesus in the scriptures, that He who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities now lives to make intercession for us.

But what does the Romanist doctrine teach me? That I cannot thus go to Him; that I cannot count upon His tenderness; that He is too high, too far off; that Mary has a tenderer heart as being a woman; and that I must go to Him through her, as I should in the case of some king or great man, who would be too much above me to allow me to approach him; or that I must go to the saints. Have they then tenderer, more condescending hearts than He who came to this earth on purpose to assure us of His love? Did Mary, however blessed, come down from heaven to seek me in my sorrow and in my misery? Or is Christ changed, and become hard-hearted, since He ascended up on high? No; the doctrine of many mediators, and of the Virgin Mary, as the one through whose heart I am to approach Jesus's, is infidelity as to the grace of Christ; it denies His glory as a compassionate high priest. He came down and suffered in this world, that we might know we could go to God by Him; inasmuch as He could feel for all our infirmities Himself, and would be touched with them. The Romanist doctrine tells me, I cannot dare to do it, that I must get nearer tenderer hearts to go to Him for me. Ah! I prefer His own; I have seen and learnt what it was in His life down here; I can count upon it more than on any, be they what they may. It is the only heart that has shed its life-blood for me. I trust its kindness more than that of all the Marys and of all the saints that ever were, blessed as they may be in their place. This again, while seeming only to add, is infidelity as to another precious doctrine of the word of God— of Christianity itself.

I refer to these as examples of the way in which the doctrines of Romanism, while seeming only to add various doctrines, on the authority of what is called the

church, is really undermining the truth, taking away all the value of what is true. It is really infidelity as to the most precious truths of the gospel. It calls you to believe other things not in scripture; but, in doing so, it makes you disbelieve what is the truth of God herein revealed. And here, note, it is not open infidelity as to the historical facts of Christianity, nor as to the doctrines which embrace the great truths on which Christianity is founded.

There are two things with which faith is concerned, in order to the peace of a soul: first, The great doctrinal facts revealed; and secondly, The value of these facts for the soul, and the application of this value to it.

If these last be taken away, the soul has no more benefit from them than if they were not true at all.

If the riches of the world were heaped up before me, and I could not have them—if they were not available to me for my debts—there might as well be none as far as I am concerned.

Now Romanism does not deny facts, but their availableness to my peace; it does not deny the expiation for sin made at the cross—it does not deny the Trinity—it does not deny the incarnation—nor the divinity of Christ. These truths it holds, so that it would not be suspected at first sight of infidelity. It is in the actual value and application of them to the sinner that it has destroyed the truth, and taken away the way of peace to the soul thereby.

God says, that by one offering Christ has perfected for ever those that are sanctified. (Heb. 10:14.)

Romanism says, He is to be offered often, and that the believer is not perfected by that one offering of Christ on the cross. It denies, not the offering, but its value and sufficiency for the believer's peace.

God says, that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin; that He has by Himself purified our sins. (1 John 1:7; Heb. 1:3.)

Romanism says, He has not; that people have to be purified in purgatory.

God says, that Christ is a merciful high priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. (Heb. 4:15.)

Romanism says, that we shall find more suitable persons to go to, more accessible, more tender-hearted, in the saints and the Virgin Mary.

It denies, not the fact of Christ's priesthood, but its real value for me. In vain then is it orthodox as to the facts of Christianity. It makes them useless to the soul and substitutes others in their place, for the soul's use and greater advantage.

These are examples of the real infidelity of Romanism as to those truths of the gospel which are most precious for the peace of the soul.

But as regards the second point I referred to in commencing (that is, the authority on which our souls can rest in order to be assured that we possess the truth), the infidelity is still more glaring. I have supposed in what precedes, that the authority of the inspired word of God is admitted, as every true believer does admit it.

But the Romanist will not consent to this. Now mark well: not to consent to it is infidelity. He who does not admit the authority of God's inspired word is an infidel.

It will be said that many souls have been saved without knowing of the existence of the Bible. I admit it fully. If the truth has been preached to them or brought to their knowledge in any other way, the Spirit of God may have brought it savingly home to their souls. In the first ages thousands were brought to salvation by the preaching of the apostles and others, before the New Testament existed. So, since it has been written, many were converted before they were informed of its existence, as heathens, into whose language it was not yet translated. But this is not our case. We do know it exists; and then to deny or question its authority, is infidelity as to it. Now this is the ground the Romanist always takes. He tells me, I cannot know it is the Bible, or the word of God, without the authority of the church. Now mark that. For, if God has written a book, and addressed it to men in general or to those called Christians, His doing so puts them under the responsibility of receiving and submitting to what He has so addressed. What God has so addressed to them obliges their conscience. If not, He has failed in the object He proposed! He was not able to put those He addressed under the responsibility of receiving what He had said, if, as the Romanist says, the ordinary Christian cannot know that it is the word of God, and that he is not able to receive it as such! Of two things one is true—either he who says so denies it himself to be the revealed word, or he asserts that God's word is not by itself binding on those to whom it is sent; that God has failed in so writing it as to render it

obligatory on the conscience of the reader to receive it as such.

Now either of these is infidelity, and the common ground taken by infidels; and the latter is really a blasphemous kind of infidelity. Yet this is the ground always taken by the Romanist, and is clearly infidel ground. If the authority of the church is requisite in order to a man's believing the scripture and receiving it as God's word, then God has not so spoken as to bind the conscience and to make faith obligatory, without some one adding to His authority so as to make it to be received. What kind of church it can be, which can give to God's word an authority over the conscience, and oblige men to believe it, which that word had not, though God spoke it, I leave a man who reverences God to consider. It must be more competent, its authority more obligatory, than that of God Himself; for it says such a book is God's word, and you must receive it as such; and yet, though it be God's word, it could not have that authority over the conscience before!

I am not speaking of a greater competency to instruct, of a greater knowledge of its meaning where all own it as divine, but of what gives it a divine authority over the soul. It has not this (though it be God's word), according to the Romanist, without receiving it from the testimony of the church.

The church—that is, certain men (supposing even they were inspired)—have told me certain things, and I am bound to believe them; Peter, Paul, John, Matthew, and others, that is, the apostles and other writers of the New Testament, have told me certain things as inspired men, and I cannot tell whether I am to believe them or not! If

so, then these apostles have not the same claim over my conscience and faith as the former. It is in vain to tell me the former compose the church, and that it has God's authority: had not the inspired apostles God's authority? Did not what they say bind the saints' conscience? It is not a question of interpreting. The question is, Has what they say authority over my conscience, so that I am bound to receive it as God's word and believe it? St. Paul writes an epistle to the church— say at Corinth:—were they bound to receive it as God's word? If so, am I? If I am not, they were not; and note, they were the church; that is, the church has to receive the work of the apostle, not to pronounce on it. Woe be to them if they did not; woe be to me if I do not.

This, then, is the simple yet solemn assertion of the believer in the truth and wisdom and glory of God—that, if God gives a testimony of Himself, man is bound to believe it. If not, he is guilty of despising the testimony of God; and the day of judgment will surely shew that it is not God who has failed in giving the testimony, so as to bind the conscience and oblige to faith, but that the man's sinful heart has deceived him.

Look at the creation. There is a testimony God has given of Himself. Man is guilty, if he does not see God in it. There are many difficulties, many things he cannot explain; but the testimony is sufficient to condemn those who do not believe in God the Creator.

When the blessed Lord appeared, many cavils might be, and were, raised by infidel hearts; but He could say, If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.

So St. John, as to the testimony of God of the gospel in general, "he that believeth not God hath made him a

liar;" because he has not believed the testimony that God gave concerning His Son: such an one was guilty—guilty of infidelity. So in the word God has given a testimony, and man is bound to believe it. Doubts and cavils and difficulties may be raised by infidel minds; but God's testimony of Himself is in every case adequate to bind man to believe it, and to bring his conscience under it.

If he does not believe it, he has, to use the apostle's solemn expression, made God a liar, because he has not believed His testimony concerning His Son. He is really an infidel (at least his principles are), whatever system of religious rites he may have bowed to.

Now what does the Romanist say? He says, You cannot believe in the scriptures, without the authority of the church to accredit them; that is, that God's testimony does not bind the conscience—does not oblige to faith, without something else to accredit. Now this is infidelity, and a horrible dishonour done to God. It is declaring that God's testimony is not sufficient, not competent in itself, to bind man—to oblige man to believe and bow to it.

God has given an inefficient thing as a testimony; so that if I do not bow to it, that is, if I remain an infidel, I am justified in so remaining! This is high treason against God and His truth. They dare not say that it is not God's word, for then they would be avowed infidels themselves. But they do dare to say, consequently, that though it be God's word, it does not bind the conscience of a man; and that something else is necessary to give it authority to his conscience. No matter what it is; they may call it the church, or the pope, or a general council

which represents the church. It is something besides the word, without which God's own word is not binding on the conscience.

That is, their principles are infidel before God. Their cleverness in puzzling the mind as to the word, their demanding proofs, their shewing how impossible it is for man to know it is God's word—though the object be to throw them into the arms of what they call the church—is merely infidel reasoning, and reasoning which is found employed in fact by infidels. They will tell you that laws require a judge. But laws bind every one, whether he be a judge or no. And, further, we are not to judge God's word: it will judge us. "The words that I have spoken unto you," says the Lord, "the same shall judge you in that day."

The word of God is a testimony to man's conscience, which bears God's authority itself.

If a man do not bow to it when sent in grace as a testimony to save, he will be obliged to bow to it, when it will be executed in judgment. In a word, Romanism declares that, without what it calls the church's authority, God's word is not such as obliges me to believe it.

This doctrine is infidelity, as to the proper authority of God's word. And mark further: if I do not believe what God's word says without the authority of the church, I do not believe God at all. It is not faith in God; there may be faith in the church, but there is not faith in God. For when I had only what God said, I did not believe it; when the church tells me to believe it, I do. But this is faith in the church; and I do not believe God: I decline doing it, unless I have something else to accredit His word.

Now the only true faith is believing God, believing God Himself. This is the real return of the soul to God. Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness; he had no church to accredit what God had said. He believed, because God had Himself said the thing. It was believing God. He who does not, until the church adds its authority, does not believe God at all. There is no true faith at all where a man believes because the church has accredited anything. I have refused or failed to believe when God has spoken, when there was only His authority.

Now believing when there is only God's authority, is believing God: nothing else is.

To require the church's testimony to accredit God's, is dishonouring Him and disbelieving Him. The Romanist, as such, has no true faith at all, for he does not believe God on his own authority, but on the church's. As the word is sometimes read by them, or heard, God may give individuals among them faith, in spite of the infidel doctrine of their church.

Remember that true faith is, faith in what God has said, because God has said it. If you require the church's sanction of it, you have not faith in God. You do not bow to His word, unless it is sanctioned by some one else. Credulity as to superstitions taught by men is not faith in God. Faith in God believes in His word without any other authority than His word itself.

If you say. How am I to know it is? This is merely saying His word is not in itself sufficient to bind your conscience. That is just what an infidel says. It is infidelity. Your belief depends on the church's authority —not on God's word.

That is, Romanism is infidelity as to the most precious and fundamental truths of Christianity; and it is infidelity as to the authority of God's own word itself.

99 In speaking of religious subjects, I have not thought it necessary to speak of the belief of mere human testimony. No one, of course, denies that there is such a thing as the belief of human testimony. The only thing important to remark here is, that really to believe the testimony of a person, I must receive what he says because he has said it; if I require something to confirm it, I so far discredit his testimony.

Remarks On Puseyism

I am satisfied that the great business of the Christian, the great utility of such a work as “The Present Testimony,” is to bring before the saints, and the world, if they will read it, the great principles of Christianity, and more particularly when they have been buried under the rubbish of man’s mind, plentifully heaped up in the early ages, and built up by schoolmen in the middle ages by Aristotle’s help; and to bring forth from the revelations of the word the unsearchable riches of Christ, and the thoughts and ways of God. This is the true preservative against the errors and seductions of the time; and indeed nothing else will preserve from them. Still I suppose it may not be wholly useless, though an inferior part of christian service, to point out anything peculiar in the forms of evil, the notice of which may help to clear the minds of God’s children from them; or to bring before the watchful eye of the saint the bearing of facts and events in the current of evil which Providence allows to go on, or of which, in order to bring about blessing, it may hasten the development upon earth.

Governed by this feeling I send you a few words on Puseyism; and, first, a remark or two on the census of religious denominations. There is one effect of the late census in this respect, which probably has not struck all who have read it. The number of sittings afforded by bodies not belonging to the Establishment is, to those it provides for the population, as 93 to 100; but owing, as it appears, to the greater number of evening services, the attendance on places outside the Establishment is in

point of numbers some half million more than that of those who frequent the opportunities it offers to the population. The relative proportion of town accommodation to country is greater also, in the case of dissenters, than in that of the Establishment.

Now it seems to me, that this report will have a very dissolving tendency in the country. The plea that the Establishment meets the wants of the masses is gone. Its public claim, as inwoven into the constitution of the country, is immensely weakened. It is clear that no particular body can take this place. Could any one do so in point of numbers, it could not in its associations— it could not by its antiquity—it could not by its principles. The aggressive action which is the vital principle of all dissenting energy, be it for good or for evil, its professed disconnection with the State, debars it from this place. They are too religious in their profession, and too little ecclesiastical, too little founded on successional consistence, too little bound up with the social and successional ties of family (and, if you embrace popery, the same thing is true for other reasons), to become, in the common use of the word, the church of England. The people may be very religious, but the country has not a church (a term I use now in its familiar sense).

Now no one can doubt that the religious institutions of a country are one of the strongest bonds by which it is united. If it can do without them when beginning its career, it cannot break them up when it has long had them, without its being the signal of the dissolution of the whole edifice. Be it for good or for bad, such surely is the case. A religion may have become incapable of holding its influence and exercising its cementing power over a corporate population; but it will be found that

when it does, and an active religious energy of any kind undermines and subverts it, the corporate condition of the whole is endangered. I say this without any reference to the truth or error of a religion. See Egypt, see Greece; see Rome, where, on the inward decay of paganism, Christianity, in its early energies, made its way among the population, saving it from utter moral anarchy, yet Rome could not subsist. Other energies may come in and concentrate elsewhere a predominant influence over the population, or it may be handed over to some other subsisting power which the dissolution does not reach; as in the case of Napoleon, or papal influence, or even Mohammedanism in the Eastern empire, but the dissolution of the corporate system takes place. God's mercy may accomplish it gently, or spare its worst features for other reasons of His grace or wisdom: the coming of the Lord may be the common term of all that is dissolving and dissolved, of inroads and resistance; but the principle, I am persuaded, will be found to be true. The divine truth of Christianity, the portion of the church of God, is entirely independent of all this. It is heavenly, and has its resources in God, who cannot fail.

Two things may be alleged in reply to what I have said—that the Establishment has shewn unwonted energy in enlarging its borders, and that the religious energies of the evangelical world were never so great. I think this will be found not in any way to alter the case. For the moment I will only speak of the latter; I think every observant mind will recognize that what is called the evangelical clergy have, as a body, lost their moral weight in the country. As an energy, the influx of truth had power; as a party, the evangelical body have not

that; nor can they, when that does not characterize them, have the dead weight of mere respect for institutions. They may insist, in defending themselves, on this respect for institutions, and guard against accusations of failure on this point, but this is not the weight and power of their cause. This, as an influence, is evidently on the other side. I think it will hardly be said that the vigour and power of the influx and onset of truth subsists. General evangelical activity is outside the institutions we speak of. Many persons belonging to these engage in that activity, but these are not the channel of it. Exeter Hall is independent of the Establishment, though the members of the established church may form the most numerous portion of those who take part there. An energy which acts outside, and independent, of an established system tends to throw this into oblivion, and to supplant it. And it is evident that the energies which are active in Exeter Hall supply nothing which can make an established institution for the country. It is not its intention. It could not have this effect. God may in His grace spare the institutions because the energy is such as He approves of in the main character of its purpose and intention, as being that of the grace of the gospel, the truest exhibition therefore of Himself. But the energy does not move within the channel of local institutions, nor form in itself a stay to them.

I will touch on the extension of churches in a moment. I now turn to the effect of the discovery that the majority of the Sunday-service-going population do not go to the services of the Establishment. It is evident that this, as a body, cannot lean upon its value as the poor man’s religion, as embracing the masses, as the resource of

the great body of the population. It is not their resource. The greater part go elsewhere, from finding services more suited to their habits. Will the clergy of the Establishment give up the conflict for this reason? Surely not. But they will be thrown on what is their more distinctive pretension, that which the others cannot have in such a shape. They will insist on being the church. They have succession, bishops as in early ages, sacraments with priestly competency to consecrate and administer them, a clergy which bears the stamp of apostolic order. Here there is but one body in the country which can pretend to stand on common ground with them. Driven back from the ground of being national, on which evangelicals and high church and no church principles had a common field, the Establishment is by the census forced upon what is commonly called Puseyite ground. It has no other left. The true Puseyite will take it up in its energy; and it is a very powerful one, and has the largest hold on human nature.100 The old high churchman, though occasionally murmuring against Rome, will necessarily follow in the wake of what constitutes the energy of his own system, and the evangelical, though crying out against Puseyism, when there is any energy, will, while guarding against false conclusions, and warning against abuses, fall into the path of sustaining the influence of that which distinguishes him from the dissenter; his system is the "Church," the rest is dissent. At Exeter Hall he will go with dissenters (and a few will hold up the "Evangelical Alliance"); but in his parish he will be what is called a churchman, he will minister de facto to the strength of that party, the energies of which are elsewhere. In a word, the census will, I cannot for a moment doubt, throw the Establishment into the hands of the Puseyites.

What was the Establishment? It was a body by which general protestant truths and protestant feelings were linked with everything that nature clung to religiously; or rather, one by which every natural tie was linked with respectable protestantism. A man was married there, his wife churched there, he said his prayers, if he said any, there, he had been christened there; his family, his children, gone before him, were all buried there. All his religious associations, and the common respect for moral order were linked up with the parish church and the protestant Establishment. That was moral and protestant; I am not speaking of saving souls, but of religious habits. The country was thus characterized. This, except in country places, has been outgrown; other religious energies have grown up; the mass of the population has escaped from this influence. It has, in a national point of view, ceased to exist. This is a momentous fact. As regards the Establishment, the clergy, as such, take its place. They characterize the system now. The validity of apostolical ordinances, the true and only channel of grace dependent on them, is the link which binds now what remains of the once national Establishment together: for they have these, while none of the others, except Romanists, possess them in this manner.

What is the import of church extension, the second objection I referred to, when this state of things is considered? Take the general spirit which animates it—of course there may be exceptions—is it evangelical or ecclesiastical? No one could hesitate a moment. It is done in a mediaeval spirit. It flows partly from, and ministers still more to, the spirit which I have spoken of as tending more and more to characterize the

Establishment. I turn to another point which you will be surprised, perhaps, to see connected with this—the Russian war. I have the clearest conviction that the real and sole effect of this war—besides exalting France, which represents the principles of the latter days now at work in their three aspects—will be to increase Romish papal, and French influence in the east, and to give both —for in this respect they are co-ordinate—a greater hold upon it. Everyone knows that the quarrel began about the privileges of the Greek and Roman systems in what are called holy places. Some of your readers may perhaps not know that in the East, France has the right of protection over catholics as French subjects. Europeans are called “Franks.” Already the French ambassador, when the Greeks were expelled Constantinople, insisted that united Greeks (that is, united to the Roman See) should remain. He has been recalled for the violence he displayed, but I refer to it as shewing the principle which is at work. The exclusion of Russian influence is the consolidating of Romish. The Romish party are not at all unaware of this, though they hesitated on account of the usefulness of the Russian Emperor politically. But, without committing itself, as usual, the See of Rome profits by it. Louis Napoleon was the instrument of this; and Satan fully at work in it.

And now what is Puseyism? I mean not in its grosser forms of wax candles, fald-stools, and surplice-preachings; or the darker shades of confessionals and floor-lickings to please the God of grace with, but in the substance of its doctrines as it sets itself forth in its most favourable light. I say nothing here of its overweening confidence and pretensions, nor of its want of straightforwardness, nor of the doctrine (worthy of

Rome) of mental reservation. I repeat, I would take the essential principles of its doctrinal foundation; if, indeed, we can justly speak of the essence of error which has no real or substantial existence, but is the mere falsification of something else.

The doctrine of Puseyism, as put forward by its best (and, as it appears from the sale of his books, its most acceptable) advocate, is this—that the sacraments are a continuation or prolongation of the incarnation. The assumption of manhood into God made, they say, that manhood the medium of communicating life to the souls of sinners; that that which Christ did personally when present, He now does by the sacraments; that, in the Eucharist, Christ's body is really present in all this vital power, and communicates life to the receiver; that all receive Christ Himself, not carnally but really: only that He does not profit those in whom that reception is not made effectual by faith; that whoever denies this denies mediation. These are, evidently, very material statements.

I pass over, for the present, what the writer I have alluded to, though seeming to explain, really passes over too, namely, that the first sacrament, baptism, is, as to its elements, confessedly no part of Christ. Yet, according to his theory, sinners or infants get life by this sacrament, which is not the life-giving humanity of the Mediator at all! I have a more serious account to settle with the system than its folly and its inconsistency. It denies the whole substantive truth of Christianity as a system of reconciliation of man to God; even supposing it orthodox as to the truths connected with Christ's person, which, in its exclusively rash and bold meddling, it can hardly be allowed to be. That meddling rashness

is most reprehensible and dangerous; but I believe that the writer to whom I allude does not mean to be unsound. It is mere heady confidence, so that I do not here take up this part of the subject. But he intends to teach what denies Christianity, viewed as a means of reconciling the sinner. I do not say he intends to deny it, for he seems to be profoundly and totally ignorant of the truth; but he intends to teach what does deny it.

The scripture, while teaching that the Son had life in Himself, and maintaining the glory of Christ's person as God manifest in the flesh, in all its blessed fulness, teaches that "except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit;" that no link could be formed between man in his natural state and a living Christ, looked at as come in the flesh. He might act divinely in men's hearts, but Christianity is not His becoming a new stock and root of humanity while living here. Not because the power of life was not in Him, but because the union of the church with Him could not be formed till redemption was accomplished and Christ gone up on high. He dies, and accomplishes redemption, and sits down in righteousness at the right hand of God, and there as risen becomes the head of a living race, standing in Him in righteousness before God. The first Adam becomes the head of a sinful race when he had accomplished sin; Christ, of a saved and righteous and holy race, quickened with Him, when righteousness is accomplished. Being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey Him. Therefore we are described as quickened together with Him; raised up together,, and sitting together in Him in heavenly places.

And hence the very first instituted sign of being a Christian, which, whatever else it does, certainly, as a sign, gives the character of the place a Christian takes as such, has for its sense and meaning, death and resurrection. We are baptized into His death, wherein also we are raised again, “If I had known Christ after the flesh,” says the apostle, “yet henceforth know I him no more.” Hence the Saviour’s positive declaration that, looked at as man, He abode alone till death. The apostolic teaching as to the sense of the introductory rite, and all the instruction he gives on the christian state, concur to prove that our position as Christians is founded on an accomplished redemption; that our union with Christ is with a risen and glorified Christ (the head being set in heaven that we might be united to Him there); and that only so is He the head of the church; that so only can man be really associated with Him; that thus, as having received life from Him, and being sealed with the Holy Spirit, we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones; and finally that it is not His partaking of our flesh (that was a step towards it, as to His person), by which union takes place. He is not united to sinful man; but redeemed quickened men are united to Him, as the exalted man in heaven by the power of the Holy Ghost. “He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit,” “for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.”

In a word, believers are united to Christ in heaven risen and glorified; not Christ living on the earth to any sinful man whatever. In the theory I comment on Christ takes whole humanity into His person, and purifies it, communicates it, while living, thus purified to sinners, and then by the sacraments communicates it and

purifies ours, the sacraments being said to be an extension of the incarnation. Where is the place of redemption? Where of a risen Christ? a glorious man, to whom the church is united, the source of life as man through faith, through a divine source of a divine life?

But that I may do the system I condemn no injustice, I will quote the words of the book I have alluded to. In the beginning of the "Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist" it is said, "The present work is the sequel of a treatise on the doctrine of the incarnation." It was then asserted that "Sacraments are the extension of the incarnation." Having this general principle thus laid down, I shall now cite some passages in another work, in which there are some truths set forth in opposition to rationalism, but which will afford us large insight into the system.

In this work the same author, after speaking of man as one family, as a "co-ordinate whole," continues:—"Now, into this family it was that Christ our Lord was pleased to enter. When He took man's nature, He vouchsafed to ally Himself to all members of this extended series, by the actual adoption of that transmitted being which related Him to the rest."

Now, it is impossible to appreciate too highly the truth and preciousness of the reality of the humanity of the Lord Jesus. All that Archdeacon Wilberforce could say to exalt the importance of this, and its essential connection with the mediatorship of Christ, as the one way of blessing, would be ever below the importance of the subject—I think I may say, the importance I would attach to it. Without His Godhead, it is nothing; but, that once owned, it is His manhood which is above all truths the blessed spring of all our hopes and joys. In it we have

the realization of the condescension in which He is with us and near us, the needed basis of all He has done to make us one with Himself. I know God thus in love. But He is not in that state the head of the new race. That is the point I urge. He accomplishes righteousness and atones for sin before He becomes so. He must have done so—He Himself declares He must, and otherwise abode alone. Now, the author makes His manhood a communicative source of life while He was down here, so as to connect men with Himself as a head; and indeed makes Him the pattern, and model, and head of restored humanity in His living condition as united to all men by incarnation; however, according to their own will they might or might not profit by it. Scripture does not. It is to bring this point out that I cite many passages which attach a great importance to the humanity of Christ, but teach what is utterly unsound as to the connection of men with Him in His incarnation.

It is necessary that I should make, and that my reader should clearly seize, this distinction between incarnation and the manhood of Christ being a uniting source of life while He lived, or the reason for quoting passages which bring both out would not be understood. This confusion is the essence of the dark apostasy which passes by the name of Puseyism.101 “It implies,” I continue to quote, “the reality of a common humanity, and His perfect and entire entrance into its ranks. Thus did He assume a common relation to all mankind. This is why the existence of human nature is a thing too precious to be surrendered to the subtleties of logic; because upon its existence depends that real manhood of Christ which renders Him a co-partner with ourselves. And upon the reality of this fact is built that peculiar connection102

between God and man which is expressed by the term mediation. It looks to an actual alteration in the condition of mankind, through the admission of a member into its ranks, in whom and through whom it attained an unprecedented elevation. Unless we discern this real impulse which was bestowed upon humanity, the doctrines of atonement and sanctification, though confessed in words, become a mere empty phraseology. That God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself implies an actual acceptance of the children of men on account of the merits of one of their race, as well as an actual change in the race itself, through the entrance of its nobler associate."

Now, that the incarnation was necessary to the atonement is self-evident; but the apostle's words, "that through death," &c. find no place in the Archdeacon's mind. He speaks of atonement, but it is only, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." But this was in His life. The apostle adds, "not imputing their trespasses to them," and then goes on to say that he and the rest were ambassadors for Christ, because God had made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, &c. This the Archdeacon entirely leaves out, and declares that God being in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, implies an actual acceptance of the children of men, on account of the merits of one of their race, not a personal substitute made sin for others, but the merits of one who is one of their race by incarnation. "What Christ associated to Himself, therefore, was no individual man, but that common nature of which Adam was the first example." He could not associate an individual man. It would be sheer nonsense; and no doubt He took our nature, but surely He became an individual man in

taking it. But this the Archdeacon strives against. “It was not any human person in particular,” says Bishop Beveridge, “but the human nature which He assumed unto His sacred person.” “‘The Word,’ saith St. John, ‘was made flesh and dwelt in us.’ The evangelist useth the plural number men for manhood, us for the nature whereof we consist.”103 Such are the grounds of the Archdeacon for what he calls Christ’s co-partnership with us.

Again, “He who was personally God, took His place in this series by incarnation, and thus assumed a common relationship to all its possessors.” “What was there in Christ’s manner of adopting our being which marked Him out from others, so that, when He was pleased to introduce Himself into the family of human beings, He became at once the first-born of every creature —the beginning of the creation of God?” He then refers to the title, last Adam; and afterwards. “And if His relation to His brethren is to be as perfect as that of the first Adam, it must rest on the same conditions. He must be the stock from whom all are descended, and the new type after which they are to be formed. Now, the first104 of these grounds of connection shall be touched upon hereafter, when we speak of the sacramental union whereby men are united to Christ… But what is asserted in this chapter is, that the new Adam was as truly the type and pattern of the renewed, as the old Adam of the first creation. Thus did He occupy a place corresponding to our original father, and became, though in a different manner, the representative of the race.”

Now, I affirm that scripture always teaches that, the risen Jesus is the head and representative of the new race. And note the importance of this, that it leaves

place for redemption, death, and atonement for sin, to come in as the ground on which men could belong to the second Adam, and be formed into His image, which the making Him as such in incarnation leaves entirely out. We are told to walk as He walked. But sinful man here in the body cannot be what Christ was down here, who knew no sin. He was perfect and walked perfectly, He had life in Himself; but the corn of wheat necessarily abode alone; and in that character of man, alive down here, He was neither the head of the new race nor the type and pattern of it according to the counsels of God. We are predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son. (Rom. 8.) We have borne the image of the earthly, we shall bear the image of the heavenly. (1 Cor. 15.) Our point of attainment is the resurrection from the dead (Phil. 3), when Christ shall change these vile bodies, and fashion them like His glorious body. We know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. The practical effects are fully stated in Philippians 3 and 1 John 3; but the time of likeness is resurrection and glory, and atonement and redemption by death is the ground and basis of it. Incarnation was needed to His being the head and type of the new race; but it was not in incarnation that He was that head and type, but when risen after He had accomplished the redemption needed to give man a share with Him in glory before the Father. If Christ does not wash us as so gone on high, we have no part with Him. The water itself as well as the blood flowed out of the wounded side of a dead Christ.

I must confine myself to my proper subject, or there is a mass of statements of the Archdeacon as to the first Adam wholly unfounded and unscriptural. But I pursue

my subject. “Christ became the head of man’s race, that in Him we might recover the likeness of God, which in Adam we had lost.” “This presence of a superior being was what gave perfection to that likeness of God in which man was created.” He then quotes Romans 8:29, and 1 Corinthians 15:49 (confounding them with Colossians 3:10); Ephesians 4:22, 23; 1 John 3:2; 2 Corinthians 4:4. Whereas the whole argument of Romans 8, from verse 18 onward, is the contrast of the saint’s future state with his present; as to 1 Corinthians 15, every child knows that it refers to resurrection; Colossians 3:10 being with equal certainty applicable to the saint now, as also Ephesians 4; whereas 1 John 3:2 is with the same certainty only applicable to a future state. It is said, “When he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.”

Indeed, in these citations the Archdeacon is trifling either with his reader or with scripture. To say the truth, his use of it in general is such as must astonish any one who has any serious respect for it, shewing a carelessness and ignorance of the passages he quotes from, which may be very patristic but is certainly anything but respect for God or for His word. A few more quotations will suffice. “When the Eternal Word created the first man in God’s image, He bestowed the beginning of this gift; its fulness was vouchsafed when He gave Himself to be the second Man in the flesh.” I have noticed, farther on, another inconceivably monstrous principle contained in this phrase. Thus the glorious state of man consequent on redemption is wholly excluded and left out of what is “designed for the family of man.” “All these passages [those to which we have just referred] shew that the gift of the gospel is

that ‘knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ,’ which had originally, though as the apostle implies in inferior measure, been designed for the family of man.” Now, it is remarkable, that the apostle here quoted had never seen Christ living here amongst men—had never seen Him as incarnate upon earth—knew Him only in the glory, and here speaks in the most emphatic manner of the ministration of the Spirit, revealing that glory of an ascended Christ as He had promised. His gospel was the gospel of the glory of Christ.

The Archdeacon’s doctrine as to original sin, in this part of his book, is as unsound, I apprehend, as the rest; but I cannot here enter on this point. It is a transmitted disorganization of the lower appetites and powers resulting from a withdrawal of divine light. “One circumstance, which must of course greatly affect this whole question, is the perfect parallel which exists between the first man and the second—between the type and the antitype; him in whom humanity fell, and Him in whom it rose again; between Adam, in whom a divine Spirit was united only for a season to our mortal being, and Christ, in whom the same Spirit dwelt permanently and without measure.” This is really rationalism in its worst features, what is called on the continent the Christ as found in humanity in all manner of shapes. Adam was a kind of partial temporary incarnation, and Christ merely a more fully inspired man. “Its fulness,” says the Archdeacon, “was vouchsafed when He gave Himself to be the second Man in the flesh.” “Thus as Adam was a type of humanity in his constitution, so also is Christ. True it is that men are not united to the second Man by that actual paternity by which they are all bound to the first. But the pattern form is perfectly developed;

it remains only to find some no less real means of union, whereby they may enjoy the blessing of this higher descent." He is speaking of Christ as come into this world—of the incarnation. "For the Word was made flesh. He clothed himself in man's whole nature," &c. The means of union he refers to are the sacraments. The author concludes by saying, "Thus is that object attained for which man's heart had always longed—the union of our inferior with that superior nature, by which its weakness might be redressed and its ignorance enlightened."

Again, after largely speaking of Christ as on earth as having no form nor comeliness, &c, as "coming to His own"—in a word, of what He was on earth, he says, "Thus was then exhibited a true pattern for the children of men, in whom was set forth that gift of which all may have participation. For here is restored that true constitution of our being, and man renewed takes the place of man fallen."

The force of all this is evident: man lost a supernatural union with God by the fall; and it is restored in incarnation in Christ in a better way, and Christ, incarnate, living in the world, is the pattern-man, after whom all are livingly remodelled. Men received life of Him through His body,105 and now His is gone, the sacraments, which are "an extension of the incarnation," supply the place of His living bodily presence, and by them we are united to this divine source of life. Before quoting some passages as to the "means of union," I would remark, that, as in the case of the spiritual rationalism of the continent, the Spirit's personal presence is wholly overlooked. With the Archdeacon, it is either man's mind or a sacrament. He alleges, I am

aware, that Christ is set aside by those who look to the Spirit's work. It is possible it may be so by some; I cannot tell. But the thought of union with the glorified Head in heaven, the incarnate glorified Man who had accomplished redemption before He went up on high, does not seem to enter into his mind. According to the word, "he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit;" but with the author, it is man's mind or a sacrament by the flesh having life in it. Now, as I have already said, all blessing is in and through the incarnate Word: it is impossible to hold this too distinctly or too fully. All is treasured up in Him; all flows through Him. If the Father's love (He with whom He is one) is the eternal source, the incarnate Word, the Son of God, is personally He in whom we have all the blessing that flows from this source, the power of the Holy Ghost being that through which we are put in communion with it. And, further, for my own part, I can say, I know no place in which, as to means, I find so peculiar and especial a blessing as in the Lord's supper, and this in special connection with the suffering and now glorified Jesus, He who if He is ascended first descended into the lower parts of the earth, that, now ascended up far above all heavens, He might fill all things, not only as seen as a creating God, but in redemption glory as a redeeming Man, and yet have the church united to Himself in a special way, as "his body, the fulness [completing] of him who filleth all in all."

All this I adore the grace of God in. But our question is not here whether all fulness is in the person of Christ. "In him dwelleth" (and surely was it so when on earth) "all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." But it was not in the state in which He was on earth that it was God's

mind to unite the church to Him; and the rather, as then that union would have been independent of redemption, and made man's sinful unredeemed state immaterial as to that union, and the Holy Ghost in man the seal of his actual sinful, and not of his redeemed, condition. And hence, though all the fulness was personally in Christ, yet He could say, "I am come to send fire on the earth, and what will I if it be already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" Was He straitened in His own bowels of love? Every believing heart will well know He was not. He was straitened, because the love in Him was infinite (for "God is love") and could not flow forth in its own proper fulness and full display, till the death due to man as a sinner was come in, till the flood-gates were opened by redemption, and the whole tide of divine grace flowed forth justly and unhindered on a lost and ruined world.

Yes, that blessed One was straitened; and death and bearing wrath though it were, He could look to His own suffering as opening the way for the full manifestation that God was love, and for the exercise of it in the salvation of the lost. The blessed perfection of Jesus, the witness of sweet and precious love in Jesus, to which every heart surely ought to have bowed, was, on the contrary, putting man's heart to the test, in one sense the final test, so as to prove that no union of Adam's seed unredeemed with a living Christ was possible. "He was in the world, and the world knew him not. He came to his own, and his own received him not." "The life was the fight of men, but the light shone in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not." Had He not come and spoken unto them, the most favoured of the race in

whom all was tested, they had not had sin; now there was no cloke:—"If he had not done the works none other man did, they had not had sin. But now they had seen and hated both him and his Father."

Christ's incarnation was His sinless entrance into the old creation, though in a way entirely exceptional, so as to be, even as man, wholly out of all the evil of it and manifest God in it. As risen, He is the head and beginning of the new, the presenting of man to God, according to His own counsels; and He is then the pattern-man, the Man as God brings Him to Himself, "The first-born among many brethren." For "he suffered, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." The fulness of Christianity is not merely that God was manifested in man; but that man was brought to God so as that God should see man in His own image, "holy and without blame before him in love" —should see him in the Son too, so that He should be a Father to him in the relationship in which He was to His beloved and Only-begotten. It is, that man should be brought to Him also in a nature in which God could delight, because it was His own (His own, I mean in its moral character, holy, blameless, and love), and which, from being such, should have infinite delight in its effects, because the fulness of this very nature was there to delight in, in God Himself.

The "mystery of godliness" was not merely, then, that "God was manifest in the flesh," blessed source of it all! but that "he was justified in the [power of the] Spirit, seen of angels, preached to Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." Thus all God's ways unfolded themselves. The veil which had hid Him till then was rent, His holiness was become a delight and

not a fear to the believer, for love was known in the putting away of sin, and the middle wall of partition broken down. The accomplishment of promise, and the mighty goodness of God to man had been presented in the setting aside of Satan's power over him in every way, "healing all that were oppressed of the devil;" and by its rejection the title to promise lost to the Jew, so that he must come in through mercy; and the intrinsic enmity of man's heart against God revealed, the carnal mind shewn to be enmity against God, but in its highest act in this wondrous scene, in the crucifying Jesus, the triumph of God's love over it displayed; for that which was the uttermost act of man's hatred to God was the accomplishment of the work of God's redemption and the sovereign act of His love. The undisturbed holiness which sin could not reach acted in the divine perfectness of love to accomplish its own purposes above and beyond the reach of sin when sin had done its worst. The spear that expressed the despising hatred of man was answered by the water and the blood which washes away the sin which was shewn in shedding it.

"God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them;" but He was wholly rejected, "despised and rejected of men." When He came, there was no man; when He called, there was none to answer. "He spake that he knew, and testified that he had seen; and no man received his testimony." But God has reconciled us to Himself by the death of His Son. The condition of man as a sinner is not merely now his fall in Adam, so that he fled from God, and that God had driven him out; but that when in the person of Christ God came into this world, ruined and fallen as it was, into which man had sunk when driven out, and was

embellishing under Satan's power as well as he could, far from God;—when He came as man, overcoming Satan's wiles, delivering from Satan's power, having bound the strong man in the temptation, and then spoiling his goods, bearing man's sorrows and carrying their infirmities;—when God was in this world of woe, man, as far as he could, turned Him out, only, blessed be His name! to destroy the power of Satan in death itself, "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," and reveal the perfect love of God, and enter as a redeemer and as a new risen man into the presence of God, not back into an earthly paradise, as a man ignorant of good and evil, but into a heavenly one in glory, into His Father's house itself, where He is gone to prepare a place for us; that there, in the sweetest and best of nearnesses, He may be the first-born among many brethren, for He is gone to "his Father and our Father, his God and our God," to have us as His bride and His body with Himself—His brethren, as personally before the Father, His bride, yea His body, in our nearness to Himself.

The scriptural development of this must be sought in Ephesians. But I will cite from the Philippians the elaborate statement of the apostle, to shew that it was a risen glorified Christ who for him was the pattern-man. "If, by any means," he says (chap. 3:11), "I might attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." Again, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" —the calling a[nw. "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it

may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." That for which Christ had apprehended him, that to which God had called him, that which Christ would accomplish by His power, that in which Christ was the pattern-man, was a heavenly state, a glorious body, not what He was as incarnate. So, in 2 Corinthians 5 "We have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens… Not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now, he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God." Paul had only known Him in glory; His gospel is the gospel of the glory. So it is not after the image of the first Adam that we are created anew at all; nor is it any infusion of divine principles into a partly fallen man, restoring him, which is contemplated by grace. All this is false. The cherubim and a flaming sword kept from the first the way of the tree of life. Death is pronounced, and maintained on all that is of the first Adam.

The second is a new life. "That ye put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts, and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and holiness of truth"— not after the first Adam, but after God. Shall we be insensible to this immense privilege? Christ is the true image of the invisible God, God manifest in the flesh—He in whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Is He a mere restoration of the first Adam, or just, as indeed the Archdeacon horridly makes Him, a degree of progress upon him? And, mark, it is not to innocence we are ever restored, nor to the ignorance of good and evil which was Adam's

unfallen state. When God had said, “the man is become as one of us,” return to that was impossible. The condition of man is now involved in the knowledge of good and evil; and he is created anew after the image of Him, who, in righteousness and holiness, knows evil perfectly, and, in the righteousness and holiness of His nature, judges and perfectly rejects it all. This is that of which we are made partakers, “of the divine nature:” not of restored Adam’s. And this, indeed, we have only in and through Christ, who is this perfection in man, our life, and the blessed and perfect object of it. We are crucified with Christ. There is no lingering, as men vainly say of crucifying. The apostle speaks of being dead; for he says, “nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”

Hence we are to reckon ourselves dead, and alive unto God through Jesus Christ—as He died unto sin once; and in that He lives, He lives unto God. “We are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God.” Nothing can be clearer than the doctrine of scripture on the subject: not the amelioration of man as he is, but death in it and to it, and a new man who is Christ.

Let me add here, that the notion of conscience in Adam is an unfounded one. Conscience has a double meaning: sense of responsibility, and knowledge of the difference of good and evil in things themselves. In this latter sense, people speak, as does the Archdeacon, of its not being lost by the fall. It was acquired in it. The first (that is, a sense of responsibility) he had; the prohibition of eating the forbidden fruit put it to the test, but commandment only made this wrong. There was in it no

knowledge of good and evil in things themselves, as in murder, theft, corruption, and the like. Man was there to enjoy, in innocence, the blessings which God had showered around him, and the Blesser who had given them. He was ignorant of evil in itself; happy state! but gone for ever. Who would think of saying, “God is innocent?” The phrase offends and shocks at once. He knows, is above, and judges, all, distinguishing perfectly evil from good.

There is another immensely important principle connected with this, in the difference between our state and Adam’s. Adam’s moral position was happy—thankfulness and praise in the enjoyment of the position he was in. Indeed, the desire to get out of it was the entrance of sin. Ours is in no way such. We are called by glory and virtue. We seek to attain. This is a total change in our whole moral condition. We live by an object to be attained; he did not. His wish to be like God, in any sort, was his sin. It is what is presented to us as the spring of life and virtue, that for which we are apprehended, that to which God calls us, our only deliverance from the evil we do know. The more this is weighed, the more important it will seem to be. It alters fundamentally the whole moral condition. Contentedness, morally, is sin, self-righteousness, and ignorance of God and good. Nor is our condition one of law, neither a rule of life, to a people called and put as such in relationship with God upon the earth. We are called by glory (it is a point to be attained), and by the virtue which measures the difficulties and leaves behind what attracts the flesh. And, mark here, it is by glory—our calling above. To be like Christ in walk (for in sinlessness of nature we cannot, which shews that His state here cannot be our

pattern, though His walk is), to be like Him in walk, is the effect of the heavenly calling, for He was the heavenly Man. A word on this point.

I am quite aware it will be said, “but you are lowering the idea of the image of God from a moral to a kind of physical glory.” I would recall that. It is strongly and justly urged, that it is in the manhood of Christ that the blessing is present, though, of course, not separating it from His Godhead. The only question is, in what condition of His manhood is He the pattern-man? Now, the foolishness of God is wiser than man; and He teaches us that it is by the revelation of a heavenly glory in the pattern-man, that His image is formed in us—whatever the means; that it is in making us heavenly that we cease to be earthly and carnal. The life of Christ here is the pattern of our walk; but it is by abiding in Him on high, that we are like Him below. He was what He was by always abiding on high. “We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and no man receiveth our testimony. And no man has ascended up to heaven but he who came down from heaven, even the Son of man, who is in heaven.” It was the life of a heavenly man. He could say so, as a divine person; we, by being united to Him, and knowing Him there. For the Spirit takes the things of Christ and shews them to us; and we, “beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory.” Hence of that eternal life, which was with the Father, and has been manifested to us, and which, so to speak with the apostle, “we have seen, heard, looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of life,” but which abode alone while here, it can now be said, “which thing is true in him and in you, because the

darkness is past, and the true light now shineth." But this is when He was on high; for He is spoken of as our advocate with the Father, as the propitiation for our sins; though it was the same, even eternal, life in Him (and hence an old commandment had from the beginning), manifested in all its perfectness in that blessed One. Blessed be God! it is so; for in Him, as living down here, I can see that heavenly life, which is mine, in all its proper perfectness, and yet say, That is my life, for Christ is my life. But yet it is a new commandment, as true in Him and in us, because He had ascended up on high when He had made propitiation for our sins, that He might be the head and source of life to a new family, to be formed after the pattern of the heavenly man: a life to be manifested in the mortal body, by always bearing about in it the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus might be manifested in these earthen vessels. It is the gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God; as another apostle says, as we have seen, "We are called by glory and virtue."

The humiliation of Christ in love draws our affections by grace.

The knowledge of and union with Him in heaven forms us into the walk and spirit in which that heavenly Man, that blessed One, walked upon the earth; of Him to whom our souls are knit in love, to whom we are united by the Spirit. One is the practical reflex down here of the other.

It is living union that we have with a living Christ by the Holy Ghost, through whom we are one with Him (for by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, and he that

is joined to the Lord is one Spirit, in contrast, note, with one flesh)—a union which will result in our fully bearing the image of the heavenly, who is the image of God—not union with a Christ in lonely love on earth, when perfectness was shewn in that He was alone, yet not alone for the Father was with Him, but of man none to reverence, none to see beauty in Him. For we speak not of what grace can do, but of what man was, and in himself is. Surely that divine love pierced through; and helpless sinners, through grace, found their resource in it; and, however straitened, the power that could say, "Go, and he goeth; and come, and he cometh," could recognize faith in a Gentile; and the love that found no answer could prove it was there to answer that faith of a once accursed Canaanite that overstepped the bounds of dispensed barriers, and maintained that God was good enough to look upon the worthless, to help and meet their need. The love that had its just sphere where there was nothing to attract it, so as to shew it was perfect and divine, could attract and win the heart, and draw the shameful sinner where no shame would be cast upon them, but with the dignity of divine excellence, upon him who saw no beauty in that love so as to desire it; upon that wisdom of human righteousness which could discern that he was no prophet, in whom the poor lost one could find the absorbing renewing refuge of divine love, and return from it in peace, forgiven and saved, knowing God and a Saviour in the love that had drawn the heart and answered to the need of conscience, knowing from His own lips that it was saved.

Yes, the divine love of a Redeemer pierced through the veil. The fulness of Godhead was there, and God is love. It could not be hid, even if it were straitened; but the

time was not come for union with that blessed source of all blessedness. The Head must be exalted before the body could be united to it. He was alone; His loneliness was the essence of the beauty and perfectness of that place of love. He could be as a sparrow upon the housetop, and as a pelican in the wilderness, in His sorrow look for some one to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but He found none. He could eat ashes like bread, and mingle His drink with weeping. This is a different thing from union. That blessed truth, so blessed for us, has its own place; the lonely (lonely as far as man was concerned) perfectness of Christ and the infinite divine fulness of His person is another. The sources were all there; the communications which united the members of His body to Him were not. Man was a lost sinner, in enmity against God. He must be redeemed, as well as attracted and quickened, to accomplish the purposes of grace in Him: and heavenly glory and blessedness were what alone met as recompense the work of redemption in which Christ glorified God, and because of which He was glorified with the Father Himself; God glorifying Him in Himself, not merely in the future royal dominion. If He was obedient to the cross, He was highly exalted; and, even, He, for the joy set before Him, endured the cross and despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God, sat down when He had by Himself purged our sins.

It is not, I repeat, the true humanity in the divine fulness of Christ that is the question, or whether that is the only means of blessing. It is not whether rationalism or the adorers of human powers are right. For the Christian there can be no question there. The question is in what condition of the person of the blessed Lord is our union

with Him? In what is He the pattern-man? Is it antecedent to redemption, and in incarnation as alive down here, or consequent on our redemption and resurrection? Scripture leaves no doubt upon the subject.

But I will clear up the other view of the subject by some more quotations referring to another part of it—the means of union. I abhor rationalism; I adore the person of the Lord; but I do not believe a lifeless sacrament to be that person, most precious as it surely is in its due place. I must have a person to love, however His lifeless body may recall that person. The blessed Lord would respect and honour the affection of a Mary Magdalene, but correct an erring spirit by revealing Himself living. To say, "I will carry Him away," was touching affection, but it was unbelief too.

But I must continue:—

"The question at issue in the present day is the reality of our Lord's mediation—the truth of that system of spiritual influences which was bestowed by the re-creation of man's race in the person of the Son of God, and that whole doctrine of grace which is characteristic of the gospel. If it should be true, as was always believed in ancient times, and as will be stated in these pages, that 'sacraments are the extension of the incarnation,' that through their agency the Son of God effects that great work which He took our nature to perform, it will not seem surprising," &c.

Nothing can be plainer than this.

In answer to the question of what regeneration is, we have the views of the author brought out more in detail. The question is, now that Christ is glorified, and absent

as to His bodily presence in the world, How can grace be communicated—how regeneration wrought, and what is it? Its connection with Christ, no Christian will deny. The question is, What is it? how communicated?

The answer of the Archdeacon to this question is this: —“It has always been understood to refer to some gift of grace bestowed by God, the result whereof is the renewal of man’s nature.” Thus, “In what way does God bestow grace? In what way is man its receiver?” As to the first, “they are expressly stated to be bestowed through the mediation of our Lord’s humanity.” I pray the reader to remark this. It is not the mediation of Christ, but of our Lord’s humanity, giving a most exclusive and very peculiar sense to mediation; because it is not a personal action but the intervention of a nature. He quotes, “There is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus,” not the humanity, note. “This,” the writer adds, “is the manner in which divine gifts flow into the world.” “As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” For “this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.”

I am not here going to comment on the loose way scriptures are quoted. I am not engaged in criticising the Archdeacon’s books, or I should have most serious questions to advert to. I use them as the means of getting at a particular system, as represented by its moderate and esteemed advocates. Now that Christ is the only way of grace, I need not say I admit; and that eternal life is found in the Son only for man. Our question here is as to the means of union; and the quotations are to shew, that, while in the world, union was to be found. “In the manhood of Christ was a new

door open to mankind. This is that new and living way which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, His flesh." I remark here, that there is no suggestion of death or sacrifice. Still the author must pass on to Christ's glorified state, for He is no longer on earth. But in treating of this, we shall find sacrifice really passed by. I do not mean that he denies it so as to be heterodox, but it forms no part of his system of truth in connection with our renewed intercourse with God.

Thus he presents it:—

"The Gospels then speak of grace, not as bestowed on humanity at large, but in the humanity of Christ. For it was the appointment of infinite wisdom that this gift was not bestowed from Him to others, till humanity had first been perfected in Himself." This is not consistent with other statements, but I do not enter on that here. "'It became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.' Though the humanity of the second Adam had been by nature pure from spot, yet it was suffering the appointed course through which it was perfected for the work of mediation. 'For their sakes I sanctify myself,106 that they also may be sanctified through the truth.' Thus did that manhood, which was taken in the virgin's womb, become a meet instrument for leavening the whole mass of corrupted nature. And this work [What work? His own sanctifying of Himself though without spot?] being perfected, we see the new Adam who, like His earthly predecessor, has been made a little lower than the angels, crowned, through the suffering of death, with glory and honour; and then did He ascend up on high, and having led captivity captive, gave gifts unto men.

That which He had received because He was human, He had power to give because He was divine. Thus did He bestow on all His members that gift of grace which had hitherto centred in Himself. The love of God had flowed forth into the manhood of His incarnate Son, that thence it might diffuse itself through His brethren."

He came, then, "to reconstruct the very foundations of humanity in Himself." "Thus did He become the second Adam, in whom the deep foundations of humanity were again constructed, so that through Him and in Him do men receive that gift, which by Him God bestowed upon His creatures;" that is, it is a renewal of that which the first Adam had received by Him, once bestowed, lost in a measure107 (for he teaches that the loss is but partial) and now renewed in Him. So elsewhere the restoration of the ancient pattern of man is not attained through the natural perfection of individuals, but because in Christ, our Lord, was the personal presence of that divine Word which was above nature.

"It is plain, therefore, that the whole of man not only needs reconstruction in Christ, but is susceptible of it." The new creation extends to it all. All the parts of that common nature which is borne by every child of Adam, were re-fashioned in the head and model of the christian family, that the renewal of our nature in Christ might extend likewise to them all. Christ's humanity is further declared to be the means of having life. "To partake of His sacred flesh is the method by which men enter into relation with Him, just as by birth men partake of that old nature which has been transmitted to us by Adam." It is not that the incarnate Lord is "the mediator through whom all divine gifts were bestowed upon men. He adds a further truth in John 6:51-58, and declares that the

eating of His flesh and of His blood is the method by which these gifts are to be received."

Quoting St. Cyril, his great authority in these matters, he says, "The sacred body of Christ gives life to those in whom it is, and preserves them for immortality by being mixed with our bodies"—"that eucharist108 which lies in the reception of His sacred flesh and blood, whereby man obtains the gift of immortality." "He is life by nature, inasmuch as He has been born from the living Father, and His sacred body is not less life-giving."

And the Archdeacon himself, "As His Godhead flows into Him by necessary derivation from His eternal Father, so does He assure us that He communicates His manhood by merciful gift to His earthly brethren. Thus there are three stages in this great work. The Godhead imparts itself to the coequal Son. This is His eternal generation. The Son unites Himself to man's nature. This is His incarnation. He communicates His manhood to His brethren. This is His real presence in the eucharist. As the first, then, is the communication of that substance which is common to the three persons in the blessed Godhead, so is the last the substantial communication of that manhood which has been hallowed by taking it into God." Nothing can be more definite than that it is distinctively and properly thus. "There are two main systems according to which it is supposed that spiritual gifts are communicated; the one implies that blessings are bestowed upon men by individual gift as a consequence indeed of Christ's death, but through that separate process whereby the Almighty holds communion with each man's spirit." I do not take His account of the matter here, nor own to be just the separation of this work from the person of Christ. I

quote to give distinctively what follows. “The other supposes all blessings to be embodied in the humanity of the Word, and from Him to be extended to His members.” And note, “This communication takes place through His coming down upon earth and manifesting Himself among men, and then it is added in verse 51-58, that to partake of His sacred flesh is the method by which men enter into relation with Him, just as by birth men partake of that old nature which has been transmitted to us by Adam.” That is, incarnation and the eucharist, as partaking of His sacred flesh, that humanity in which all is embodied, is the means, the one means, of having life, just as we are naturally born to have natural life. Remark, he says nothing of drinking the blood or of death. Popery has gone a step farther in this system; but of this hereafter. It is consistent.

“There must be some means, then, by which we must be put into relation with the new man, even as we have a natural relation to the flesh of the old one; we must be united by grace to Christ, as we were united to Adam by nature. Neither should it surprise us that the processes should present some analogy; that if” the poison of the sin is transmitted through his flesh, so His flesh should be the medium through which is transmitted the virtue of the other.” “This (our common) nature is transmitted according to the most mysterious of earthly laws through the continuing of the flesh. It was not inconsistent, therefore, with the order of the divine economy, that our Lord’s flesh and blood, mysteriously and supernaturally communicated, should be the principle of a higher life to His brethren.”

“The holy eucharist, therefore, is the carrying out of that act which took effect in the incarnation of the Son of

God. It was by the incarnation that God and man, the finite and the infinite, were brought into relation, and that the graces which were inherent in the one were communicated as a gift to the other. Now, the medium through which these gifts are extended, is not the Deity, but the manhood of Christ." And he quotes Cyril: "For being life, as God, He has made it life and life-giving." This doctrine, with all manner of monstrous statements, original and quoted, is over and over again insisted on. Thus, "Now it must be remembered that He speaks of two things in this chapter (John 6): first, of the general fact of His mediation, and that His humanity was the medium through which divine graces found their way to mankind; secondly, that the eating His body, and the drinking His blood, was the method in which this gift was to be participated [52c always] by individuals." I cite this passage to shew, in the clearest way, that it is not mediation nor the humanity of Jesus as the one sure full way of grace found in and by and through Him. It is, further, that eating His flesh (and here he adds, "drinking His blood," though not shewing what it has to do with incarnation,) is the way of having share in what He was (as incarnate). "His body," he says, quoting from St. Cyril, "was sanctified by the power of the Word, and it is thus rendered effective for us for the purpose of the mystical eucharist, so as to be able to implant in us its own sanctification." St. Ignatius and St. Irenaeus "dwell on the truth that our Lord's body, as communicated in the holy eucharist, is the renewing principle by which His people are to be quickened both in body and soul." "St. Irenaeus speaks of it as the cause of resurrection."

And the manhood of Christ is so truly in the sensible creatures of bread and wine that "all who receive one

receive the other." I leave to others to judge of the Archdeacon's deliberate contradiction of the twenty-ninth article, of which the title is, "Of the wicked which eat not the body of Christ in the use of the Lord's supper." The Archdeacon might cavil at the absence of the negative of the res sacramenti, which the article does not speak of in any way; but the title leaves no loophole for this artifice. But my business is with the doctrine itself. Now, the consideration of the sacraments themselves is fatal to the whole theory, and at the same time demonstrates the fact, that it is in resurrection, not in incarnation, that Christ is a source of life to others. According to their own theory, it is in baptism that a man is regenerate and receives life. But they admit that in the elements used in baptism, in the matter, as they speak technically, there is nothing really or spiritually of the flesh or humanity of Christ. I would here recall the statement, that it is not merely the doctrine that His humanity is the medium through which divine graces find their way to mankind, on which the Archdeacon insists; but that the eating of His body and drinking of His blood was the method in which this gift was to be participated in by individuals. The flesh and blood thus communicated are the principle of a higher life to His brethren—that to partake of His sacred flesh is the method by which men enter into relation with Him. This is put in contrast with the system that implies that blessings are bestowed upon man by individual gift as a consequence, indeed, of Christ's death, but through that separate process by which the Almighty holds communion with each man's spirit.

Now this in baptism, according to their own theory, that men enter into relation with Christ, and God by Him,

and receive the principle of life; but here all such communication of His humanity as really present is out of the question. The element is water. They do not deny this. “In baptism, therefore, the outward sign has no permanent relation to the inward grace.” … “Our Lord used no words which imply that any particular portion of the element employed is invested with a specific character.” “The inward grace is associated with the act, not with the element.” “And for the same reason, the intervention of the minister, however desirable, is not essential;” “because baptism depends upon an act which all Christians may perform and not upon any consecration which requires a special commission.” That is, the whole system is overthrown, its foundation subverted. For the communication of the humanity of Christ, through a direct sacramental participation in it as present, whereby we enter into relationship with Him, as by birth we are so with the first Adam, is here impossible; for there is confessedly no such sacramental presence. And this in the sacrament in which this relationship, and in which alone according to their theory this relationship is properly entered into! The whole system and theory is false upon the face of it—false in its own sacramental way. It is apostasy if compared with the scriptures of truth.

But, farther, if we examine both the sacraments, the greater truth for which I contend will be clearly established. That is, that death comes in before the possibility of being blessed in Christ as a living Head; and that it is the life of a risen Christ, who has wrought atonement for us (so that we can be livingly blessed, consistently with God’s righteousness), that we are made partakers of, and that it is not with a merely

incarnate Christ that we are united. Being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation to all those that obey Him. Both sacraments present death in Christ, not life, save as we enter into resurrection as emerging out of death. But they are expressions not of the power of life in Christ, but of the power and efficacy of death in grace; so that in having life from Christ risen, we have the knowledge of the perfect love in which He gave Himself for us as sinners, and of the entire putting away of sin which He wrought by His death, so that we are not in the nature or person at all, before God, in which sin subsisted. He that is dead is freed from sin.

Were I united to Christ as a living man in the first Adam, and He incarnate, the body of sin were not destroyed; death would not be adjudged to it; I could not reckon myself dead; I were yet living in the power of the flesh of the first Adam departed from God. But I am baptized into the death of Christ (buried with Him by baptism into death); for I, morally dead in trespasses and sins, find Him by grace judicially dead for them, and I know my sins, and sin in nature, all gone, the very life to which they attach gone by faith. Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me, and in a life in which He dies no more, or I therefore, for because He lives I live also: death hath no more dominion over Him.

Of this participation in Christ's death, baptism is the expression, and to use the words of men, the sacrament. I live, for therein also I am risen again through faith in the operation of God which raised Him from the dead. But I have part in the death and resurrection of Christ; and as a sinner cannot have part with Him till then. His death is the uniting point, but it is in death. As living by Him risen, I can reckon myself dead. The old life was all

sin; but it is dead, crucified with Christ. The sacrament is not the medium of union with an incarnate Christ, not dead; it is the expression of exactly the contrary, that we can have no part with Him upon this ground. It is the absolute sentence of death upon man in connection with the first Adam, a sentence judicially suffered in grace by Christ, and into the confession of which I come alone admitted to have a part with Him. If I enter into life, I do so in the admission, that death is my only ground of hope, and that I cannot turn to God in the life of the first Adam.109 The other sacrament, that of the Lord's supper, is equally significative. It represents definitely and specifically the death of Christ. "Ye do shew forth the Lord's death till he come." Nothing can be more emphatically death. "This is my body which was broken for you. This is my blood which is shed for many for the remission of sins." It is not, then, participating in incarnate living humanity, but in the death of Christ. Is the breaking of the body in death, the flowing of the very might, wisdom, and purity of Deity itself into the weak and poor elements of our nature? That all the perfections of Godhead were displayed there, so that God has been glorified in the work wrought about our sin is most true: His love, His righteousness, His truth, His majesty; but to say that death is the communication of the fulness of the gift of grace to humanity, and by humanity to us as life, is nonsense. It is death we celebrate in the eucharist: neither a Christ alive as man through the incarnation; nor a Christ alive again in resurrection; but a body broken,110 and the blood shed out, the sure emblems of death, and given as such; and therefore the Lord, when speaking of this glorious mystery itself, of His taking manhood and dying, says, "The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give,"

not will take or have taken, though this were a necessary step towards it; but “which I will give for the life of the world:” that divine life in man, and in which God was truly manifested in flesh and amongst men, was shewn to be the object of flesh’s hatred, and the new man took His place as head of the new race, when atonement had been made for fatal and otherwise irremediable sin; and on both the ordinances which the Lord instituted for our blessing as Christians, He stamped this truth of the death of the old man, and death to it; but that death became ours in a saving way, through Him who by the grace of God tasted death for us. Quickened together with Him, and raised up together, we own His death as our necessary door of entrance into life, and do not think of uniting two incompatible lives with one another. We were dead by, we are now dead to, sin through Jesus, and, alive in Him, feed on that precious sacrifice which He has wrought for us, making death our life and security for ever, where the power of Satan, where sin and all that belongs to it end with the life they attached to, and where a new life in righteousness has its origin, all trespasses being forgiven us, righteousness in Christ Himself before God, and righteousness by Christ in us before men. Such is the doctrine of scripture. To make the blessed glorious truth of incarnation, the source, indeed, of all our blessings, to be not the display of divine life as of God Himself in a man, but the medium in that state of communication to others as imparted to humanity, as a reconstructing of it in that form,111 declaring that rationalism, or the power of the human spirit, is the only alternative, is under the plea of denying rationalism, apostasy from the true foundations of Christian truth, and a denial of the real effect of the fall, of the condition

of the sinner under it, and of the true need of the death of Christ in order to our participation in life. “Except ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man you have no life in yourselves:” that is, you cannot be associated with Him living. It is a Saviour by means of death that will introduce you to God.

I am aware that it is urged, as regards baptism, that it is said by one Spirit we are all baptised into one body. Now, in the first place, the one body, into which they are baptised here, is the unity of the church; but the truth is, the passage does not speak of baptism by Water, but does, very definitely, speak of something else. Baptism with the Spirit is a well-known scripture doctrine. “I, indeed,” says John Baptist, “baptize you with water, but … he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.” “Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.” This we know was accomplished at Pentecost. When Cornelius is called by grace, he receives the Holy Ghost as they did at the first, called baptism of the Holy Ghost (Acts 11:16), and thereupon is baptized or received into the visible church on earth. In the twelfth chapter of 1 Corinthians, where the passage we are speaking of occurs, the subject expressly treated of is the Holy Ghost or spiritual power, pneumotikav: the sense of this is, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, by which, the Head being exalted on high, all are brought into the unity of the same body, and exercise the gifts given of the Spirit, as members of the body. Baptism by water is nowhere spoken of as engrafting into the unity of the body. The Lord’s supper is the expression of that truth (though not that alone). We are all one body, inasmuch as we are partakers of that one bread (loaf).

But no such thought is connected in scripture with baptism. It is simply death and resurrection, terms applicable of individuals. We are baptized into His death, buried with Him by baptism into death. It may be the natural consequence of putting on Christ; but the act is individual; the individual puts on Christ. It is the sign of his regeneration in the death and resurrection of Christ, whereby he is received into the visible church of God on earth. We learn, in the case of Samaria, that those thus received had not yet received the Holy Ghost, and Simon Magus never did, though baptized; as Cornelius' receiving the Spirit as the seal of faith was the warrant for his being publicly received by baptism.

Besides, then, its connection with the fundamental doctrine of the necessity of redemption and our total ruin by sin, the truth that death must come in, in order to our union with Christ, is clearly established by the characteristic ordinances of the christian religion; and it is shewn, that it is not by a rectifying of the old man, in connection with the filling of humanity with divine power and grace by the incarnation when Jesus was in the likeness of sinful flesh, by which we are regenerate in union with the Lord Christ; but by the establishment of a new man, of which the pattern in power of life is in Christ risen and glorified, to whose image we are to be conformed, and that consequent not only on His living in the likeness of sinful flesh (though sinless) but in His being (a sacrifice) for sin, so that by His death sin in the flesh has been condemned (Rom. 8:4); and the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, thus risen from the dead, has made us free from the law of sin and death. Hence, having Christ for our life, we reckon ourselves dead and do this one thing, press towards the mark of our calling

on high. The effect is the walk of a heavenly man, such as Christ was on earth, because we are in Him who is in heaven. It is when He was raised from the dead and set in heavenly places, far above all heavens, and filling all things that He was given to be Head over all things to the church, His body the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.

This is the question with Puseyism then. Is redemption the necessary ground of our living association with the Lord Jesus Christ? Puseyism is merely the old effort of Judaism against the doctrine of Paul—the doctrine of a full salvation through a dead and exalted Saviour. The not thus holding the Head, as risen with Christ, is the cause of insisting on ordinances, as though we were alive in the world in connection with the old man, as if we were “in the flesh,” and not in a risen Christ before God in the Spirit. The true Head is not held. We are not known to be risen with Christ, and hence we have voluntary humility and subjection to ordinances, and all the train of fleshly observances, and not sparing of the body, which the Apostle denounces as the consequences of departure from Christ as He is risen and exalted on high. And hence I called it apostasy, for so the Apostle does. It is not a nominal denial of Christ, nor did the then Judaisers so deny Him. It is not a question of mere orthodoxy as to His person, though the orthodoxy of Archdeacon Wilberforce’s books is to me most doubtful, and his statements most hazardous, and his contradiction of the thirty-nine articles flagrant.

There are two great points, as I have stated elsewhere, in christian truth: first, the fundamental doctrines as to the Trinity, the person of Christ, the atonement; and then, secondly, the way in which sinners receive the

value of these great facts. The question with the Romanist and the Puseyite is on the second of these points. So was it in Paul's time. No doubt the full development of apostasy will be in the rejection of the fundamental truths; but he who denies the true way of their application to the sinner is, the Apostle declares, fallen from grace, and Christ profits him nothing. That sovereign grace may pierce through the cloud, and attach the heart by living faith to Christ is, blessed be God! true; and hence men may be saved, though they are Romanists and Puseyites. But this does not hinder their system being cloud, and not light at all.

I have not thought, as I have stated, of giving a review of the Archdeacon's books, but merely used them as a means of having the system before us fairly and in its best shape. Our dispute is not as to an incarnate Lord being the one only and blessed medium of grace. It is impossible we can hold this too firmly or estimate it too highly. It is our all. He is the second Adam, Lord of all, Head of His church, sole spring (drawn from, and communicating, the Father's love) of blessing, and life, and joy, through the power of the Holy Ghost. I am willing, most rash and hazardous as I think them, to take the intentions of the archdeacon and Puseyites in general to be orthodox. The question is, Is the communication of living blessing to sinful men, and the setting up of a new race in Christ as a pattern-man in incarnation? or, consequent on accomplished redemption and divine righteousness in man in resurrection? The scripture teaches us it is in resurrection, and that the incarnate man was rejected, and remained alone, bearing fruit after falling into the ground and dying.

All the truths of Christianity as applied to men are engaged in this question, what sin is—what regeneration is—how man is renewed—what the extent of the fall—what original sin— what death as the wages of sin—what practical restoration and sanctification—what eternal life. Every essential practical doctrine has a totally different character in the two systems. It is not, as the Archdeacon would allege, whether the mediation of the incarnate Word be the only way of blessing. There we are wholly agreed; wholly agreed, that rationalism is a return to direct communication between God and man, only forgetting that sin has made it impossible, actually and judicially. Our question is, how this mediation is effectual. Is it by the transfusion of the grace of the incarnate Word, communicated to Him from the Father into disorganised man, so as to ameliorate and reconstruct him; a process carried on now by ordinances? Or is the sentence of death and utter condemnation passed on the old man, and the proof given in Jesus's death that there can be no connexion between them (though man be responsible— though conscience be there by the fall, and famine awaken desires in the Spirit); but that in that death redemption has been wrought by grace, and sin put away, and a risen Christ, who has triumphed over death, because, as so risen, a new source of life, a new life rather, to the sinner by faith, through the quickening power of the Word and Spirit, giving Him the title to reckon Himself wholly dead as regards sin, the world, and the law too, and alive unto God through Jesus, risen with Him, to mortify his members which are on earth, but made the righteousness of God in Him; the sacraments being an abiding sensible witness of these truths, that is, of entrance by death, as regards the old man, into blessing,

and in no other way but by death in Christ, so that that entrance is salvation, and the complete deliverance from the whole state of sin in which we were (though the body still hinder us as yet unredeemed by power), while they are, I doubt not, also special means of blessing. For I speak here only of the character these sacraments give to Christianity by their nature.

Such is the vital question involved in what is now called Puseyism. It is a denial of scriptural Christianity. It takes up one blessed truth, incarnation—most miserably treated, I judge, but still a blessed truth—under the plea of using it against rationalism, that is, miserable infidelity; but really overthrowing the doctrine of the total sinfulness and loss of man, lying in death and condemnation; the need of redemption and accomplishment of righteousness by another; and a new resurrection state of man in Christ in order to our union with Him, and our participation in the heavenly blessings of this new manhood: a union of which the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven is the power, while the sacraments are, both of them, the witnesses of the death through which we have this place, and one of them, of the unity of the body in which we all enjoy it.

I have not cited the Fathers, nor gone into their doctrines. While I do not doubt that the truly pious among them were guarded in the faith; yet, as doctors, nothing can be more uncertain; as moralists, scarce anything more objectionable. God has preserved truth in and for His church, blessed be His name! but the Fathers are the expression, not of orthodox truth, but of a mass of mental efforts on divine subjects, of heavings to and fro on subjects which escaped their grasp; of the efforts, too, of minds, for the most part, seriously

corrupted by Platonic philosophy, and shrinking from the attacks of Pagans on the point of the unity of the Godhead, which they feared to compromise by the doctrine of the eternal Sonship and divinity of Christ. Save Jerome and Origen, they did not understand Hebrew, and could only use the Septuagint version; valuable, no doubt, as testimony, but most imperfect as representing the meaning of scripture, and sometimes any meaning at all.

I believe the Trinity and the incarnation, along with the atonement, and, I might add, the resurrection, as already accomplished in Christ, to be the great foundation and distinctive truths of Christianity; but it is not in the Fathers of the first four centuries, that I should seek for the proof of, or any certain faith in, them. I certainly judge the Ante-Nicene Fathers to have failed (as doctors) in the assertion of the true and full divinity of the Lord. You may find it stated, perhaps, but you will find it undermined and contradicted. Every one in the least acquainted with them knows that they read with the LXX not “the Lord possessed me in the beginning of His ways;” but “the Lord created me,” e[ktisev me;112 and that the doctrine that the wisdom, or lovgo", which had subsisted in an un-separated state in the divine mind, took person subsistence, only immediately preceding and for the purpose of creation. You may find what maintained the truth, I freely admit it; but their having nothing in this passage but “created me,” and constantly using it in connection with their philosophy about the lovgo", embarrassed all their teaching, producing the doctrine of the lovgo" ejndiavqeto" and lovgo" proforikov". On the doctrine that Christ “is the true God,” God over all, blessed for

evermore, all were infirm, to say the least, some undoubtedly orthodox.113 The doctrine of the Trinity suffered in proportion; although when Arius would have defiled these expressions in a way which affirmed that Christ was a creature, the instinctive faith of Christians resisted and repelled the abomination. Yet the famous oJmoouvsio", by which the Arians were formally set aside, in spite of their subtleties, had been as formally condemned as Sabellianism by a previous council, so that the Emperor Constantine, who had given the character of generality to the Nicene one, being impressed with the danger of using a word thus condemned, restored Arius; and Athanasius was deposed by the council of Tyre. Marcellus, one of his opponents, is generally judged to have fallen into Sabellianism; and Arius, received as orthodox, died in the communion of the Catholic church. I have a perfect horror of his doctrine.

I only say that I cannot lean on the Fathers for securing the truth. The history of Cyril, indeed of Alexander himself, is not much more satisfactory. He was the Coryphaeus of the Fathers as to the incarnation, and the turbulent condemner of Nestorius, the rival patriarch of Constantinople. He got his adversary condemned before the arrival of John of Antioch and the eastern bishops, who favoured him (so that this was a singular general council); but the same John having assembled a council of the Eastern bishops and condemned Cyril, Cyril withdrew his twelve famous anathemas which, as Archdeacon Wilberforce states, had been adopted as the faith of the church in the council [of Ephesus], and accepted the creed proposed by John. Indeed, the language of Cyril is very equivocal, adopted, he says,

from the fathers (Gieseler says, from Athanasius): mijan fuvsin tou' Qeou' lovgou sesarkwmevnmu, that though there were two natures united, and not confounded as he states just before, yet, when united, it was one nature of God, the word made flesh.114 But this may suffice.

I have only one remark to make, which is important as to the principles on which the Fathers are referred to, for there are two. One is development, that christian truth, of which the power is all in full perfection in the word, was developed and fully formed by the Spirit residing in the church, so that we learn more perfectly developed and defined truth115 as we proceed, say, not to go too far, for of course Romanists would go farther, during the first four or five centuries, embracing the four first general councils. That is one principle. The other is, that the early Fathers, as nearest the sources, must best know what the apostolic teaching was. But on this principle, when there was the least development, there was the surest knowledge. Yet, an awkward circumstance, as a fact, we find that the earliest (I do not speak here of what are called the Apostolical Fathers, who are a class apart, and in general the poorest and worst of all, with the exception of Platonic speculations) Fathers are the most vague, loose, uncertain, and, if it must be said, heretical.

I must except from this the pious and faithful Irenaeus, though feebleness and some superstition may be found in him. It is a refreshment to read him after looking at the rest: what a difference from the wild imagination of a speculative, but (I believe) true-hearted, Origen; the loose and loosely expressed doctrine of a Justin Martyr, willing after all to die for Christ; or the turbulent orthodoxy and doubtful Christianity of an ambitious

Cyril! What a difference, I say, in all this from that piety which flows from the personal knowledge of Christ by the scriptures, and respect for the word as the word of God! We find a clear recognition of fundamental truths, such as Christ's being the true God, and a true and heartfelt refusal to go on beyond what is written, in the prying impotency of the human mind; and this, with whatever defects, we do find in the good Irenaeus. The reader, who has the opportunity, may read chapters 27-28 of his second book (46, 47 in Feuardentii). Yet, and for this very reason of his humble submission to scripture, he is simple and firm in what scripture does teach; though perhaps, like all, the full divinity of the Lord Jesus has not an adequate place in his mind, for he occasionally owns it unequivocally. But one sees he has "the truth itself as a rule," hoping still to receive something more, and learn from God, because He is good and has unlimited riches. And thus he adds, "if, according to the measure we have spoken of, we commit some questions to God, we shall both keep our faith perfect and shall persevere without danger; and all scripture given to us of God will be found by us harmonious [consonant with itself], and parables will agree with what is said plainly, and what is said plainly will explain the parables." I may add, as to the fathers and scripture, "But we ought to refer such things as these to God" (what we cannot solve of things which are sought out in the scriptures) "who has made us, also knowing most surely that the scriptures, indeed, are perfect, as uttered by the word of God and by His Spirit, but we, inasmuch as we are inferior and the meanest (novissima) compared with (or the farthest from) the word of God and His Spirit, by so much are we wanting the knowledge of His mysteries."

I desire to bring briefly before the reader, in conclusion, the scriptural testimony to the great truth of the utter and irremediable evil of the old man in its principle of life; and that death and judgment are its only portion. “Except a man be born again” (entirely anew), says St. John, “he cannot see the kingdom of God.” It is not from above, nor merely again, but from the outset of life; as in the beginning of Luke it is said, certain knowledge “from the very first.” Hence Nicodemus refers to re-entering into his mother’s womb. It is a positively new nature. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Again, death and not amelioration is always pronounced upon the old man, those who have the new life having the title to reckon themselves dead. “Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God,” “buried with Him by baptism unto death;” and as regards practice, when thus alive, “mortify [put to death] therefore your members which are on the earth.” “I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;” we are baptized into His death. “If any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature (kainhV ktivsi"),” it is a new creation; old things are passed away, all things are become new, and all things are of God” We are created again in Christ Jesus. We are created again, not after Adam’s image renewed, but after God.116 Further, it is in and with Christ, we being really dead in sins, that is, having no moral movement of life in ourselves towards God, “none that understandeth, none that seeketh after God,” whatever man may say. The same power has wrought in us, which raised Him from the dead. “According to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly

places; and God, rich in mercy, of his great love wherewith he loved us, when we were dead in sins, has quickened us together with Christ." Being by the word of God, it is by faith; "of his own will begat he us by the word of truth" but this revelation of the glory of God is not the amelioration of the old, but the revelation of the new or second Adam, which judges the old and sets it wholly aside and condemns it, and draws it out after the new Adam, even after Christ; so that we are renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created us; who has manifested Himself in love to sinners, the spirit of forgiveness, grace (to go no further), which in the first Adam had no place.

For Christ was not only a perfect man in righteousness and true holiness, but the manifestation of God in grace; and we are called on to follow Him in this, which neither innocence, nor law, have anything to do with. Being by the word, it is by faith, and so renewed in knowledge, according to God's revelation of Himself as a man. Hence, though it be a real communication of life, of a nature, as it is said, "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." "Having loved the church, and given himself for it." Yet it is of water. He sanctifies and cleanses it by the washing of water by the word, it is the cleansing of a man who remains the same person still, but cleanses by the judgment of the old, according to the revelation of the new, and the renewal of desires, according to the blessed object thus presented, who is also our life. He is come not by water only, but by water and blood, cleanses as well as expiates; but it is out of His pierced side, out of a dead Christ, this water flows. This cleansing is a real thing, by spiritual power; and of this John 3 speaks. Hence baptism, which is the sign of this

regeneration, is baptism into His death. So John 6 is the reality of what Christ has been, and done, come down and made flesh, the true bread from heaven, and given in death for the life of the world, on which we feed by faith, eating His flesh and drinking His blood: a Christ in death, of which the second sacrament is the expression. 117 And here I will notice what I have referred to, the consistent but awful character of Romanism in this respect. It is well known that the cup is refused to the laity. They are consoled under this privation by the authoritative doctrinal assurance— what is called the doctrine of concomitancy—that in what is no longer bread there is the whole body, soul, blood, and divinity of the Lord Jesus, a whole [that is, the whole of] Christ. Now, the very essence of the Lord's teaching is, that the body is broken and the blood shed, not a living Christ, but a Christ who has given Himself effectually in redemption. We drink the blood, therefore, apart as dead. If it be in the body, redemption is not wrought. The Eucharist in the church of Rome is a sacrament of won-redemption; of the absence of forgiveness, for without shedding of blood there is no remission; but if it be in the body, the blood is not shed. Thus has Satan mocked poor souls, pardonable objects of pity, no doubt, in their ignorance, but blinded by what are called theologians, by what is really his theology, which has given (instead of the blessed sacrament of redemption, though not permitted openly to deny it) a sacrament, as far as they receive it, of non-redemption and of non-forgiveness. Up to this point, whatever the aspirations of Puseyism, divine goodness has not permitted it yet to reach. It does its best doctrinally in making an incarnate, in contrast with a risen, Christ, the source of life and blessing, the head of a new race. Furthermore, I

deny entirely that Christ incarnate is the pattern-man to a renewed race. He is the man who is a pattern in His walk; but sinlessness in flesh is not the pattern-state for man in the flesh, in whom “this infection of nature doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerate. For Christ, in the birth of our nature, was made like unto us in all things (sin only excepted), from which He was clearly void, both in His flesh and in His spirit… but all we, the rest, although baptized and born again in Christ, yet offend in many things; ‘and if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.’” If it be replied, “But it is only asserted that we have the principle of it in us in this life, and it will be perfect in another,” that is precisely to assert that a risen and glorified Christ is the pattern-man, and not an incarnate one here below. We are to be conformed to the image of God’s Son, risen and glorified, and, as we have borne the image of the earthly, then bear the image of the heavenly in its full display and development.

100 Mr. Bennett has already re-married a couple married legally out of the Establishment.

101 What precedes is this:—“He [God] had really entitled Himself to a share in the hereditary characteristics of this lower being, and qualified Himself for co-partnership with His brethren.” “Incarnation,” page 52. Remark that, save in the vague expression of brother, sister, mother, the Lord never calls His disciples brethren till after His resurrection, when He went to His Father and their Father, His God and their God.

102 This is a singular phrase, and implies a good deal of what is peculiar to the system. Mediator is some one between two parties—between God and man. Here it is

headship of a race—a connection between the two—by taking manhood into God. The reader will do well to notice this. It is the use and application of this doctrine we are occupied about, not the doctrine of the taking of manhood into God.

103 This is a quotation from Hooker.

104 The two are these:—“The grounds of this relationship to mankind at large are twofold [that is, of Adam as head or representative of humanity]. First, the tie of common parentage, on account of which ‘the man’ called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the mother of all living; and secondly, that He was the type who represented the race in its perfection.”

105 “That the earthly body of our Lord was the medium through which life and health were conveyed to other bodies, is expressly recorded in holy writ. It is not our purpose to speak of the acts of healing which were thus wrought, because His divine mind and will must not be excluded from participation in the miracles of which His body was the medium. Yet when we consider the nature of His body in itself, when we inquire whether the conditions of its existence answer to the character of Him who assumed it, we see peculiar reasons why virtue should flow, as we are assured it did, out of His body into the bodies of others.” No doubt: but was this the eternal life of the soul? “Now since Christ as the second Adam is that seed of life, through whom the spiritual body is to be quickened at the last day, that virtue should go out of Him when He was upon earth is nowise inconsistent with what scripture leads us to expect.” “Whether the influence exerted when He were [was] upon earth were material or immaterial, it is needless to

ask.” … “He [our Lord] set it [His, man’s body] forth as possessed of an instrumental efficacy in that work of renovating the race of man, which extends to the restoration of their bodies, as well as the renewal of their souls.” If that is not convenient logic, surely I know not what is. But the looseness of the author’s reasoning —the utter inconclusiveness of his statements— is beyond all I ever read. The soul is slipped in here without the smallest ray of connection with the argument, as if touching the body renewed that. Yet this is the whole point as to spiritual benefit by sacraments as an extension of the incarnation. But you may have Cyril, his great authority, to vouch for it, soul and all: “since the life-giving Word of God dwelt in the flesh, He transformed it into that excellence which belongs to Himself, that is, into life, and by His intimate and unspeakable union with it, He rendered it life-giving, as He is—Himself.” Cyril. Alex. 4, 354; who, however, declares it equally true of the wicked, so that little serves our author’s object or indeed his own.

106 This, the Archdeacon’s favourite author, Cyril, interprets quite differently; he applies it to the offering of Christ as on an altar in sacrifice, which he says, is by the Jews held as sanctifying, though the victim be previously holy. Tovde aJgiavzw ejn touvtoi", ajntiV tou' ajnativqhmi kaiV prosajgw kaqavper a[mwmon iJepei'on eij" ojsmhVn eujwdiva", k.t.l. Com. in Ev. Johan., lib. 4 (vol. 4, p. 354, ed. Aubert). Both, I judge, interpret wrongly.

107 Not only does our author urge its being only partial, but his views are somewhat those of Quakers. He holds that “the life was the light of men” applies to what Christ was as the word. The law of conscience is one

“which has its origin in God’s image reflected in the creature’s mind. St. Paul speaks of it as the work of the law written in men’s hearts.” He slurs over here the fact that it is not the law which is written at all. “And St. John tells us, that it was not a law the perpetual maintenance whereof had been entrusted only to human powers: it was preserved by the abiding influence of that all-pervading Word, who never totally forsook the beings whom He had created… ‘In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.’ The second result of this partial perpetuation of his Maker’s image was the preservation of a measure of that intercourse with God, which in the first instance had doubtless been full and unrestricted… What was secret prayer, as a rite of heathen religion, but the intuitional reaching forth of the mind after its invisible Creator? … This intercourse is built upon that all-pervading action of the eternal Word, which was the original light of our being… This, then, is the old road of nature; this the channel through which light was originally transmitted from God to man. Now, the law of mediation is the substitution of a new channel of intercourse instead of this old one. The law of grace is given in place of the law of nature. The old door of access had been shut or obstructed by sin; therefore, in the manhood of Christ was a new door opened to mankind.” Now it is not that there was not a conscience in every man, “a certain inherent judgment respecting right and wrong.” Surely there was. Man acquired it in the fall, by which he was separated from God. Nor do I say that God left Himself without witness, if haply men might feel after Him and find Him. We know He did not; so that men were without excuse. But this is not the statement of the Archdeacon. With him this is a nature which was the power of holding intercourse with God:

that in man which was preserved by the abiding influence of the all-pervading Word. “The guiding light, then, of original humanity was… a special and supernatural in-dwelling of the great Author of all knowledge… For even the heathen must have derived their remaining light of conscience, however darkened and confused, from Him who is the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world;” that is, it is His influence within and not His witness without to a conscience acquired in the fall, which, after all, drove him from God (Gen. 3:8-10), and a heart which, alas! was enmity against Him.

Christ removes the obstruction to this preserved image being in intercourse with God, and gives fuller objects. It is not death come on the first Adam and utter condemnation, and in us, that is in our flesh, no good thing, and Christ, a sacrifice to put away sin, and, as second Adam, an entirely new life in which, in the power which is in Him, we live to God. It is a renewal of the old intercourse, improving it perhaps, but Christ adopting our humanity in its disordered state and reconstructing it in His own person as alive here, and then, according to infinite wisdom passing through sufferings and glorified so as to communicate it there. “Our ancient intercourse with God has been given back only through that new Founder of man’s race, through whom alone we can approach the Father.” And again, “This He did, not by the creation of materials which- did not before exist; the materials were drawn from that stock for which the benefit was designed. ‘He was made of a woman.’ (It is merely genovmenon ejk gunaikoV", genovmenon uJpoV novmou.) The materials, therefore, which were employed, were weak and disorganised,

because they were taken out of one who naturally was heir to Adam's defects. But then He who took them was the Word of God. Into these weak and poor elements of our nature there flowed the very might, wisdom, and purity of Deity itself. Thus was their weakness from the first corrected; from the first moment that His nature existed its disorder was counteracted by the perfect order and harmony of God's Spirit, and though made of a woman, He was made without sin."

I do not expatiate on the excessive looseness of the Archdeacon's statement (and he is the most inaccurate, loosest writer, with the pretensions he has to philosophical theology, that one might easily find: take the statement, for example, that the disorder of His nature was counteracted by the perfect order and harmony of God's Spirit, which may be said of us, but certainly not of Christ)—I do not expatiate on it, because I hope and suppose he means no harm; or on the doctrine, which is really, as it stands, practically Apollinarianism, because I believe he does not mean it, but is merely loose in his statements, from extreme inaccuracy and carelessness in mind and habits of thought, associated with exceeding boldness and even irreverence as to the subjects he treats.

But what miserable materialism there is in all this! They were materials whose disorder He corrected. But I especially refer to the passage here in connection with regeneration. It was a divine person taking the old materials and counteracting their disorder. Is that all? The might, wisdom, and purity of Deity itself, flowing into the weak and poor elements of our nature? I repeat, it is Apollinarianism really, but is there no really new life which Adam had not? Is it merely Deity correcting, or, as

the Archdeacon heretically expresses it, counteracting the disorder of fallen Adam's elements? Let the reader note this. The doctrine is elaborately wrought out in the system; it is sacramental materialism, a correction by a kind of divine physical process. The very words I use offend me; but what can I do, when men speak of materials and of taking the same composition of parts? I do not doubt He did, so as to be as really man as we are; but is this eternal life in Christ? Is this what Christ is as a new life to those united to Him by grace? Life is in Him and He is our life. Is this merely a counteraction of disorder in the weak and poor elements of our nature?

But I must close this note: only I recall here the Archdeacon's account of the first and second Adam, that we may see the utter and fundamental unsoundness of the whole system as to what Christ's person is—what sin is—what the fall is—and what our recovery is. "One circumstance, which must of course greatly affect the whole question, is the perfect parallel which exists between the first man and the Second—between the type and the Antitype—him in whom humanity fell, and Him in whom it rose again—between Adam in whom a divine Spirit was united only for a season to our mortal being, and Christ, in whom the same Spirit dwelt permanently and without measure." Again, "For in His [Christ's] constitution there were the elements of Adam's being, together with the perfect presence of that wisdom of God, which had vouchsafed its influence as an indwelling gift to our first parent." And, as regards the pattern-man and the exclusion of resurrection—"In Adam was humanity, and the presence of the Word superadded as a guiding light. In Christ was God the Word by personal presence, who for our sakes had

added to Himself human flesh. Thus it attained that perfection of man's nature, which, in the case of our first parent, was only transiently set forth. For that perfection lay in the intercourse with God, which Adam so soon renounced. But in Christ is this intercourse restored permanently and in its completeness." Is this a just account of incarnation, to say nothing of resurrection?

108 *** Eiloiva is Cyril's word.

109 The Archdeacon speaks of reducing man to the state of the brute as indeed do others, and refers to the common sense of human nature as to the ingratitude and the like, and certain affections which subsist. Far be it from me to liken one who has an immortal responsible soul to a brute. But the use of such arguments to prove man not wholly lost, and that some good remains, in spite of the apostle's assertion, "I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwells no good thing," is absurd; because, as to the knowledge of right and wrong in se, it was acquired by the fall, and was no part of man's unfallen nature, and proves no inclination to good whatever, but is a conscience which the inclination to evil constantly violates—"video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor;" secondly, because, as to mere amiable qualities, they are found in the brute, parental fondness, devotedness to a benefactor, even to the laying down life rather than allow injury to a beloved master, patient endurance of even injustice from him, and of everything for him, and every other natural quality which can adorn human nature as a nature, but which prove nothing as to his moral condition in relationship to God. There is this difference, that the poor brute does not boast of it, nor pretend to be an heir of heaven by it.

110 It is known that the Greek corresponding to ‘“broken” is omitted in the best copies. This may impair slightly the reasoning here, but the substantial truth abides.—En.]

111 “And by reason hereof there was conferred as a gift upon the man Jesus Christ, that quickening power which pertained to His Godhead by nature. For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself. And so did He declare when addressing the Father as Mediator for His brethren, ‘Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.’ “I add another passage to one already quoted, to shew that Christ is presented as the source of life as incarnate. “Thus was there bestowed upon what was human in Him such living energy, as was evidenced while He was upon earth, when there went virtue out of Him and healed them all. So that it became that’ quickening spirit,’ which is able to bestow a new life on the progeny of Adam, and that bread of life which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die.” Remark how he leaves out the giving of it to which I have referred.

The Archdeacon adds, moreover, in a subsequent passage—“It was because Christ, therefore, was the Head and Father of man’s race, that He bore, in like manner, not part, but all its punishment.”

St. Cyril, from whom the substance of his doctrine is drawn, is more consistent. The Archdeacon will declare as to Christ’s mediation, “that its proper reference is in those who are united to Him.” Cyril, after stating as an objection to our being raised because united to Christ

that all are raised, adds, “for all shall rise again according to the similitude of Him who has been raised for our sakes, and has all in Himself,” pavnta" e[conta" ejn eJautw'/. Only, he says, it will be for judgment. This is founded on the following statement:—“Christ, therefore, gave for the life of men His own body, and causes again life to dwell in us; and I will say now as well as I can, for since the life-giving Word of God dwelt in flesh, He transformed it (meteskeuvasen) into His own good, that is, into life, and, being joined to it in an ineffable way of union, made it life-giving, according to what He is Himself by nature. Therefore the body of Christ vivifies those who partake of it.” The objection is then made, that unbelievers will rise. The undaunted theologian then adds, “Through the resurrection of Christ, the mystery extends (dihvkein) to all humanity, that is, all men, for all rise, being contained in Him, so that all are raised in virtue of union with Christ being contained in Him. His incarnation has made Him the Head of the race.” It will be remarked, that He is said to have borne the punishment of all as such. For what they are to be in the resurrection of judgment, I must leave to others to explain. Cyril equally applies his death, as bearing their sins, to all, saying, dikaV" uJfevzwn, and then quoting 1 Peter 2:24.

112 Archdeacon Wilberforce sanctions this translation, quoting Athanasius, who uses it in a different way from the preceding fathers—no wonder. He founds it on a use of *** Hip, which the rationalists have eagerly adopted, which is given in dictionaries, I admit, but questioned by first-rate Hebrew scholars, there being no passage in the Bible to which the word “possess” does not fully answer.

113 The Archdeacon, audaciously enough, has quoted Origen for the eternal generation. Horsley has shewn his want of veracity in argument; but Origen's absolute heterodoxy on these points cannot be questioned, whatever his heart and intentions may have been. I do not mean that Origen does not hold eternal generation; he does, but he holds the Son to be wholly inferior to the Father, the Father being as much superior to the Son and Spirit as or more than, the Son and Spirit are to others. His language is as bad as possible on these subjects. Indeed, one of the honestest, a rare quality in those days, he was one of the wildest of imaginatives—pre-existence of souls who are placed here according to their conduct there; recovery here; and all purged by fire; perhaps their fall again; and every other wild notion imaginable. It was rather nearer Mormonism than anything else, mixed with universalism. But he was a "Father" only, though he suffered for Christ; rather too independent in his wildness to be made a saint of.

114 If I ask Tertullian, he tells me Christ took corruption (corruptela) and that, if not, He was not a perfect man; but adds, "for what was death but corruption?" Cyril declares He did not, and that it was impossible; Clement of Alexandria, according to Bishop Kaye's account, that "it would be ridiculous to suppose that the body of the Saviour, as a body, required necessary sustenance for its preservation; He ate, but not for the body, which was held together by a holy power; but lest His companions should be induced to think otherwise of Him" (than as a man). Are these to be trusted, or which?

115 The very learned Jesuit Petau, in commenting on the exceeding looseness of the Ante-Nicene Fathers as to the divinity of the Lord, says, after speaking of heretics,

“Others were truly Christian, and Catholic, and holy; but as the times were, that mystery not being yet sufficiently clearly known, have thrown out some things dangerously said.” (De Trin. lib. i, c. iii, § 1.). Indeed, he charges most of the Ante-Nicene Fathers with Arianism, chiefly however in the form of the existence of the word as ejndiavqeto", and only proforikoV", for the purpose of creation, but some of them in a grosser shape.

116 I have already stated, and would recall it again: conscience, considered as knowing good and evil, was not a good in man surviving the fall. It was acquired in the fall, and drives away in itself from God through fear. There was no righteousness, no holiness, in the first Adam. There was innocence. We are purified in being called out, in heart and conscience, after the second Man, the Lord Jesus. The knowledge of good and evil belongs to God; and we are not to lose it to return to innocence, but to be conformed by grace in living power to Him who having it is perfect in respect of both.

117 These chapters present the thing itself, the two sacraments present the truths of which the chapters speak. These do not speak of the sacraments; but chapters and sacraments speak of the same things.

What Do The Scriptures Teach Concerning Judgment To Come?

First, that definitive and final judgment is entirely committed to the Son.

“The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son; that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father.” (John 5:22, 23.) The Father “hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is Son of man.” (Ver. 27.)

As regards our sojourning in this world, the Father does judge (1 Pet. 1:17): “If ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man’s work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear; forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed … but with the precious blood of Christ.” This judgment is carried into effect in the holiness of His nature against evil, and in His fatherly care of us in holiness: as it is written, “Holy Father, keep through thine own name,” &c. (John 17:11.) And so we have to judge ourselves; and if we do not, we are judged of the Lord. There is His government in this respect. (1 Cor. 10:31, 32.) It is chastening. Compare Job 33 and 36.

Christ judges the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom. Now is not the time of Christ’s judgment, save as Lord over His people for their good, as we have seen. It is the time of grace to the world. That the Jews as a nation are rejected is, as to God’s dealings, the reconciling of the world, the accepted time, the day of salvation. Of course God can interfere in judgment, supremely if He pleases, as He once did in the

flood, not a sparrow falling to the ground without Him. But this time is the time of grace to the world. When He appears and establishes the kingdom, it will be the time of judgment. As it is expressed in the Psalms; “judgment shall return unto righteousness and all the upright in heart shall follow it.” (Ps. 94:15.) In the cross, though infinitely deeper things were wrought by it, and divine righteousness established through it, yet righteousness was not made good in this world, but the contrary. Righteousness was found in the person of Christ; judgment in the hands of Pilate, or the chiefs of the Jews. When Christ appears for His kingdom, judgment and righteousness will go together in the earth. As it is written (Ps. 94), “Jehovah, God of vengeance, God of vengeance, shine forth. Lift up thyself, thou judge of the earth; render a reward to the proud. Jehovah! how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph ? “Christ comes to judge the quick: “He cometh, he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness.” (Ps. 96:13.) “He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world [habitable earth] in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained.” (Acts 17:31.)

When the Lord judges the dead, He does not come at all. “I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened.” (Rev. 20:11,12.) Here there is no coming to the earth or coming again in any way. One sits on a great white throne, and heaven and earth flee away. At the judgment of the dead there is no coming of Christ. His kingdom is given up after it is executed, but not till then.

(Compare 1 Cor. 15:24.) … But there is another judgment, that of the quick or living (a judgment of this world), for which Christ comes; which will be like the days of Noah and Lot: there will be eating, drinking, buying, selling, planting, building, marrying, and giving in marriage, and the day will come upon them like a thief in the night. It is clear this is a different scene from the great white throne. There is no buying and selling there, in the midst- of which they are caught.

Yet, when Christ comes to judgment, there will then be those who are "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." (2 Thess. 1:9, 10.) At this judgment of the quick, Christ comes, He appears. The holy angels come with Hun, as in the passage just quoted from verse 7," The Son of man… shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels." (Luke 9:26.) I might cite other passagesj but these are clear.

But He brings His saints with Him too: "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." (Col. 3:4.) "Them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." (1 Thess. 4:14.36) Chapter 5 shews that this is the time of the judgment of the careless on the earth. And this truth of the saints coming with Christ, when He appears to judge the quick, is largely and fully taught in scripture. Even in the Old Testament we read (in Zech. 14:5), "And Jehovah my God shall come, and all the saints with thee." That is the day when "Jehovah shall be king over all the earth." (Ver. 9.) So in Jude: "The Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints to execute judgment upon all." (Ver. 14,15.) Nor is

it the angels alone who are spoken of, as in some of these passages it might be alleged, though groundlessly. They will come; but Colossians 3:4 cannot apply to them: nor 1 Thessalonians 4; nor Revelation 17:

14, “They that are with him are called, and chosen and faithful:” nor again, in the chapter where it is fully brought out—Revelation 19, where the clean linen is the righteousness of the saints; when the Lord comes “as King of kings” to judge and destroy the beast and his armies, and Satan is bound, and the saints are seated on thrones, and judgment is given unto them; for the saints shall judge the world and even angels. (1 Cor. 6:2, 3.) In Isaiah 66:15, 16, we find this judgment also of the quick, with the solemn declaration: “It shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and see my glory. And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations,” &c, where we see that in this judgment of the quick some will escape. This will be seen, as to the Jews in Zechariah 13; as to the ten tribes, in Ezekiel 20; as to Gog, in Ezekiel 39. It may not be amiss to quote another passage relating to this judgment of the living: “Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Jehovah. Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle; for the harvest is ripe; come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision; for the day of Jehovah is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw

their shining. Jehovah also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but Jehovah will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel." And the abiding blessing of Jerusalem is then spoken of (Joel 3:11, and following).

Were I to enter into details I should multiply passages too much, and perhaps distract the reader from the main point. An earthly judgment was famihar to the Jews; a judgment of the dead little so. To us, one of the dead is familiar; one of the quick far less so. Hence it was needful to quote a greater number of passages. The last passage refers to the time (as indeed all do that speak of the judgment of the quick) when Jehovah shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem; when God will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat;37 and will plead with them there for His people. (Joel 3:1, 2.) Psalms 93 to 100 describe this scene in general, including the precious call to all who have ears to hear—it is reproduced in Revelation 14:6,7: judgments on the earth following also there. The parable of the sheep, goats, and brethren (Matt. 25) describes the judgment of the nations—not exactly the destruction of the beast and his armies and the false prophet. That is executed by Christ as coming from heaven, and as a warlike judgment. "And in righteousness doth he judge and make war" (Rev. 19:11): it is the destruction of those who, animated by Satan, rise up against Him.

But, besides the warrior-judgment, there is a sessional judgment, when, by the destruction of the beast and Antichrist, Christ has taken the throne of Jehovah on the

earth at Jerusalem; for Jerusalem is to be called the throne of Jehovah. (Jer. 3:17.)

Let us now examine the passage in Matthew. I do it with more detail because it is the passage which stands in the way of many, and is appealed to as a description of a general judgment (a thing unknown to scripture); whereas it is simply and exclusively (as is stated in the passage itself) the judgment of the Gentiles or nations, not of any dead persons at all. In the end of Matthew 23, the Lord, addressing Jerusalem, declares her house is left desolate to them, and He declares they would not see Him thenceforth till they said, “Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord.” The Lord then (in chap. 24:31) gives an account of all that was connected with the testimony among the Jews till He came—when “they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory.” He then exhorts His disciples, and in three parables presents the responsibility of Christians in His absence, shewing that the putting off of His own return would lead the public ministry of the Church to hierarchical oppression and worldliness, as has happened; and that the actual delay would lead even true saints to forget His return and go to sleep as to thus waiting for Him; but what would awaken them was the midnight cry that He was coming; and, lastly, the service of the saints in His absence (namely, the use of the gifts which He had left to them on His going away to receive the kingdom) is judged of in the parable of the talents.

Thus, what concerns the Jewish people having been fully gone into in Matthew 24:1-31; and then, in the parenthetical exhortations and parables, the conduct of Christians and their motives in reference to His return

set forth, after that the historical part is resumed in chapter 25:31. “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him.” This will not be a transient act like a flash of lightning, but “He shall sit on the throne of his glory and before him shall be gathered all the nations [the Gentiles].” Israel and Christians have been already spoken of. Now the gospel of the kingdom had gone out (chap. 24:14) as a testimony to all nations (all the Gentiles), and then the end was to come. And now the end was come; and the nations were judged—the quick—according as they had received these messengers of the kingdom. It is a mistake to say that there are two classes here. There are three; the sheep, the goats, and the brethren. The goats had despised this final message of the kingdom and were condemned. The sheep had received the messengers and were blessed; their treating the brethren so, was as if they had treated Christ in the same way. There is not a word about the resurrection.38 Thosev judged are the nations (or Gentiles) upon the earth when Christ comes. Christ as King will sit and judge the Gentiles. That is the express statement, and it is an event often spoken of by the prophets.

I have dwelt more fully on this passage because it is that which, from old traditional teaching, hinders people receiving the plain and positive testimonies of the word of God. It is simply and expressly the judgment of the Gentiles upon the earth: for when Christ comes and appears in glory, He comes to earth; and He must judge the quick as well as the dead; and as regards the quick (as the very word itself means, those living on the earth), when they will be eating and drinking, buying and selling, saying Peace and safety, “as a snare shall it

come upon them that dwell upon the face of the whole earth."

Many details might be gone into; the judgment of the Jewish people and Jerusalem, the judgment of the beast, of Gog in Idumea, which vary in details and character so as to distinguish even the Jews (who having rejected Christ receive Antichrist) and the ten tribes (who do neither); but this would lead me too far from my object. Suffice it to say that Matthew 25 describes the sessional judgment of the nations by the Son of man when He is come. It has nothing to do with the dead.

Let us now enquire how far, and how, does judgment apply to us—to the [heavenly] saints? First, from the judgment of the quick and the dead (which is to take place at His appearing and His kingdom) they are clearly wholly exempt: for when He appears, they shall appear with Him in glory; they come with Him when He comes to execute judgment. (Col. 3:4; 1 Thess. 4; Rev. 19.) This is confirmed by the striking scene in Revelation 4, where the throne (not of grace, but) of judgment, of thunderings, lightnings, and voices, is set in heaven. There are twenty-four elders, the kings and priests, are sitting on twenty-four thrones around. I need not recall the many passages already cited which speak of their coming with Him. But there are other scriptures which refer to the subject.

But first let us recognize that we are all subject to condemnation, and liable in ourselves to judgment as responsible to God. That is a great foundation truth which is at the basis of salvation as well as of wrath. Nothing must be allowed to weaken that, and further, that "every one of us shall give an account of himself to

God." (Rom. 14:12.) We shall all be manifested before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in the body. (2 Cor. 5:10.) "We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ." (Rom. 14:10.) But the Christian has, through grace, anticipated this. He has recognized by divine teaching that condemnation is his own portion; he knows that in him, that is in the flesh, dwells no good thing; he has said in spirit, "enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified."

In a word, the sentence of the day of judgment has passed upon his soul by faith. He knows that he that believes not is condemned already; and he has applied to himself the sentence: "there is none righteous, no not one;" he has gone farther—if really clear as to his state —and learned that "they that are in the flesh cannot please God." In a word, he has recognized, by a divine work in his own soul, what sin is before God as the judgment-seat will shew it. The feeling may have been deeper or less deep, but if one is a Christian at all, it has been truthful in this respect. But then he has recognized that He who is to judge the quick and the dead, the Lord Jesus Christ, has also (anticipating that day) stepped in, in grace, as a Saviour before He becomes a judge, and has borne his sins in His own body on the tree, and, in blessed obedience and love, drunk the cup of wrath. The sins, for which himself would have had to be judged, and certainly and justly condemned, have been borne already by another, and that other the One who is to judge; and that, if this were not so, he is condemned. He owns it to be a perfect work; perfect in every respect, perfect to glorify God, and perfect as regards all his sins; and he owns that if Christ has not completed that

work in dying once for all, it never can be completed, nor God glorified about sin; and that, if all his sins were not put away then, they never can be, because Christ cannot die over again; but that indeed, having by Himself purged our sins, He has sat down for ever on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, having by one offering perfected for ever them that are sanctified; so that there is now no more offering for sin. He may feel them, though gone, more deeply (it is most right he should); he may see more deeply what they are (and the nearer he draws to God, the more deeply will he see the horror and baseness of them); but the work which has put them away is done and cannot be repeated. And when he is manifested before the judgment-seat of Christ, he is before Him who Himself put them all away. Christ must deny Himself if He imputes them to him.

But, further, in what state does the Christian appear before the Lord? He is raised in glory. No judgment can apply to him which can affect his being in glory, for he is in it already when he appears there. And to what extent does this go? Judgment begins when Christ appears. “He shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;” but, “when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.” (1 John 3:2.) We are “conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren.” (Rom. 8:29.) We have borne the image of the earthy, and we shall bear the image of the heavenly. (1 Cor. 15:49.) What is judgment, if we are completely like the judge, and He Himself our righteousness? And the knowledge of this is applied to our present happiness in this world. “Herein is love made perfect39 with us, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are

we in this world." (1 John 4:17.) The truth is, though we may all pass through it as an experience, hope for the day of judgment is an imperfect and ill-founded feeling which cannot be justified. If I am judged, I shall certainly be condemned; if justified, there is no judgment for me. Hope, though very natural, is here the result of human reasoning, not the simplicity of divinely wrought faith. But the more we reflect on what scripture teaches, the more shall we see the truth on which I am dwelling.

When we depart or are absent from the body, we are with Christ, present with the Lord (as we speak) in heaven. Could Paul or Stephen be taken out of heaven to be judged as to whether he should have a place there? This is not what scripture teaches. It teaches an accomplished salvation, in virtue of which being justified we have peace with God, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God; in which we say, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" "It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth?" But, further, how is it that we believers arrive before the judgment seat of Christ? "Let not your heart be troubled" (says the Lord, John 14:1) … "I go to prepare a place for you: and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." That is, the way I come up before Christ is that He so loves me that He comes Himself to fetch me, that I may be with Himself. And so the apostle teaches us (i Thess. 4:16,17): "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout… and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain [to the coming of the Lord] shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

That is a blessed way of going before the judgment seat. And so in Philippians 3:20, “Our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.”

In a word, we go up before the judgment-seat of Christ, in that Christ (who has loved us, and given Himself for us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood; who comes Himself to fetch us, and changes our vile body into the likeness of His glorious body) raises us, or changes us into glory, and takes us, made like Himself, to be with Himself for ever, who in His own resurrection was the firstfruits of the saints that slept. Such is the scriptural account of the way we go up before, and the state in which we are manifested before, the judgment-seat of Christ.

And scripture is yet more precise as to the question of our being judged. In John 5 this question is directly treated of. Two means are stated by which the glory of the Son is secured. In one He works in common with the Father; in the other, alone. The two are life-giving and executing judgment: one, that by which we are brought to enjoy communion with the Father and the Son; the other, that by which the Son’s glory is secured in the case of the wicked who reject Him. These two are not confounded. He does not bring into question the truth of the life He has communicated by calling the quickened into judgment. In which (the question naturally arises) is my part? The Lord answers (in ver. 24), “Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life” (he is quickened), “and shall not come into judgment,40 but is passed from death unto life.” He is not to be tried, as on

the footing of his own conduct, to know if he can be received. He was dead in sins, but has been brought out of that totally lost state into a new one by the quickening power of the Son of God. So in the resurrection; there is a resurrection of the just to life, and a resurrection of the wicked to judgment. Those who have everlasting life do not come into judgment. (Ver. 29.)

This contrast of the natural portion of man in judgment, and the value of the cross of Christ—as come to deliver and redeem— is strikingly shewn in the end of Hebrews 9. “As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation.” He appeared the first time to be made sin for sin, but to put it away by the sacrifice of Himself. This He accomplished for us, and He who was ever sinless Himself, having put it away for us the first time He came, appears unto those who look for Him the second time, not having to say to it at all, to take us into the full salvation of glory. Man’s portion as such is death and judgment. The believer’s portion is Christ’s bearing and putting away his sins; and then coming to bring him to glory. Hence, when the throne of judgment is set, the kings and priests are seen sitting on four and twenty thrones around it, and come back in glory with Christ when He executes it on the earth.

A striking instance of the effect of the thought of judgment according to scripture will be found in 2 Corinthians 5. The apostle first looks at the proper portion of the saint, not as death and judgment, or even death and happiness. It is mortality being swallowed up of life, the mortal body being changed into glory, without

death's necessarily intervening at all. But death and judgment are fallen man's portion; and if death did thus intervene, confidence remained unmoved, for he had divine life, and, if he were absent from the body, he would be present with the Lord. Then he considers judgment, calls it the terror of the Lord, looks it fully in the face, knows it, states we shall all be manifested before the judgment-seat of Christ; and then, what—trembles or thinks of himself? In no wise; he persuades men. Its terror produces no effect of terror at all on his own mind. It was a judgment which, as such, affected others. It had however a powerful influence on his heart and conscience. Others were not free as he was. And the thought of that day stirs up the love of Christ constrainingly, and he persuades men who were not ready for it; but then, secondly, it brings him into God's judgment as a present thing in a sanctifying way. We are, says he (not shall be), manifested to God. And this is a most important effect; nothing more, practically, than bringing us into the presence of God to judge ourselves, and to do so as to good and evil, as it will be judged of in that day. Such then was the effect on Paul: no terror for him in that day of terror, but a stimulus to his seeking unconverted sinners, and keeping his soul in the presence and fear of God.

Another expression in this passage calls for remark—"to receive the things done in the body." The expression, "judgment," is carefully avoided, even when in a certain sense there is such. Man would soon turn it into a question of the acceptance of the person. As regards the wicked, I need not dwell on it. They will receive the things done in the body, it will be their condemnation; but as regards the saints, they will also. As regards

acceptance, we are in Christ, all accepted alike—all to be conformed to the image of the Son—all having Christ for our righ-teousness. Paul cannot have one more perfect or a higher glory. But, besides this, saints have the privilege of service, of being the vessels of God's love to others. In the work of the Holy Ghost by us there is a difference. And while all is pre-ordered of God, and to sit on Christ's right hand and on His left is for those for whom it is prepared of the Father, yet we do receive through grace the reward of labour, and every man his own reward according to his own labour. Scripture speaks of receiving a full reward. The Thessalonians will be Paul's joy and crown of rejoicing, not ours, as the fruit of our labours. If we have built with wood, hay, and stubble, all will be lost, though we are saved. In a word righteousness is in Christ, the same for all; service is rewarded.

Another point remains. We shall be in glory, we shall not even have the nature, the flesh in which we sinned; but we shall know as we are known, and give an account of ourselves to God, re-pass our whole life and all God's blessed ways with us, see it all as God sees it, and wonder at the all-perfect grace which has led us onward from our birth. Now when I look back, I adore God's grace. Then I shall know as I am known, and see the thousand instances of how His eye has watched over me to bless me. We are manifested thus now, even in thinking of it. We shall give an account then, in fact; but it is when we are glorified, and brought to be with Christ by Himself for ever. As to judgment there is no such thing for the saint, understood as pronouncing on his state. He is already in glory when he stands before Christ. On that scripture leaves no doubt, no ambiguity.

There is then a judgment of the quick when Christ comes; a judgment of the dead afterwards before the great white throne. There is a continuing judgment when Christ returns, in a more general sense, of power associated with righteousness governing the earth, of which prophecy specially treats:—a subject full of interest, but too long to be entered on here. For the saints is no judgment at all: Christ comes to receive them to Himself, and raises them in glory to have them with Him. But they do give an account of themselves to God when in glory, and receive the reward of service, though it be grace that has wrought it in them. Such is the scriptural instruction on this subject.

[end of doctrinal—vol. 3.]

36 If carefully examined, verses 15-18 (of 1 Thess. 4) will be found to be a parenthesis, in which a special revelation is given, in which the apostle shews how the saints will be with Him, in order to being so brought.

37 Jehoshaphat means, the rod or judgment of Jehovah.

38 Note also that the sole ground of judgment is the way the messengers of Christ have been treated, so that it cannot apply to the mass of the heathen world, in a word, to the vast majority of mankind.

39 See margin of English Bible. This alone is the true translation. You have love towards us as sinners (1 John 4:9, 10) for life and propitiation; love in us (ver. 12) for joy and communion; and love perfect with us for the day of judgment. (Ver. 17.)

40 I am of course aware, that it is condemnation in the English text, but it is in the original the same word as in verse 22 and 27, and so it is in verse 29. Condemnation

is a different word in Greek. Here the change destroys the whole force of the passage, though condemned they would be. The translators tell us in their original preface that, where the same word occurred several times in a passage, they give a different one if they can. Much as we have to be thankful for the English translation, this was a very false principle. They have done so here.