The Collected Writings of J. N. Darby, Volume 23 (Doctrinal 7)

John Nelson Darby

Public domain. As published on plymouthbrethren.org.

Also online at https://plymouthbrethren.org/series/10990

KEE Ministry Library · Faithful Men
kee-ministry-library.netlify.app

Introduction

Letter On The Divine Inspiration Of The Holy Scriptures

Or Remarks On The Letter Of Resignation Of M. Le Professeur Edmond Scherer

Introduction

The letter of Mr. Scherer to Dr. M. d'Aubigné having been communicated to me by a third person who desired to have my opinion of it, I answered with all freedom, without meditating any future publicity. I spoke severely in several places, because I judged severely that which I criticized. The Christian's faith is something too precious not to oppose clearly that which ruins it. And one will find all the imperfections in this letter necessarily connected with a composition of this kind. Perhaps it ought to have been corrected before being given to the public, but it has not been. The end in view in printing was to communicate it to a few friends, who desired to read it, for want of time to make copies.

Another word. The blame that rests on Mr. Scherer's letter cannot fail in a certain sense to reflect upon the author. But I desire ardently that the reader and Mr. S. himself, if this should fall into his hands, may distinguish as I have done myself as much as possible between Mr. S. and his letter. I doubt not that Mr. S., spite of his grave errors, has excellent qualities, and I like to appreciate them impartially, judging his doctrine without thinking of himself.

When I say that I could distinguish between Mr. S. and his letter, I do not mean that he does not deserve blame, for it is clear he is responsible for what he has done. But this is what I mean: the flesh in a Christian is not better, alas! than in a man of the world, and I cherish the thought that Mr. S. is a Christian, whatever may be the gravity of his position; I hope that this circumstance may be a blessing to him. While judging his actions according to their merits for the love of souls, I hope that he himself will judge this “lust of the mind,” as my answer does, and, separating himself from them, escape the condemnation they merit.

If then I have said that to treat a subject so serious in such a light and superficial way is the act of a vulgar mind, I believe I have expressed a sound judgment upon the act of Mr. S.; but I sincerely desire that he may not feel hurt. But I do not desire the reader to esteem Mr. S. as a vulgar mind, but rather that he will join with me in hoping that after reflection, Mr. S. judging himself will shew that the words by which I condemn him apply to his acts and not to himself.

In order to treat the subject thoroughly it would need a volume and this is only a letter; you must not expect therefore more than a familiar and hastily-written letter can give.

* * * *

May, 1850.

M——,

Thanks for having sent me Mr. Scherer’s letter to Dr. Merle d’Aubigne.

I have seen nothing worse than this letter. It is a sign of a vulgar spirit to speak so lightly, so superficially, and with so much vanity and self-confidence, on subjects so serious. In the background (for I see no reason to accuse him of it) I see a bad faith, which betrays the presence and action of an evil spirit, of a demon. For my part I cannot reduce the question to that of a degree of inspiration, literal or otherwise—an interesting question for those who believe in a revelation. That which is contended for here is not at all a certain degree of inspiration (such an intention is denied), but all written revelation, and also all revelation made by the mouth of man. There are truths, but they are not a communication from God, unless they are communicated from the Person of Christ to the soul, if that even can be according to his principles. The letter denies the existence of all word from God, of whatever nature it be, except so far that Christ bears this title, for which, after all, from his system one has no authority. This might be a mistake of John's, or a rabbinical tradition, or rabbino-platonist; and indeed the expression is found in works of this character.

The question then which we have specially before us is, whether there exists a written revelation from God, which consequently bears His authority.

We shall not, therefore, at present discuss the character and degree of inspiration which we claim for the scriptures. We shall not enter upon the discussion of verbal inspiration, interesting as that question is to those who believe in a revelation from God. Neither is it our present object to defend the facts and doctrines of Christianity. These truths are not denied by some who deny their immediate communication to us by God. The

existence of a written revelation from God, bearing His authority as His word, is that which we would now discuss. It is important to keep this clearly before us; for that which is denied is, that we have any communication of divine truth which possesses divine authority.

Now for us, according to the author of this letter, there is no inspiration from God, there is no divine truth; because a truth which is not communicated with divine certainty is not to us a divine truth. Or, to speak more accurately, an existing fact which cannot be naturally known to man, because not relating to this creation, cannot be a truth to my soul, if it be not communicated with divine certainty. In order to this, there might be an immediate revelation to each individual in each case; or there must be an inspired communication through others, either written or by the word of mouth. I speak not of truth previously revealed being applied to the conscience by the Holy Ghost, but of the way in which we arrive at the divine certainty of the truth by knowing that it came from God. A doctrine cannot have more authority as truth than the means employed for its communication. A man, without being inspired, may be the channel through which truth, already existing as a revelation from God, is imparted; and the truth, thus communicated, may act through the Spirit’s power on the heart and conscience; for there is no basis for faith; but such an uninspired medium of communication—a preacher, for instance, or a tract—does not constitute a divine basis for faith in him who hears. That basis must exist beforehand in the fact of God having vouchsafed an inspired communication; and the effect now produced by God in the soul is, that the hearer is led to recognize this. Otherwise, though he may say, “I believe this or

that," if I ask him, "Why do you believe it? "he has no answer; he can give no satisfactory reason for his faith.

Let us remember then, that when authority is spoken of, and it is said there is no authority in matters of faith, the words "divine certainty "may be substituted for authority; and that the doctrine now opposed is, that there is no divine certainty in the things of faith. That is, there is no warrant for faith at all. John the Baptist describes faith in these words—" He that hath received his testimony hath set to [affixed] his seal that God is true. For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God." But this reception of divine testimony has no existence in the system which denies inspiration. The testimony of God is excluded, and there is no place for faith. This may be called an a priori argument. But no! I only present the question in its true light; and this is often enough to convince a sincere person. For example; if any one disputed the interpretation of a text, and I could shew that his mode of looking at it—the effect of his reasoning upon it— was to make it appear that Christ was wicked, or to prove that He was not the Son of God; to state the real question would be, in fact, to decide it in the mind of one who knew Christ.

Besides, there are two kinds of a priori arguments, which it is important to distinguish; as they differ totally from each other, and are morally opposed to each other. Let us suppose that some one tried to prove God a liar. I answer, "That cannot be. A priori, I condemn your reasoning as false." In that case my judgment is sound (perfectly logical and philosophical, if you like to take that ground), because it is much more sure, nay, it is infallibly sure, that God cannot lie; whilst it is very possible that your reasoning is false, even though I were

unable to detect the fallacy. How many things there are as to which the judgment of a wayfaring man is right, although he may be wanting in the capacity for reasoning rightly! And this is the safeguard which God has given to the simple-minded, namely, a divine conviction as to the truth with respect to things which are beyond their reach—beyond the reach of man; while the philosopher, who undertakes to explain them, sinks in the mire.

To say, “God ought not to be or to do so-and-so,” is also what is called a priori reasoning; but it is of an entirely different kind. In the former case I measure the folly of man by the certainty of what God is; in the latter I measure what God ought to be or to do by the standard of human thought, which is necessarily false. “Thou thoughtest,” said God, “that I was altogether such an one as thyself; but I will reprove thee, and set before thee things which thou hast done.” In the first case I say, “God is true; therefore your argument, which denies it, must be false.” In the second, I say, “This is my thought; and God must be, or must act, according to my thoughts.” To measure man by the certainty of what God is, and to measure God by man, are two very different things. %The former may be termed a priori reasoning. It presumes, I allow, that there is the knowledge of God; and it is possible that Mr. Scherer does not admit the force of such reasoning; and all men have not this knowledge. “He hideth these things from the wise and prudent, and revealeth them unto babes.”

Now I do not exaggerate in saying that this system takes away all divine certainty in things concerning faith, and, according to him, one ceases totally and absolutely to set to his seal that God is true. That is, as to the

testimony, God is excluded: the author's words prove it. "Otherwise," says he, "why is an historical certainty coupled with a moral evidence not sufficient for the Christian in things concerning faith?" The object then is to substitute a purely human belief in place of a divine testimony, in fact, to exclude God.

There are other striking examples of this want to exclude God in the letter. But to return to the subject: it is evident that, whatever may be the competency of witnesses, from their own faithfulness, and from the important fact of their knowledge of the circumstances which they relate, yet to deny direct inspiration, and to put in its stead the competency of witnesses, is to substitute merely human testimony for divine testimony. The aim of such a system is to exclude God. It asserts (for without this it would be open infidelity) that revelation is allowed, although not inspiration; that is, that the apostles, or others employed to communicate truth, had a divine basis for their faith, but that other believers have not: this is plainly the effect of the supposition. According to this system truth has been revealed from heaven, that is, has been divinely communicated to the apostles and others; but since that time there has been nothing to rest on but human testimony— credible it may be, but only human. This system allows of no divine basis, which, on God's part,1 could shield the church from error. Now the mere statement of this doctrine is almost its refutation; besides which it is formally contradicted in the word itself. "But God," says the apostle, who carefully states the opposite of the notion of Mr. Scherer, "hath revealed them unto us2 by his Spirit."

The reason which the apostle gives for this revelation is very striking. “For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are given to us of God.” I was going to dwell upon this argument, forgetting that the apostle had used it; I will now only insist on the force of his statement: “Without a divine communication there can be no faith.” That which belongs to man—that which is within the limits of his intelligence—may be known through the senses, through reasoning, or through the testimony of man; but it is not so in the things of faith, as to divine thoughts and truths. God alone knows them, and God alone can make them known; consequently man must be entirely ignorant of them, unless God reveals them. But He makes them known by His Spirit, that is, by revelation; giving the Holy Ghost Himself, who reveals them to the mind.

I speak of the apostolic work. The question then stands within very narrow limits. It is this: the apostles having received the knowledge of these things in a divine manner, did they communicate them to us in a divine manner, or in a manner, excellent indeed, but not inspired? God had revealed them to the apostles by His Spirit; how did the- communicate them? Was their inspiration what is termed simply religious inspiration “? Was it only that operation or the Spirit which is found in a spiritual preacher, and which leaves him still liable to error? Nothing can be more precise than the testimony of the apostle on this point. Continuing the passage already quoted, he says, “which things also we speak,

not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." Could the idea of inspiration be embodied in a form of words more absolutely definite than the expression, "words which the Holy Ghost teacheth"? Here then there is nothing equivocal. When the apostle set forth the truths which the Holy Ghost had taught him, he used words which the Holy Ghost had also taught him. This unfortunate Mr. Scherer, betrayed by his vanity, can, with a revolting lightness (which, if one does not consider as such, is a blasphemy), call this a "cabalistic ventriloquy," but that which he designates thus is clear and certain.

And notice here, it is not said that it is not inspiration, but a cabalistic ventriloquy; that is, supposing inspiration to be true, that he designates thus, in contrast with the noble accents of human voice; that is, it was God Himself speaking through the mouth of man. This he designates with these insulting and blasphemous words.

As to the idea of reducing all inspiration to "religious inspiration," it is overturned by the fact, that inspiration is asserted in cases where "religious inspiration "was impossible, as in that of Balaam, when "he took up his parable," and spoke, having "heard the words of God." Besides, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and many others of the scripture writers, who have said to us, "Thus saith the Lord"; "The word of the Lord came unto me, saying," etc., are all properly so-called examples of positive inspiration. The reasonings of the author's letter apply to all. Still there is no equivoque here. The prophets boldly proclaim their inspiration, and we have the results of it in a written form. In regard to this I accuse the letter of a mean and evil faith. Be it remembered

moreover, that the arguments which deny inspiration must, if applied at all, be applied universally. The Old and New Testaments stand or fall together. In examining this subject, the Old Testament cannot honestly be left out, because the arguments (except, perhaps, those which relate to the canon) apply to both—to the Old as to the New; with the addition that the inspiration of the Old has the positive attestation of the Lord and the apostles, supposing only the authenticity and correctness of the New.

But has the Old Testament authority, and has the New Testament none? Is the Old Testament the word of God, and not the New? It may be very convenient to our opponents, in reasoning upon a subject, to leave out that part of which the proofs are incontestable. For if the Old Testament be inspired, inspiration is a reality, and we possess the absolute authority of God's own word. The prophets have affirmed it; the Lord has recognized it; that is, He has recognized the inspiration of the Old Testament as it stands; and He has declared that nothing can invalidate its authority. The apostle also has declared that these scriptures were "given by inspiration of God," and are capable of making us "wise unto salvation." The principle of inspiration and of authority then is established. The words of Mr. Scherer are but blasphemous words, and for him it is reduced to this—the New Testament is not inspired; but he has not the faith to recognize that the Old Testament leaves no foundation to his arguments.

This should be thoroughly understood. The inspiration of the word of God is certain—its divine authority incontestable. This then alone remains: whether according to the author of the letter, the New Testament

is part of it? His principles are false. It must only be known if the judgments of a man who evades irrefragable proofs are worth anything, when this judgment is based upon these false, and even blasphemous principles. There are those who tell us that it is not—that it is a mere human record of what the writers knew, either by their senses or by personal revelations to themselves, but which they were not inspired to write. Let us remember, however, that inspiration itself is denied. But he who denies inspiration denies that which the Lord and the apostles maintain; for they maintain the inspiration of the Old Testament. Such an one therefore forfeits all my confidence; and I cannot allow any weight to his judgment, when he tells me that the New Testament has not the authority of inspiration.

I will not multiply quotations to prove that the prophets assert the inspiration of their prophecies; because it recurs at the beginning of almost every separate prophecy, but I will point out the passages in the New Testament which recognize the scriptures of the Old as having this authority. “All things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me,” Luke 24:44. Jesus here recognizes the body of writings called the Old Testament in its three parts—still thus entitled in the modern Hebrew Bibles. The Lord gives them equal authority in verse 27—“And, beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.” “Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me,” John 5:39. “And the scripture cannot be broken,” John 10:35. These passages

demonstrate that the scriptures of the Old Testament were a body of writings recognized by the Lord; and that in the detail of its present divisions it was recognized as having absolute authority. But to have these writings—to have truths communicated in this form—is something more than to have the truth spoken by word of mouth, even though it were by the mouth of the Lord Himself. “If ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?” John 5:47.

The writings then were the object of faith, and consequently had the authority of the word of God. “They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.” “If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead,” Luke 16:29-31. When the apostle preached the truth at Berea, the Jews, his hearers, “searched the scriptures daily whether those things were so”; that is to say, they made use of the scriptures as an authority by which they judged the teaching even of an apostle; and they are commended for so doing; Acts 17:11. The inspiration then of the Old Testament is demonstrated, its authority is recognized by the Lord, and the whole—as we possess it—is declared to be authentic and to be clothed with an authority which nothing can invalidate.

“The scriptures,” as a whole, are owned of God as a distinct class of writings, having a certain authority, namely, that of His Word. As it is written in Proverbs 30:5, 6— “Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not to his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.” Finally, the apostle Paul (2 Tim. 3:16) gives a remarkable testimony to the same effect—a testimony which clearly designates this class of writings: “All scripture is given

by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." We have only, therefore, to learn whether the New Testament forms part of "the scriptures," or whether the church is without a divine communication specially given to herself, and possesses only the Old Testament.

Here I would notice-the folly of a principle set forth by the letter—that the claim to inspiration is necessarily limited to the book which makes the claim, or at least to the writings of the same author. This assertion is futile. Why could not an inspired author, or the Lord, declare all the other books, or some amongst them, to be inspired? And, on the other hand, there is no necessity that the other writings of an author should be inspired because one of them is so. The Lord sets His seal to the entire Old Testament, and Paul declares that all scripture is given by inspiration of God. Does this only prove the inspiration of the Epistle to Timothy, in which the assertion is found? A man who seeks to overthrow the foundations of truth by such arguments as these deserves reproof rather than refutation.

In 2 Peter 1:19-21 we find the prophetic word, that is all the prophecies of scripture, and that from men who spoke being moved by the Holy Ghost. I know that Mr. Scherer rejects this Epistle, but why should we accept this authority? The character of this epistle is not that of the work of an impostor. However, if it is not the work of Peter, it is certainly that of an impostor, for he calls himself an apostle, and this Epistle the second.

But I leave this point. That which Mr. Scherer says about the canon is also entirely without force. He maintains that we cannot avail ourselves of the New Testament till the canon is settled. Why not? Let us suppose that a wilding is found in my garden: can I therefore make no use of the good trees which are in it? Supposing the second Epistle of Peter were spurious, and if the Revelation merits all the reproaches which the letter's insolent pretension gives it, what has that to do with the epistles of John or of Paul? I might admit that one Epistle was questionable—which, however, I do not admit— without in the least questioning the others.

But I return to direct proofs. We have seen the inspiration, the authority, the canon even, of the Old Testament, fully proved, and the principles of the letter, which deny inspiration itself, utterly overthrown. But we have seen more than this. Paul received "by revelation "the truths he taught, and he communicated them in "words which the Holy Ghost teach-eth," that is, by inspiration. Consequently it is certain that the early disciples had the truth communicated to them by inspiration, as the foundation of their faith. Now the argument of Mr. Scherer, if true, would only prove that God had changed His mode of acting, and left the succeeding ages without this foundation—without a divine basis for their faith: a change incredible indeed! But when Paul says, "which things we speak," does he mean those things which he spoke only by word of mouth? And has he taught nothing by writing? We well know that he has taught by writing that which had been revealed to him; that is, that his writings for this purpose were inspired. He even says so, which would not have been necessary after the passage we have

quoted from Corinthians. But God has favoured us with this additional proof. “How,” he says, “by revelation he made known unto me the mystery, as I wrote afore in few words, whereby when ye read ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ.” Should any say, “It may be so when fundamental truths are concerned, but not otherwise,” even this refuge is denied by scripture.

In giving details for the inward regulation of a church (1 Cor. 14:36, 37), the apostle says, “Came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only? If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.” The communications then of the Spirit to the church or to the world were the “word of God,” and that which was written by the apostle to direct the saints was “the commandment of the Lord.” “For this cause,” said the apostle to the Thessa-lonians (1 Thess. 2:13), “we thank God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.” Thus we see that the apostle puts his writings on the footing of “commandments of the Lord,” with the sorrowful consolation for those who cannot discern it, “if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.” Now will anyone say that the apostle, acting in the self-same character, and addressing himself in the same manner, in virtue of his apostolic sanction and authority, to the Romans or to the Galatians, is less inspired than when he addresses the Corinthians? Such an argument deserves no other

refutation than “if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.” To say God has willed that the faith of the Ephesians and Corinthians should rest upon divine inspiration, and that of the Romans and Galatians on a human basis, deserves no serious answer.

We have a particular class of writings, and this class of writings is inspired and is called “the scriptures.” Romans 16:26 defines this principle very clearly. “But is now made manifest [that is, the mystery], and by prophetic writings [see Greek], according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith.” This passage again points out that class of writings which we call “the scriptures,” writings which have the authority of a revelation—of an oracle from God: they are “prophetic writings.” In short, to sum up this part of the testimonies which we possess, Peter, in his Second Epistle, recognizing these writings as the scriptures, tells us, when speaking of Paul’s Epistles, that those who are “unlearned and unstable wrest them, as they do the other scriptures”; hereby proving that Paul’s Epistles form a part of “the scriptures,” a term very well understood, and having the same meaning then as now, as the Lord’s own words demonstrate, I know, indeed, that Mr. Scherer rejects this Epistle, but I do not accept his dictum as an authority.

The existence then of prophetic scriptures—of the scriptures of the New Testament, which have the authority of “the word of God” —of “the commandments of the Lord,” is most clearly proved. He who finds more authority in the words of the Lord’s apostle than in those of the author of the letter—he who reveres the word of God and the revelations of God— will have no doubt on

the subject. But if there exist writings of John or Peter, making the same claim, addressing Christians in the same manner, and that in perfect accordance with the same divine ministry committed to these apostles (as, for instance, the Epistles of Peter to the circumcision), could a Christian say, “the writings of one apostle are inspired, but those of another are not,” although entirely of the same nature, and although the writer speaks expressly in the name of his apostolate, and as exercising the authority of his mission? I assume now their authenticity, and that they are really the writings they claim to be. We need not look for the words, “I am inspired.” We find in them the unequivocal expression of authority. The faith of Christians consequently clothes them with this authority. The authors announce the truth, as having a right to impose their thoughts upon the acceptance of Christians, and in fact they do so impose them.

Take the First Epistle of Peter. Does he not speak with full authority as an apostle? And when Paul said, “If any obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him”; had not that written word apostolic authority? When John said, “We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us “(1 John 4:6), exercising thus divine authority over the conscience, do you think he meant that these words, pronounced so solemnly, had not the same authority? Such a conclusion would involve a palpable contradiction; for if they rejected his words, they did not hear him. One cannot attribute authority to his words spoken elsewhere, without attributing it to the words which claim that authority. If I say, “I command you to obey me,” the command which I give, and the

authority of that which I have already commanded, stand or fall together. I cannot believe the authority of Peter to be less than that of John or of Paul. He was sent forth with the same authority by the Lord.

What then have we proved? That there is a class of writings called the “scriptures”—which are inspired—which possess absolute authority as the word of God—which are recognized as such by the Lord and His apostles, and are constantly referred to by them with the greatest solemnity. We have found, that a very large portion of the New Testament is spoken of as forming part of these scriptures; that there is a body of writings attached to the apostolic work, “prophetic scriptures,” employed by the command of God, and having the authority of the word of God. The question then is narrowed into very small dimensions. The assertion that there is no inspiration, no divine authority for “the word,” has been proved entirely false. It is in flagrant opposition to the authority of the Lord and the apostles, and it seeks to overthrow that which they maintain. The only question then is this, Does such or such a book form a part of this inspired collection? A very important question, but one which, by the very fact of its being asked, pre-supposes the existence and the authority of the word of God, and seeks only not to confound human pretensions with the divine authority which it reveres, and of which it seeks to preserve the full value untouched and without alloy.

It is not our present object to bring forward detailed proofs of the authenticity of each book of the New Testament; to do so would be to write an introduction to the New Testament. Lower down I will indicate a few general principles of God’s ways as regards this. The

great question is decided. The object of the letter which you have sent me is not to prove whether such or such a book be genuine, admitting the inspiration of the rest, but to deny inspiration. Now this has been proved: inspiration does exist. The truth revealed has been communicated in words taught by the Holy Ghost. If this be so (mark it well), the letter bears the character, not only of a false principle, but of a principle hostile to God and to His goodness; it is subversive of the truth which He has condescended to make known to us, and destroys the very foundations of our faith. It is very important to have a right judgment as to the source and the character of that which presents itself as truth. “Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; for many false prophets are gone out into the world.” Following this injunction of the apostle’s—of the Holy Ghost’s—I solemnly judge that the principle of the letter proceeds from Satan. Here is not the place to examine to what point the principles of those to whom the author is opposed have furnished the occasion of this irruption of the enemy. Whatever saps the foundations of faith, in opposition to the express declarations of the Spirit of God, comes from the enemy; and I have always found that to deal with that which is of the enemy, openly and publicly as from the enemy, is the wisdom of God, and is accompanied by His strength and His blessing. Thus I deal with Mr. Scherer’s letter.

The final appeal to the “written word,” as to a recognized authority, which we find continually in the scriptures, is another proof of its authority. It is used there as an authority which no one, except a professed unbeliever, would think of disputing. Open the New Testament at almost what page you like, you will find a

proof of this. “It is written—it is written,” settled every question, decided every controversy. It is not the scriptures which have to be proved; they themselves serve for an absolute and final proof. This is the strongest testimony we can have. If I say, in canvassing some proof of human conduct, the law says this and the law says that, as settling the question; it takes for granted the existence of the law, and its sovereign authority over all disputed points—an authority which no one can gainsay. Thus it is in the use of scripture. If it is the word of authority (as says the letter), and not the authority of the word, and thus I believe it with an entire faith, that word even submits, in the most absolute manner, to the authority of the word. Examine the scriptures to know if things are thus. “These things were done that the scripture might be fulfilled.”— “Jesus, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.”— “Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers.”— “Promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures.” — “Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures,” and was buried, and rose again the third day, according to the scriptures.— “And the scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith.”— “And the scripture cannot be broken.”— “Give place unto wrath, for it is written.”— “That by patience and comfort of the scriptures we might have hope.”

It was the highest of all the Jewish privileges that the “oracles of God “were committed to them. “For what saith the scripture?” — “The scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation.” The Jews made “the word of God of none effect through their traditions.”— “Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures; and said unto them, Thus it is

written.” Is it in accommodating Himself to man, as the adversaries of inspiration pretend He did, in appealing amongst the Jews to the written word, that the Lord opens the understanding, that they may understand things which have not divine authority? No; the scriptures are treated by the apostles, by the Lord Himself, as having an incontestable and divine authority as the oracles of God, as the word of God. This is so entirely true, that when, in fulfilling His divine mission, it behoved the Lord to undergo the temptation of the enemy, the scripture was the weapon which He used, as being divinely tempered, against which Satan had no power, and his devices no possible success. It sufficed to say, “It is written.” The tempter would have betrayed himself if he had questioned the absolute authority of the quotation: his best resource was to quote scripture his own way; but it does not fail under this trial. The second Adam still replies, “It is also written.”

One may, without blame, prefer the perfect wisdom of our divine Saviour to the self-sufficiency and unbelief of human wisdom. And observe here the importance of this use of the word of God, the holy scriptures, the oracles of God, by the apostles and by the Lord. People say, “But there are various readings, bad translations, statements which the increase of knowledge has proved impossible, so that scripture cannot be used as an authority.” The Lord, then, was mistaken! There were various readings, bad translations (especially that of the Septuagint, indicated in the letter), and supposed inconsistencies, at the very time when the Lord said, “The scripture cannot be broken.” When, in His controversy with Satan, He employed the scriptures, Satan, lest he should appear to be Satan undisguised, durst not question their authority.

These things existed too when the apostle called them “the oracles of God.” But none of these things prevented the Lord’s recognizing their absolute authority on every occasion. “The foolishness of God is wiser than men.”

As to proofs which may be given of the authority of the word, it carries its own proof with it, as does every testimony from God. This is a fundamental principle. It does not require proof; it furnishes its own proofs of everything to the soul. We do not bring a light to the sun in order to discern it; it enlightens us. The word of God is not judged; it judges. If God speaks, woe unto him that hears what is spoken, and knows not that it is God who speaks. There are those assuredly who will not own that it is He. If this refusal to believe be final, they are lost—sentence has already been passed upon them; the light is come, and the darkness comprehends it not. “The word of God is sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” The word of God, whether spoken or written, has to be received as the word of God, and he who rejects it is lost. If any remain in ignorance of some of its details—if any are mistaken as to some book—they lose just so much of it through their pride. “The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple … moreover by them is thy servant warned.”— “The entrance of thy word giveth light, it giveth understanding unto the simple.” Read the whole of Psalm 119.

This conviction that the word is its own evidence is all-important; this alone maintains the true character of the word of God. Like Jesus, “it receiveth not testimony from man.” He who believes not in the Son of God will be

condemned. He that believes not the record that God gave of His Son has made God a liar, and has not life. Now, according to the Lord's own words, the scriptures testify of Him. The fundamental principle is this—the word of God must be received by faith; and the reasonings of man cannot be the foundation of faith; if they were, it would not be faith in God, nor faith in His word. "He believed God,"— "They shall be all taught of God."— "Every man therefore, that hath heard and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."

Having established this principle, I would enter into some details respecting the ways of God in this matter. We have seen how the Lord while on earth set His seal to the scriptures; but observe, in so doing He set His seal to the faith of those who had previously believed in them. It was not because He had already done so that those faithful ones believed. Their heart, their faith, had been previously tested. They had faith, because they had received the testimony of the scriptures (before they were thus sanctioned), when presented to their faith on the ground of their own authority. When Jeremiah spoke, it does not follow that all received his testimony; there were some who had not "ears to hear," but who listened to false prophets. When God is to be owned, it becomes a moral question; but in all ages believers have owned God by receiving His testimony. And unbelievers have not acknowledged God in the testimony. It is so now. God gives in His word sufficient moral evidence to commend it to the conscience. When He has established anything new, He has added a sufficiency of extraordinary evidences. But with this comes the moral responsibility of him who hears, which God never sets aside; and also the grace which acts in giving and establishing faith.

The reception of the word, and afterwards the understanding this word, are things presented to the responsibility of man. Grace alone can enable him to receive and to understand it; but nothing can set aside this responsibility, and nothing take away the necessity of this grace, or destroy its efficacy. The positive authority of the apostolic testimony, claiming submission as it does in the most peremptory manner, cannot alter this. “If any man think himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.” An apostle cannot go beyond that. For the things which are communicated in words taught by the Spirit are spiritually discerned. It was thus in the days of all the prophets. “Hear ye, and give ear,” said Jeremiah; “be not proud: for the Lord hath spoken. But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride.”

Now the condition which brings judgment upon the house of God is marked by this feature—the word loses its authority, excepting over the remnant preserved by Him. “And the vision of all is come unto you, as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot, for it is sealed. And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned. Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men. Therefore behold,” etc.

Such was the condition of the people of Israel, and the cause of the judgment which befell them. It was then the Lord said, “Bind up the testimony, seal the law, among my disciples… To the law and to the testimony.” Thus also in the New Testament we are told, “In the last days perilous times shall come.” What is then the resource of the faithful? “But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, 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. All scripture is given by inspiration of God.” The resource in “the last days “is reverence for the holy scriptures, and the assurance of their sufficiency. “All scripture is given by inspiration of God.” Therefore, whether it be amongst the Jews or in the church, the resource in evil days is confidence in the divine inspiration of the holy scriptures. The Lord has pointed it out and sanctioned it; but this confidence in the authority of the word existed before He had given it His sanction. And it is this faith, without any other sanction than the word itself which He has sanctioned. Precious testimony for latter days, since the same sanction applies to them also! The apostle, in warning us of perilous times, directs our thoughts beforehand to the same means of establishing the soul. Those who had faith in the scriptures, before the Saviour’s testimony to their authority, were enabled through grace to discern what was God’s word, and were approved by Him. Those who do so now have this same approval. They have the same responsibility as to what they receive. But although this responsibility exists, God does not cease to use means.

There is another principle which should be noticed here, as Mr. Scherer's letter seems to want us to add absurd and even foolish books, such as the epistle of Barnabas, to the word of God. "The oracles of God "are committed to His people. This does not entitle the church to impose her authority upon us; but she is undoubtedly responsible for preserving that which has been committed to her. In this trust Rome has shewn her unfaithfulness by adding apocryphal books. Now, although the church may in detail fail in her responsibility, it is impossible, in anything essential to it, that God should fail towards His church, or that Christ should cease to nourish and cherish it. God watches over all this—not to keep the learned from stumbling, but that believers may have food from Him, and an unerring rule of life. It is not the babe and the wayfaring man who find difficulties: God has given them the word, and preserved it for them; and their conscience bears them witness in the Holy Ghost that God works in them by this word. The Holy Ghost enables them, according to the measure of their spirituality, to use and understand it. A heart full of peace and joy, because taught of God, discerns and acknowledges that it is indeed the word of God. It is read, perhaps in a bad translation, and doubtless something is lost thereby; but God has taken care that enough should remain to teach the heart with certainty His truth and His ways. The word is "the sword of the Spirit." It carries conviction with it, when the Spirit uses it in the power of His grace. It leaves man under the responsibility of having rejected it, whenever it has been presented to his conscience.

A man of little information, but taught of God, is much more able to apprehend the whole truth, even through

the medium of an indifferent translation, than the learned man, who, though a stranger to Christ, thinks he can judge of the whole canon. This is easily accounted for. The church puts the New Testament into our hands, for the oracles of God are committed to the church. This does not, indeed, impart faith, but it is the means which God uses for this end. The church presents us with the divine oracles, not with authority, as having power to judge the word, but as the faithful guardian of that which has been committed to her. This is done through parents, friends, ministers; and there is a general belief in the professing church that these oracles are the word of God. The simple-minded do not set themselves to judge of the whole canon of the New Testament before reading it. They read it, and the word produces faith.

A man receives by the teaching of God first one truth, and then another. The word has judged him—the word has revealed Jesus to him. To such an one the history of Jesus is all divine; it communicates to his soul what he receives with divine knowledge, for these things are spiritually discerned. The epistles unfold to him divine truth, and he receives it with a divine certainty that God has spoken to him. He makes use of every book in the New Testament, without knowing what the term “canon” means. And if some scholar would deprive him of his treasure—of that divinely inspired word which he knows to be of God—this word is “the sword of the Spirit” in his hands to shew him the folly of human wisdom. He pities the learned man who is a stranger to all that which he himself is enjoying.

He who has eaten bread knows what bread is, although he may not understand the art of baking. If, through grace, the believer grows in divine knowledge, he sees

the harmony of the whole—the adaptation of the several parts. He has not only “the full assurance of faith,” but “the full assurance of understanding “also. He perceives the divine wisdom of the Bible, not merely the divine truth which it contains. He finds perhaps a text spoiled by a bad translation; it does not harmonize with what he knows to be the truth of God. Under such circumstances he will say, “I do not understand that passage.” I am supposing a person deprived of all spiritual help, which, according to the ways of God in His church, is very seldom the case. Humble in heart, he will attribute to his own ignorance his inability to understand the passage. “The wisdom of this world “reasons about the canon, and will form its judgment before it reads, and in consequence it receives nothing. The mind of man cannot create for itself the things of God. Nor can human reason pronounce upon the authority of the word of God. It may be said, “This is trusting to feelings “; but no! it is trusting to God. They shall be all “taught of God.” The authority of the word can only be really known by believing in it.

He who has only man’s thoughts will say, “But I must know that it is the word of God before I can believe in it.” I reply, “You cannot.” It is true, happily true, that we receive the New Testament as the word of God, on the faith of our parents or of our education; but it is never really received as such till it is “mixed with faith “in those that read it. For my part I receive the New Testament with full assurance in its present form, as it has been adopted by the universal church. Circumstances having called me to it, I have examined the external evidences and found them satisfactory; but that does not produce faith. It may be useful to obviate

the objections made by those who do not live upon the word and cannot judge of it. The authority of God is not subject to human intelligence. I know that some of the epistles were questioned in the early ages, at least in certain places; but I doubt not that, in receiving as inspired those books which form the New Testament, the church was guided by God. The means by which God's word may be communicated are to be distinguished from that word itself as an authoritative rule; but these means may nevertheless be used according to the certainty of that rule.

A mother instructs her child in the truth, but she is not the rule or standard of truth. Thus the unlettered Christian receives the New Testament in the form in which it is distributed. It may be that he cannot demonstrate its authenticity, but he happily profits by the fact that the church receives it. It comes thus into his possession, and, when he reads it, he finds it divine. God thus uses means to spread the truth, and the book which contains it. The multitude of believers profit by it. It is God who acts thus. If any answer must be given to unbelievers who dispute the authority of the word, it may be that only a few amongst those who receive and enjoy it are able to convince gainsayers; but that does not hinder God from using the scriptures, and giving faith to those who receive them; then the folly of gainsayers, and of those who are nourished with incredulity, appears to all.

He whose heart and mind are exercised in the word according to God finds not only the proof of its divinity, in the application of passage after passage to his conscience, but he gains the deepest conviction of its perfection as a whole, through the knowledge thus

obtained of the fulness of Christ. I will take an instance out of Mr. Scherer's letter. He says the Spirit of God cannot make us feel the value of a genealogy. Such a remark only betrays ignorance of the word of God and of Christ Himself. To set forth the varied glory of Jesus, according to the counsels of God respecting Him, it is needful to present the different characters which He bears. This is the substance of God's revelation. Now His connection with Abraham and David, and His connection with Adam, are leading points in this revelation; and the genealogies of the New Testament set this before us. But this is not all. They correspond exactly with the character of the Gospels in which we find them.

The Gospel by Matthew, in which the genealogy is traced from Abraham and David, treats especially of the Messiah, of the relation of Christ to the Jews, of the fulfilment of prophecy in Him, and at the same time of His rejection as Messiah, and the transition to a new dispensation. Luke sets before us the great features of grace brought in by "the second Adam," and the great moral principles connected with this grace; so that in the body of this Gospel events are not arranged in chronological order, but according to their moral bearing. This is true even in the history of the temptation. In this Gospel the genealogy is traced up to Adam. John, on the contrary, gives us the Person of the Saviour, who is above all the dispensational dealings of God in the earth, the Jews being throughout set aside as rejected, and therefore no genealogy is given. "The Word was God." John's Gospel begins before Genesis, and at the close we find neither the agony in Gethsemane, nor the being forsaken on the cross; but other things are mentioned which are not found in

Matthew or in Luke. Thus the different glories of Christ are manifested, and by degrees the admirable perfection of the word shines forth in all its splendour. The criticisms of man fade away, like the stars before the sun, which makes them disappear with the darkness that allowed them to be seen. The Bible presents us with a perfection, both in its details and as a whole, which leaves no doubt in the mind of one who has tasted it that, as a complete whole, it is divine.

I have hitherto spoken of the divinity of the word in its separate parts, as the sword of the Spirit which causes its power to be felt in the soul, while judging it, and revealing Christ to it; but I speak now of the word as a whole—of what is called the canon of scripture. If Matthew were wanting, we should not have the Messiah, Son of David, and Son of Abraham. If Mark were wanting, we should not have the Servant made in the likeness of man—a prophet on the earth; if Luke, we should not have the Son of man; if John, we should lose the Son of God.

In the Acts of the Apostles we have the foundation of the church, by the power of the Spirit of God; the commencement and development of the church in Jerusalem, through the instrumentality of the twelve; then the Gentiles grafted into the good olive-tree by Peter, the apostle of the circumcision; and, when Jerusalem had rejected the testimony, the church fully revealed and called by the ministry of Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles.

The Epistle to the Romans furnishes the eternal principle of God’s relationship with man, the way in which, by means of Christ, dead and risen, the believer

is established in blessing, and the reconciling of these things with the speciality of the promises made to the Jews by Him whose gifts and calling are without repentance. In the Corinthians are found details respecting the internal regulation of a church; its walk, its order, its restoration when it had gone astray—the patience and the energy of grace; the whole being sketched by the Spirit of God, acting through an apostle, and declaring the divine authority of His commands. In Galatians we find the contrast between law and promise, as well as the source of ministry; in a word, the condemnation of Judaism even in its very roots. Ephesians presents to us the relationship of the believer with the Father and with Christ, and the fulness of the church's privileges as the body of Christ, her connection with Him, and "the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations," in which all the counsels of God for His own glory are unfolded. In Colossians the fulness which dwells in the Head for the body is set forth, and the solemn warning is given not to separate practically from this union with the Head, through allowing a show of humility to glide into the bosom of the church. In Philippians we have the apostle's experience of what Christ is to the Christian, as sufficient for all things, whatever his position may be—His immediate sufficiency, even when the Christian should be deprived of apostolic support; and the walk of the church in the unity of grace—in unity maintained by grace, when the spiritual energy of her human leaders should be wanting. It is a precious epistle in this point of view. 1 and 2 Thessalonians give us the hope of the church in the freshness of her affections; and the mystery of iniquity ending in the manifestation of the man of sin—a mystery notwithstanding which the church

is called to maintain this hope, and to cherish these affections.

Timothy and Titus exhibit what may be termed ecclesiastical care for the maintenance whether of truth or of order: i Timothy, the normal order of the church; 2 Timothy, the path of the individual when it is in disorder, and there is general false profession of Christianity. All these present salvation and life. In the Epistle to the Ephesians the church is seen seated as a body in the heavenly places. In the Epistle to the Hebrews the faithful are viewed as journeying in weakness upon the earth, and Christ is consequently seen apart, as appearing for them in the presence of God in heaven. This is in contrast with the earthly figures given to Israel. This gives rise to a glorious unfolding of the Person of our Lord, as God the Creator, as man, and as the Son over His own house, the Creator of all things, and lastly as High Priest. His priesthood is very largely set forth. It is after the order of Melchisedec, as to His personal rights; after the likeness of Aaron, or rather in contrast with Aaron, as to its present exercise. This leads to the unfolding of the life of faith (the faith common to all saints), and to the final separation of the believing Jews from the camp of earthly religion, as having “come to the heavenly Jerusalem.”

James sets before us that girdle of practical righteousness which restrains the natural tendency of the heart to abuse grace; faith must be real or living faith; and the last dealings of God with the twelve tribes (as in Jonah with the Gentiles), when the light and perfection of a new order of things eclipsed that old order, to which those tribes had proved unfaithful.

Peter gives us the government of God: in the First Epistle in blessing to saints as far as was applied; in the Second, in reference to the wicked.

In the First Epistle of Peter we find the Christian a pilgrim on the earth, placed in this position by the power of Christ's resurrection, according to an election which is not that of an earthly people, but unto eternal life. This epistle was addressed to the Jews of the dispersion (Peter being the apostle of circumcision), and was particularly adapted to them, through grace setting them free from the idea of an earthly establishment to be pilgrims on the earth in view of an incorruptible inheritance.

The Second Epistle of Peter is written in the prospect of his departure, and of the flowing in of evil. It exhorts them to press forward. On the one hand it gives the picture and the assurance of the glory of the coming kingdom in its heavenly aspect, but manifested on the earth; on the other, the corruption which would degrade and swallow up Christianity, and the consequences of this in judgment. Peter never represents the church as one body in heaven, as Paul does; he views her, or rather her members, as on the earth, and as pilgrims there. The exact correspondence of every detail with this point of view, even in the manner of presenting the glory (2 Pet. 1), manifests a perfection which proves its divine origin.

Jude admirably unfolds all the moral features of the apostasy3 —its beginnings and its results; recording the solemn prophecy of Enoch, which we should otherwise have lost, and thus proving how clear, even before the

flood, was the testimony of God, who is unchangeable in purpose from the beginning to the end.

John presents us with all the features of the divine nature, and that as life first of all, as manifested in Jesus, and then as characteristic of the whole family. The epistle is thus a safeguard against every pretension, which, wanting in these features, would seek to pervert the faithful. It is the means also of strengthening and establishing Christians, by the development of those qualities which belong to the nature of God, with whom, if light be in them, they have communion, as to the Father and the Son, and in whom, if love be in them, they dwell. This is true of every believer in Jesus. This love was manifested in Christ coming down here, accomplished in giving us the full joy with Him in His position above.

Philemon, and the two lesser Epistles of John, shew us that, if the mystery of God is revealed to us by one apostle, and the nature of God set evidently before us by another; if they lift us up to the height of His counsels and of His being, they can also be occupied with the interests of a runaway slave and his master, and with the anxieties and practical difficulties of an excellent lady, who was to reject those who did not bring the truth; and with a kind and worthy brother, as to receiving persons to whom Christian love would open the door, insisting on the truth, but refuting the jealousy of a local selfish person who desired to have things in his own hands. They shew us that that love which dwells in God, which is the very nature of God, which is manifested in the glorious work of Christ— that wisdom which ordains all mysteries for His eternal glory, disdains not to provide with perfect delicacy for the difficult relationships

between a master and his slave; nor to manifest the tenderest solicitude with respect to the details of life. This love, in the perfection of wisdom and grace, links the fulness and perfection of God with every emotion of the human heart, with every circumstance of our life in this world. It sanctifies, by the revelation of what God is, a people who are to dwell with Him, and fits them for His presence by creating pure affections—by making a holy love the spring of their whole life.

In the Apocalypse the Spirit of God gives at the outset, in an admirable review of the state of seven Asiatic churches, the elements of a perfect judgment with respect to every state in which the professing church would be found, so as to guide any one connected with the church in these circumstances. He at the same time encourages the faithfulness of those who have ears to hear by promises of blessing from above specially suited to the difficulties of these several conditions. He declares that these blessings are prepared for “him that overcometh” in the conflict into which he is brought by the declension of the church. This declension had already commenced in the days of the apostle in their leaving their first love; it will end in compelling Christ to spue out of His mouth those who bear His name. Such is the substance of that which the Spirit of God gives us in the earlier chapters of this book.

Having thus furnished the Christian with all that he needs in the midst of the difficulties presented by the state of the professing church; and having revealed the judgment of Christ, with a perfection and a circumstantial adaptation which are most admirable, the Holy Ghost then lifts the veil to shew how all this will end in the judgment of the world. He reveals

chastenings, first of all in outward things; then more directly upon man himself; afterwards, He discloses all the features of man's dreadful apostasy, the diabolical organization of his forces against Christ, and, at length, the judgment which will break forth at the coming of Christ Himself, the King of kings, and Lord of lords. This judgment is to make way for an administration of blessing and happiness (Satan being bound), which will only be interrupted by his being loosed from his prison, to test those who have enjoyed this happiness, and thus to bring on the final judgment of the dead and the eternal state in which God will be "all in all." This is the methodical and complete development of that which Jude, 2 Peter, and 2 Thessalonians had made known to the church in its moral elements.

At the close of the book we have more particularly unfolded to us the connection of the church with Christ in heaven, and with the times of blessing enjoyed under His reign.

There is another striking feature of the perfection of the Apocalypse, which may be noticed here, that is, its moral unity The standing of the church is indeed defined in the opening and concluding paragraphs by the expression of her own sentiments; but throughout the book there is not one thought connected with the living communication of grace from the Head to the members. It is a prophetic book of judgment treating, first, of all that relates to the church, as seen in its responsibility upon the earth. In this portion of it there is promise, threatening, warning, judgment of its condition, revelation of the characters of the Son of man, everything connected with responsibility. But the Head, the source of life and knowledge to the body, is not

mentioned as such. After the judgment of the church comes that of the world—the church being seen on high—a judgment increasing in severity up to the destruction of the wicked one. In this part of the book is found all that the faithful need, in order to understand the ways of God, and to discern the path which He has marked out for them in these perilous times; but Christ as the living source of grace is never referred to. Everything is in its right place, for it is the work of God.

The New Testament then, commencing with the manifestation of the Man Christ in humiliation on the earth, and carrying us forward to the eternal state when God will be "all in all," presents us with the full development of all the ways of God, and of what He is in Himself, in order that man may joy in Him, know Him, and glorify Him—that the believer may be kept through all the difficulties and dangers of the way by the wisdom and admonitions of God—and that he may understand His wisdom and His love. Man could not have composed this as a whole—could not have foreseen the necessity for each part. One feels in it the energetic spontaneity of life, that is, of the Spirit of God. Take away one single part, now that we possess the whole, and the breach is immediately felt by one who has seen and appreciated its completeness.

Perfection marks the book of God as a whole, as it marks everything which God has made, from the insect which sports in the air, up to man himself, created in the image of God, with a body of exquisite workmanship united to a mind capable of enjoying God, of communion with Him, and even, through grace, of expressing something of His character and His ways. The word is not a shapeless mass; it is the complete body of the revealed thoughts of

God more perfect even than man, to whom it is addressed, because more immediately divine. Man, who would be wise, does not understand this body of divine communications, but judges this or that part of it according to the little pitiful history of ecclesiastical weaknesses and contentions. Things of the Spirit are spiritually discerned. For him who is spiritual divine perfection shines forth in every page; and the unity of the whole, the perfect connection of its several parts, the relation of these parts to each other and to all the ways of God, to the Person of Christ, to the Old Testament, to the heart of the renewed man, to the necessities of sinful man, to the dangers and difficulties which have sprung up in the church—all combine to crown with divine glory the demonstration of the origin and the authorship of the book which contains these things.

Its author is so much the more evidently God from the human instruments having been many and diverse. But its unity—and above all, the intimate union of its different parts— demonstrates a complete and perfect body. If but one joint of a finger were wanting to a man, he is not a man such as God made him; he may have life, but he is imperfect, and his imperfection is perceptible. So take away a book from the New Testament, the remainder is divine undoubtedly, but it is no longer the New Testament in its divine perfection. As in a noble tree, the inward energy, the freedom of the sovereign vital power, produces a variety of forms, in which the details of human order may appear to be wanting, but in which there is a beauty that no human art can imitate. Cut off one of its branches, and the void is obvious; the minute connection of the remainder is destroyed; the

gap which is made in the intertwining of its tender leaves proves that the devastating hand of man has been there.

This then is the way in which the Christian uses the word; each part of it acts divinely in him, and, in proportion to the progress he makes, it unfolds itself as a whole to the eyes of his faith with a divine evidence which unites itself with every element of his faith, with the varied glories of the Person of Christ, and with the universal perfection of the ways of God; a perfection of which the Christian has not judged a priori, but which he has learnt in the word itself.

When I see a man, do I need to be told that his form is complete? The more I know of anatomy, the more I shall admire its structure; but it is the sight of the man himself which makes me apprehend his perfectness. Thus it is with all the works of God; only His word requires, even as it produces, spiritual discernment. If any one be “a prophet or spiritual,” let him acknowle4ge it. And how does the word dispose of those who do not acknowledge it? “If any be ignorant, let him be ignorant.” It is humbling, no doubt, to have all one’s learning treated thus; but between God and man this is as it should be. Outward evidences, as I have remarked, confirm the spiritual judgment. The learned man, who creates doubts for himself, needs evidences to remove them. The simple Christian feeds on that which is divine, and knows nothing of the difficulties which man’s poor learning creates.

I will now examine some of the arguments used in the letter in order to shew their futility. It is a melancholy

task, after having had one's thoughts directed towards the perfection of the Bible.

The first thing which strikes one is, that the arguments themselves are all extrinsic to the scriptures. We are told, for instance, that at the time of the Reformation one authority was substituted for another. But observe, it is not through anything found in the Bible itself that Mr. Scherer judges of its authority. No divine operation in the soul reveals itself in the letter. Since this is so, it is not astonishing that man's voice be openly preferred to God's which is treated as ventriloquy. One speaks of openness. Let the manner in which the Spirit of God has been unacknowledged have given place to this deviation as to the word—I understand that; but to belch out impertinent blasphemies is not openness for me, though it be done very openly.

Besides, the letter would have faith rest upon historical certainty and external moral evidence. I do not judge the author, I know not if he has faith or no; but after this phrase one would say that he ignores entirely what faith is, that he has never had divine conviction: he feels not the need of divine faith, and knows not its nature; for no such historical or moral certainty can be faith. Faith comes from God, and receives a testimony whereupon it sets to its seal that God is true. He speaks of the economy of the letter. But the application of the word by the Spirit is not the economy of the letter. Paul where he speaks of it reasons on the word. The rationalist, who has not the Spirit, can only see in scripture the testimony of the man who wrote it. This is easy to be understood. He gives up the Spirit and the word together, and falls back upon his own reason.

Mr. Scherer's letter insists on the imperfection of the text of the New Testament, on its being written in a dead language, on its being read in translations; and, finally, says that its authors followed the opinions of the day in which they lived. This last objection is itself but a judgment founded upon the opinions of the present day, and is not worth a refutation. It is an accusation, not a proof: and the accusation is but a calumny. In fact, if it were well founded, the same should be said of the Lord's own discourses, or the whole history should be rejected as false. (See John 3:33, 34; ch. 8:47.) As to the other objections, I have a divine certainty of their futility; because, as I have already shewn, the Lord has set His seal to the Old Testament scriptures in spite of the same difficulties.

Notwithstanding I would add a few words. The author confounds the rule of faith with the means by which it is made known; in the latter, the imperfection of the instrument is felt. No one would assert that a translation was divine; but, through human diligence, we profit by a divine work. The deposit, the rule of faith, remains in its original purity.

If clouds, formed by exhalations from the earth, obscure the light of the sun, they only prove, by thus veiling it, the power of that light, which, although not seen in all its brightness, still suffices for all human purposes. This objection then only tells us that, when God gives blessing, we profit by the blessing according to our diligence.

But this is not all. It is said that we do not even possess the original in its purity. This objection is in the main the same in principle as that we have just touched on. All

that God gives He puts into the hands of men for their use; and they never know how to keep it as they ought. The revelation of God has been placed in the hands of men—of the church. Man has not preserved it in its absolute perfection: be it so. God allows man to learn what he himself is; but faith knows that, behind all human failure, there is the faithfulness of God who watches over the church, and that Christ nourishes and cherishes it. Experience teaches, and the day of judgment will mafce manifest, that faith in God is always in the right. Thus the believer supposes it possible, that, through human carelessness, some defects may have crept into what was committed to man; but he has full confidence in the faithfulness of God. His experience, as we have seen, confirms his faith, for he finds the word divine. The judgment of God will decide that question for the unbeliever, which divine faith has already decided for the believer.

The examination of the text by learned men has indeed shewn the rashness of infidel knowledge; but it has left no serious doubts, except as to an extremely small number of texts or rather of words. It has not left a shade of obscurity upon any passage of the slightest importance as to the truth. One thus learns God’s grace in caring for the word, as well as His original bestowal of it, although apparently He left all to the responsibility of man.

To say that the meaning of a passage is doubtful, in order to deny its inspiration, as if the doubt about its meaning proved it, is too absurd an argument to be repeated. It is saying that the ignorance and incapacity of man are a proof that God has not acted in anything which man does not understand. There is a superficiality

in such reasoning as this, which reveals the true value of mere human wisdom. The meaning is doubtful. Doubtful to whom? To him who refuses to be taught of God.

The letter says that the writers of the New Testament implicitly followed the translation of the Seventy. The contrary is the fact. When the Septuagint gives the sense, they used it. Half their quotations are faithfully rendered from the Hebrew; and if there are passages which differ from the present Hebrew text, the researches of the learned have proved that they are borne out by the testimony of the oldest translations. In many instances the meaning is given without confining themselves to the exact words. Conscientious research on this point strongly confirms the divine inspiration of the authors of the New Testament.

Mr. Scherer tells us that there are inaccuracies, errors, and contradictions. I deny these contradictions and these inaccuracies. Let us remember that the certainty of the objector's knowledge must be first ascertained. I have no confidence in it. I have known many cases in which man would prune away the fruit of the spontaneous actings of the Spirit, and carve the beautiful tree into a round or a square. For my part I behold divine perfection in the form it bears. All is divinely adapted to the object which the Holy Ghost had in view. We have seen that John does not mention the prayer of Jesus in Gethsemane; Matthew and Luke omit what John relates. What does this prove to me? That John was not there? Not so; but that the Holy Ghost is the author of the two accounts, and not John and Matthew. They were but the penmen of the Holy Ghost. Man would have related what man had seen. The Holy Ghost sets before me in the one Gospel, the man and the

Messiah suffering; in the other, the divine Person who offered up Himself, and whose life no man took from Him. I see divine perfection where human wisdom sees blemishes. In the history of our Lord's temptation Luke puts the offer of the kingdoms of the earth before the temptation on the pinnacle of the temple, and, in consequence, omits, "Get thee hence, Satan!" "This is wrong!" cries the worldly scholar. "What perfection!" says the Christian. Matthew gives the historical order; Luke the moral order; for the spiritual temptation, through the written word, was of a deeper character than that of the offer of the whole world. The Man—the Messiah, Son of man—the Holy One relying on the promises, duly succeed each other. Now this moral order is characteristic of the whole of Luke's Gospel, excepting where the historical order is necessary to the truth of the recital. It is the Holy Ghost who writes.

I have myself found difficulties in the word. This has not surprised me, ignorant as I am; but I have found these difficulties, one after another, to be but the means of entering more fully into the perfection, the wisdom, and the divine beauty of the revelation of my God. If I still find more of these difficulties, and I do so, I wait upon Him to solve them for me; I do not say, "The meaning is doubtful," but "The meaning is doubtful to me." I do not say, "There is inaccuracy, and I am accurate enough to judge it without divine light"; but "I am ignorant, and God will enlighten me in due time."

We have seen that when the author said that Paul spoke not of his inspiration, this is an ignorance or a disregard of its contents, which, especially on such a subject, renders the arguments of those who could assert it unworthy of the attention of a serious man. The apostle

asserts the exact contrary in the most clear and absolute manner. Notice that the letter sees but reasons and motives: all divine action is excluded. It owns, when one insists, the work in the conscience, but to limit it to the extent of his author's judgment. We have already seen how the scriptures claim for themselves the authority of inspiration. I need not return to it. I have already exposed the folly of the argument, that inspiration is limited to the passage which asserts it. I say it is folly; for why could not a text say, "All these writings are inspired"? The fact is, that the passages which assert inspiration limit it, neither to the book which contains them, nor to the writings of the same author. They establish a principle, or allude to the writings of another, to invest them with the authority of scripture. They establish the existence of a class of writings which have divine authority; they ascribe this authority to the entire Old Testament. The letter betrays here the lightness of its author.

The church, it is also said, may have made mistakes. Be it so; but is there no God? Would He allow us to be deceived on so essential a point? The author answers that He might, and boldly pronounces about books which have edified the church for centuries. But what is his opinion worth? That must be settled, before we allow it to invalidate the book to which it refers. I by no means admit the authority of the church; but I recognize her duty to preserve the deposit committed to her; and I believe in the faithfulness of God.

In a certain sense everything is necessarily referred to individual judgment; that is, each one is under its responsibility for himself. A Socinian claims a right to deny the divinity of Christ and the atonement. Were I the

pope, I could not hinder his thinking so; but, being a Christian, I know that he is lost if he remain in this state. I cannot make another believe the inspiration of the New Testament: each one must judge for himself. But if Mr. Scherer rejects the word of God, the word will reject him. He is bolder than man should dare to be; but he will not be stronger than God. Salvation does not depend on faith in the inspiration of the New Testament. A man may be saved, though ignorant of its existence, for the truth which it contains may reach his heart through the lips of another. To reject the word of God, when it is made known to us, is quite another thing.

I admit that there is a difference between the inspiration of the New Testament and that of the Old—not as to authority, but as to character. The prophets of old said, "Thus saith Jehovah"; and they announced the thoughts of God, in His own words, on a particular subject, at the moment when His word was addressed to them. But the Holy Ghost—come down, as the Comforter, to lead into all truth—is different from the Spirit of prophecy, although the same Spirit. (See 1 Pet. 1:11, 12.) "He searcheth all things, even the deep things of God." "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." Christ being glorified, the Holy Ghost dwells in His disciples, and can open all the treasures of the glory of the Lord, all the tenderness of His love, of His relations, as man, with His own. The Word was made flesh, and God the Holy Ghost dwells in the church, and thus, if I may so speak, humanizes Himself, or at least the expression of His thoughts, while not ceasing to be God. He expresses Himself in grace and blessing in all the details and circumstances of human life; He helps our infirmities. "He that searcheth the hearts knoweth

what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to God."

The inspiration of the New Testament partakes of this character. It unfolds itself in the unity of the church in feelings and affections, and ministers to her need by telling of the love and the ways of God manifest in the flesh in a world of sinners. But if the Holy Ghost has thus acted in the church united to the Head whom He glorifies, what He spoke, and what He caused to be written, was none the less the word of God—the thoughts of God communicated in words of His own teaching. As Christ did not cease to be God because he was made man, so he that received the testimony of Christ set to his seal that God is true. We must not give up (alas! that so many have done so) that presence of the Holy Ghost in the church, which produces religious inspiration, as says Mr. Scherer's letter, that is, the energy which acts in Christians in power and blessing, without making them an authority; neither must we give up the authority of that which has been communicated, whether orally, had we been present to profit by it, or by writings inspired by the Holy Ghost. Neither must we give up things which are the Lord's commandments.

Observe also, that it is not apostolic authority only which is the question, but the authority of the word of God. A prophet, who spoke by inspiration, and who could say, "The Holy Ghost saith, Separate me Barnabas and Saul," had as much authority in that instance as Paul or Barnabas. He was but the mouthpiece of God, just as that which Paul and Barnabas spoke by the same inspiration was the word of God. That which is said of the Gospels in Mr. Scherer's letter, namely, that the Gospels were not written by apostles, is idle. If an

apostle had written without being inspired, his writing would only have had the value of that of a godly man. If one of the least in the church has been used by the Holy Ghost, his writing has the authority of the word of God. The infinite value of scripture proceeds from its one divine Author, and not, in any instance, from the character of its subordinate human authors.

The two Gospels which are not written by apostles are not on that account the less perfect in their presentation of God manifest in the flesh, according to that peculiar aspect in which the Holy Ghost would present Him in each. The instrument used in giving us the history of our Saviour is of no importance: the only essential point is, “Is Christ faithfully presented to us as God would present Him?”

The letter says that three of the Gospels are narratives on Christianity, rather than the productions of its religious genius. What a style to speak of the manifestation of God on the earth! It was not Christianity; at least it was Christ. It was God who was there. Is it not then the religious genius of Christianity to occupy oneself with one’s God, God manifest in flesh? This philosophy is icy and contemptible. What incapacity to seize the true character of a thing when it has to do with God! To it man’s voice is noble. When it hears God’s voice, it is ventriloquy.

Let us see what Mr. Scherer says about 2 Peter, of Jude, and of the Apocalypse. “The church has erred in admitting the so-called Epistle of Peter; Jude uses fables and apocryphal books. The Apocalypse has seen its predictions contradicted by facts.” It is easily said, The church has erred. Only one can just as well believe that

he who utters this judgment is subject to err. No reason whatever is given to us.

In the Second Epistle of Peter I find the assertion that it was written by himself. It has a tone of deep and spiritual holiness, a dignified confidence, most remote from imposture; yet imposture it must be, if it were not written by the apostle Peter. I find in it minute allusions to things which happened to himself, and are related elsewhere, which would never have occurred to an impostor. There is not the smallest deviation from divine truth. There is a solemnity and an authority nowhere found except in inspired writings; and a direct application to the soul, as from God, of the authority of its contents, which is one characteristic of inspiration. The manner in which it deals with the word, as well as with the events of the life of Christ, has a divine character. We see in it a knowledge and a use of the grand principles of divine truth, which are unquestionably original, and which possess at the same time that divine force which belongs to the whole Bible. There is an absence of amplification only to be found in the Bible, and which is the result of that consciousness of authority, with which an inspired man would speak, or rather which was the natural consequence of his divine authority.

Those who have read the Epistle of Barnabas, which some would compare with that of Peter, will be able to judge of the difference between them, and of the discernment of those who could put it on a level with that of the apostle. It is scarcely doubtful that this so-called Epistle of Barnabas is a fabrication, though of his time; but one has only to read any of the Epistles of the Fathers (called apostolic) to see that God has guarded

the testimony of His word, by the counter-proof of the futility of the writings even of the Apostle's companions. One would scarcely find so much nonsense in these days, even in religious books written for children. There is an epistle by Clement—kind and amiable enough—written to make peace at Corinth, but it is the only passable one; and even this is as inferior to the New Testament as, doubtless, the humility of the author would have admitted it to be.

Jude, says the letter, makes use of fables and apocryphal books in his Epistle; who told him so? The Epistle, on the whole, contains deep and wonderful instruction as to the features of the apostasy, which is foretold in other parts of the word; supplying elements which, although linking themselves with the whole of scripture, are found nowhere else. It contains deep principles of eternal and divine truth; and it sketches, with surprising distinctness in a few words, the moral progressive steps of man's apostasy, as well as its historical beginnings in the church—beginnings confirmed doctrinally, and by allusions to other parts of the New Testament. It bears the same marks of inspiration and divine authority which I have pointed out in Peter, and the same contrast with what we know to be of man.

But, it is said, there are fables in it. Which are they? Is the fall of the angels a fable? The Lord Himself tells us that Satan is a fallen being. We learn from Peter that there are angels reserved for judgment. The temerity of human knowledge calls everything which is beyond its reach a fable. I believed Jude and Peter, borne out if that were needful by other passages, more than Mr. Scherer's letter. All Revelation is a fable to him who believes not. Perhaps it is the mention of Michael

contending with the devil. But this conflict with evil angels is, as a scriptural truth, recognized, not only in the Apocalypse and 2 Peter, but also in the book of Daniel (chap. 10:20, 21) quoted by the Lord Himself. That passage shews that Michael especially interests himself in Israel: he is there called their “prince.” We find the same thing in Daniel 12:1 —a chapter, one part of which is especially pointed out as worthy of attention by the Lord Jesus. It proves that Michael is used of the Lord in behalf of Israel. One can easily understand the use which the Israelites would have made of the body of Moses, as we know what they did for centuries with the brazen serpent. We know also that the Lord buried him, carefully concealing the place of his interment. Does He not use the angels in His service for these things, and Michael especially, for Israel, and against Satan, who opposed his service to that people?

So there is not an element contained in Jude’s statement that is not borne out in principle by the general testimony of the word of God. That Jude should have been commissioned to add to all this the record of another and similar fact is no difficulty to one whose mind is imbued with the word of God. On the contrary, there is much solemnity in the instruction. It has none of those curious and idle details, which we find in the fables of the apocryphal books; but it throws much light on that invisible world of Providence, the existence of which is proved by a multitude of passages, and which will be unveiled to us, when we shall know even as we are known. If I reason thus, it is not that I question the inspiration of Jude: no, for his whole Epistle is stamped with the love, the holiness, and the authority of God; and it has its own manifest place in the series of the books of

the New Testament. I am not proving the truth of what Jude spoke by inspiration, but the superficial character of what Mr. Scherer said about him.

As to the accusation of borrowing from the Apocrypha, where is it proved? I conclude the prophecy of Enoch is alluded to, as it is found in an apocryphal book, bearing the name of Enoch, which was published in England some years ago, and which exists in the Ethiopian language. But there is no shadow of a proof that Jude borrowed it from this Ethiopian book. There would be nothing extraordinary in the supposition that the author of the so-called “Book of Enoch” may have been acquainted with this prophecy. The prophecy itself is confirmed by a multitude of passages in the Old and New Testaments. Its divine truth is proved by innumerable texts of all kinds. Is the relating of that which is certainly true, and nothing more, a proof of not being directed by God, because he who composes a book, known to be an imposture, adds to it a mass of crudities? Is it not rather a proof to the contrary, if proof were needed? Jude gives us a true prophecy. Another avails himself of the truth of this prophecy, which had come to his knowledge, to accredit a mass of errors. And this is brought forward as a proof that the former was not under the direction of God, and that he must have quoted the true prophecy from him who made so bad a use of it! And this is called reasoning, and wisdom, and knowledge!

To a Christian, on the contrary, the preservation of this prophecy has an affecting interest. In adding, to a truth taught elsewhere, the fact of its having been prophesied by Enoch, we have a testimony that, even before the flood, the man of God—who “walked with God” and was

taken from the world, as the church will one day be—had already at that early period announced the judgment of the world he was leaving. “Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world.” All His purposes are fixed beforehand, whatever may be His patience and His dealings in long-suffering and in righteousness with man, ere those purposes be accomplished.

In short, to say that this passage has been taken from an apocryphal book is an assertion destitute of proof. The date of the apocryphal book of Enoch is controverted. Yet this must be settled before there can be any foundation whatever for alleging that the passage in Jude was taken from it. My own examination of the question has thoroughly convinced me that it was not.

We have now to consider the Apocalypse. This book is only rejected because not understood. Ignorance assumes the office of judge, and decides with the temerity natural to it. To one not familiar with the word, it is indeed obscure in its style; and it is so in its matter, because it treats of subjects which naturally tend to make it so. Nothing is difficult for Mr. Scherer. In vain a number of pious men have occupied themselves with the interpretation of this book, each, with many errors perhaps, adding their part of light to the light which grew by their united efforts. In vain has the great ignorance of all been manifested. Mr. Scherer perfectly understands this book; he knows precisely what the prophecy said, and according to him, “it has been contradicted by facts.” What a pity that he has not furnished us with his interpretation so certain that it leaves no doubt! It is sure that, if he can say it has been contradicted by facts, he ought to know what it signifies.

What trouble he would have saved the church! This is not the first time that ignorance has determined questions where true knowledge has discovered its ignorance and confessed it. To such a temerity, to a dogmatism so superficial, an answer is scarcely necessary. I only add that there is no book in the New Testament, of which the date and the author are established by more precise, more ancient, and more competent evidences; not one which has acted in a more holy and solemn manner on the conscience of true Christians; not one which links itself more admirably with the whole structure of the New Testament, as completing the whole edifice; not one, the absence of which in this respect would be more sensibly felt. There is not one that connects itself so much with the Old Testament, by borrowing the imagery of the prophets to unfold its revelations, while so far altering that imagery as to adapt it to the New Testament.

This mode of using the Old Testament forms the most perfect connection between heavenly and earthly things, a connection which is fully established in the New Testament. It also makes the symbolic language of the Revelation more easy to be understood, and the object of the book more apparent. There is scarcely a subject onwards from Genesis I with which the Apocalypse does not link itself, without effort, and in a manner which is altogether beyond human art. This book has the impress, the lofty range, the perfection of the mind of God, precisely in those representations and symbols from which man has endeavoured to borrow something, in order to give a more exalted character to the idolatrous creations of his own mind. Creation—the Jew —man—his power in the world—the work of Satan—that

of Christ in its results of glory to Himself and to the earth—the church—the condition of the saints in relation to God and to the earth—the government and the long-suffering of God—the angels—all these subjects are in this wondrous book treated of and set in their relations to each other and to God. Nor is it deficient as to any one doctrine revealed in the word. It does not rehearse these doctrines; but it expresses them in new forms, and under altogether new circumstances, which throw fresh light upon their former associations and receive it from them in return.

How could there have been so suited a close to such a volume as the Bible? The Bible sets forth all the ways of God, from the creation to the return of that creation (long fallen, rebellious, and miserable, but now redeemed) into the order and blessing in which it is securely set by the fulness of God's grace; nothing being excluded save that which is incompatible with the blessing itself. It reveals the eternal Son of God acting in the midst of this whole scene, glorifying His Father, and bringing everything into a more beautiful order than had been lost. One can understand that a book like this would not close without taking up again all the threads of this wondrous, divine process, and exhibiting those results which, when the work of the Son is perfected, and all things subdued, will bring in the full and perfect dominion of the eternal God: the blessing of that God, who has made Himself known in Jesus. This is what the Apocalypse sets before us.

To enter into some details of another part of this book, who is it that in choosing seven churches (a number which, in itself, suggests the idea of a complete whole), could give us, in two short chapters, every moral

position in which the church (and even every individual who has ears to hear) could be found, from the beginning to the end of its career? Who could, with this, give us the most precious revelation of heavenly blessings, adapted as special encouragement to the difficulties of each of these respective conditions? Who is it that could, at the same time, furnish the richest revelations of the divine and varied glory of the Person of the Son of God, a glory which beams with all-pervading brightness over every part of the subject; and that too, in such details as are calculated to strengthen those who may be placed in the circumstances described? This is what we find in chapters 2 and 3 of the Apocalypse.

One can understand, moreover, that when the inspired communications made to the church were about to be closed; when those who were commissioned by God to superintend were being removed; when evil, as the word everywhere testifies, was coming in like a flood; one can understand, I say, that the Spirit of God should have thus left to the church—to the faithful who need it—a moral summary, which could meet their need in the darkness gathering round them. Such a summary these chapters of Revelation afford us: a summary, which, if God arouses those who are His, explains to them the course and result of events which have taken place during the darkness, and makes manifest, even though the church may have slumbered, that nothing has happened without God; a summary, which gives warning also of the judgment which will fall upon the professing church, as the result of her unfaithfulness to God and to die light which He has dispensed, and makes room for His dealing with the world. This terrific judgment is the

consequence of man's rejection and corruption of God's last and most gracious manifestation of Himself. The consummated iniquity of that which professes to be the church leaves room for nothing but judgment; and, when this judgment is executed, this closing book of scripture tells us that righteousness will be established in the world by divine power.

We can understand that such a book as this should close the revelations of God! Mr. Scherer sees nothing in it but historic speculations which have been contradicted —a view worthy of such a system. That it should contain things hard to be understood is not to be wondered at. Its language, it is true, is figurative, but it is full of moral instruction to the spiritual. God intended it to be a light to His people, for a peculiar blessing is attached to the observance of it; chap. 1:3. It is only in proportion as the church awakens, takes her place in humbling herself, and apprehends her true relationship to God, that she will be able also to acquire a divine understanding of this rich treasury of all which throws light upon her outward position, and to comprehend the way in which God will resume the government of the world, to place it in the hands of the First-begotten to whom every knee shall bow.

The author of the letter prefers man to God, or, at least, would rather listen to him, and this is in reality preferring him. This will be charged as calumny. I shall be glad of it, for such sensitiveness will at least shew that conscience feels it Is a horrible thing if true; and that a system which adopts such a principle as its basis condemns itself. Well then, I repeat it, he prefers man to God, and avows that he does so. For the rationalist the Bible is no longer the word of God. Human reason

pronounces upon it, upon its verity, upon its moral worth; but it is self-evident that, were it recognized as the word of God, this could not—dare not be done. It is equally certain, that the rationalist does thus judge the Bible, and chooses rather to rely on his own reason than to acknowledge divine authority, be it in what book it may. He says, “the Bible is no longer the word of God; and I know not what detriment it will be to the cause of piety to exchange a written code for the living productions of apostolic individuality, authority for history, and, to speak plainly, a cabalistic ventriloquy for the noble accents of the human voice.” If this be not preferring the word of a man to the word of God, what is it? Inspiration, which makes man the mouth and the voice of God, is “a cabalistic ventriloquy!!”

The author prefers the voice of man; he thinks it a nobler voice. Poor rationalists! self-admirers, to whom the voice of God, too clearly heard, is a deadly alarm—an unknown sound, which too plainly tells them what they are! Yet hearken to it, ye wise men, who are tempted of Satan to search into good and evil, relying solely upon yourselves. Hearken to it: you will find it, if it convict you, a voice of grace, which can restore you, and cover your moral nakedness with the perfection and the glory of the second Adam—of the Son of God.

Mr. Scherer pretends that one of the shapes which error has taken of late years is to assert, that the rejection of the inspiration of the Bible and of its authority over believers, allows the Holy Ghost to resume His rightful place. I fully allow that the church has grievously forgotten the presence and authority of the Holy Ghost dwelling in her. But I cannot understand how rejecting the authority of what the Holy Ghost has already spoken

can enhance His authority. It appears to me to be rather opening the door to human pretensions and the devices of Satan. I have seen the latter effect—a door opened for Satan's devices—produced by the same cause; and in this letter we are completely given over to human pretensions under the specious guise of greater spirituality. The language of the author already quoted is: "Instead of the authority of the word, we shall have the word of authority; instead of referring the poor proselyte to the article of a code, to the ritual of a dogmatist" [which I would no more do, than the author of the letter], "or to the pages of I know not what mysterious oracles, we will refer him to all the great prophets of all ages, to the living instructions of the church, to the word of God personified in His servants, to the Spirit and to His manifestations, in a word, to the immediate contact of the heart with truth." How my heart would be brought into more immediate contact with truth, by listening to the voice of man, rather than by listening to "the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth," it is difficult to conceive.

I accept "the manifestation of the Spirit," if thereby is only meant the exercise of spiritual gifts for the edification of the church, and the energy of the Spirit manifested in these gifts; but I warn the believer to be carefully on his guard against all false claims to these "spiritual manifestations." I have witnessed such, and have had evidence, which to me plainly identified them with the active energy of Satan. It is not every spirit which is the Spirit of God; and Satan can disguise himself as an angel of light. Such "manifestations," when accompanied by the rejection of the word of God and of its direct authority over the soul, such as that

which is found in Mr. Scherer's letter, proceed from the enemy of souls. This is the case with the Irvingites, and others. It is probable that this movement of the author of the letter is something after this, that the enemy is preparing bolder attempts of this kind, if the Lord hinder him not. The church in general does not sufficiently own the Holy Ghost to have real strength against such pretensions. But it is not in giving up the word, which the Spirit has given us, that we shall find this strength.

Observe, we are asked to renounce that which is here styled "I know not what mysterious oracles," but which Stephen calls "the lively oracles," and Paul, "the oracles of God" (and remark, "the lively oracles" were the letter of scripture), and to give ourselves up to "all the great prophets of all ages," that is, to all the vagaries of the human mind, apart from God, perhaps under the influence of Satan, to be tossed about on a restless ocean of uncertainty without chart and without compass. For there is no word of God, only "the noble accents of the human voice," and a "word of authority"! that is, whether it be an individual or a body which assumes this authority, we are to resign ourselves to the guidance of man—not of God!

I recognize the existence of the evil which Mr. Scherer professes to assail. It is one of the commonest devices of the enemy to attack a corruption when it grows old and loses its power over the mind of man, in order to set up some other evil more in accordance with the state of men's minds. Thus the heathen mythology was assailed by the scoffs of infidelity, as soon as it had been shaken by Christianity. This is what the letter does; it attacks that lifeless dogmatic theology, which makes use of the

name of God in order to put restraint, not on man, but on the Holy Ghost. But while doing this, instead of bringing us back to the authority of God, it sets up that of man; instead of restoring the liberty and the rights of the Spirit of God, it gives us up to the spirit of man, publishing its unbelief as to the word, and undermining, as far as it can, all that is certainly of God. When this is once taken away— when there is no more authority of God thus, says the letter (which alone secures true liberty to man)—when there is no other authority than that of him who speaks or of the church, who will then be free?

Mr. Scherer speaks of the Person of the Saviour. Doubtless this is the centre and the strength of Christianity: but what faith would there be, or in what Saviour, if the word of God were taken from us?

Mr. Scherer speaks of the Holy Ghost, but he speaks in such an ambiguous manner that, to say no more, one does not know what he means by this title. This Spirit, says he, “which has made the apostles, which has given in them a form to the Christian conscience, to the doctrine, to the life, and operated in every sense the rich cheerfulness of the principle contained in their faith,—this Spirit will exercise in us a faith equally free and spiritual.” Now, I own most fully the way in which the Comforter, sent down from heaven, has been grieved and forgotten; but I find here something vague and mystical, which in no wise answers to that which the inspiration, that Mr. Scherer disdains, said of the Comforter. It is a principle which engenders a kind of communism, and not the revealer of Christ, and the power of a divine Person in the church.

The Holy Ghost is the source of strength, of power, and of understanding in the church, and in the Christian. But if you separate the idea of the Holy Ghost from the inspiration and the authority of the written word, you give yourself up to the imaginations of the mind or to an authority which is merely human, whatever may be its pretensions or the ecclesiastical form it may assume; it is authority, and not truth, that is established. The word of God is the authority of the truth and of Him who reveals it.

What is the meaning of “this Spirit will exercise in us a faith?” But I find nothing in the way in which it is spoken of the Holy Ghost which leads me to think that it is an expression that negligence has allowed to pass. All is spoken in the same vague manner.

But I close my letter, already too long. I have been obliged to write it by snatches and half-pages. But when such a document is presented to me, I will not let it pass without exposing its character.

Had I had the thought of writing so long a letter, I should not have dared to address it to you, but here it is such as it is. I feel that, if it was not Mr. Scherer’s letter, one would have been able to have taken up in a more decisive manner the pretension and the doctrines; but my business was with the Bible and with souls.

I still hope he is a Christian, though after his letter several will not believe it, for his philosophy has made it fall very low. I sincerely and heartily pray God to reveal it, but I denounce his doctrine and his system as being of Satan.

As Mr. S. has published his letter of resignation as Professor of the School of Theology at Geneva, I am now

free to give entire publicity to my letter on the Divine Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures.

Appendix

There is an important point which I have not yet brought forward, and on which I would add a few words; that is, the the authority of the word, independently of the effect it produces on the heart. I may be led to recognize the authority of the word of God, through the effect which it has produced in my soul; but evidently, it is not this effect which gives it its authority. If the word produces this effect, it is because it possessed the authority which I recognize, before I yielded to it. I recognize it, because it exists. If Christ pronounced the words of God, His words had authority, notwithstanding the unbelief of His hearers; that is, they possessed intrinsic authority. Nor have they lost it, by being written. The Lord speaks (John 5) of “writings” being the highest order of means of communication. If the apostle has made the will of God known to us in “words which the Holy Ghost teacheth,” the revelations he received and thus communicated have a divine authority over the conscience, even though they should be rejected by man. The authority of the word does not depend upon its being received by him who hears. It is not he who is to judge it, except at his own peril. “The words that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.” Here is what is called possessing an authority independent of him who pretends to judge of it.

We are not now discussing the authenticity of the testimony, but its authority, allowing it to be authentic. Wherein lies this authority? Suppose two persons read a portion of the Bible: the heart of one is touched and

convinced of the divine authority of what he reads; the other remains in his unbelief. Does the authority of the word depend on the faith of one who believes, or is it the same for both, although unrecognized by him who believes not? It is evident that either he who believed was mistaken, or, if not, that the authority of the book, although unrecognized by the unbeliever, is as great for him as for the one who bowed to it. The authority lies then in the word itself, independently of the effect produced by it, or of the opinion man forms of it. It possesses intrinsic authority. The judgment of the last day will prove it. “The words that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.” It could not be otherwise with the word of God; but it is important clearly to establish this principle. The word of God cannot be useful if it is not received, but it has no less all authority because it is the word of God. Unless to deny the existence of all divine communication one cannot doubt this principle. To deny all communication is unbelief. We do not want to reason on what the church possesses in the scriptures, but to convince the unbeliever. And more, unbelief does not destroy the authority of the word, for the rebellion of man destroys not the authority of God.

The word itself establishes this. “And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear; for they are most rebellious,” Ezek. 2:7; compare 1 John 3:11-27. “He that believeth hath the witness in himself”: this is the inward power of the testimony. “He that believeth not God hath made him a liar”: here is the guilt of him who believes not. Thus the authority of testimony from God is independent of the

judgment which man may pronounce upon it. The testimony will itself judge man.

Other passages which are derived from this principle apply it to scripture as a body of writings. “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,” 2 Tim. 3:15. Here the sacred letter, or scripture, has an authority over man from his childhood, still rendering the man of God perfect. Then it is not the judgment that the man of God had of the scripture that marked their value. He who knew their value, as rendering the man of God perfect, acknowledged their authority over him when he must have been thoroughly incapable of judging. That is, they had a full and absolute authority over him independent of his capacity to receive them, a divine and intrinsic authority. The most advanced man of God is happy to receive them in the same spirit; 1 Pet. 2:1, 2. The apostle formally states the principle of authority in the same passage: “stand fast in the things which thou hast learnt, and which have been entrusted to thee, knowing from whom thou hast learnt them.” It is the authority of him who had taught them which was the reason for holding them fast.

The intrinsic authority, then, of the testimony of scripture is clearly established. It is an authority independent of the reception of the testimony by the hearer; so entirely independent, that the word will judge him who is not obedient to it. This proves to us that God has endued it with moral evidence, powerful enough to bring in as guilty the man who does not receive the testimony, and who thereby treats God as a liar. Nevertheless it is only the grace of God which can

overcome the moral resistance of man's heart, unbelieving as it is by nature and by will as to the things of God, though full of credulity as to the things of man.

There is another point which I have only glanced at, and which I desire to put forward a little more plainly. Many circumstances testify, that the narratives of the evangelists were written not merely by man, but by the Holy Ghost. For instance, John was one of the three apostles who were with Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane, an attendant upon the scene of His agony. He says nothing about it. Nothing could be more affecting and more solemn. John most certainly had not forgotten it, for he relates many other of the circumstances which are not to be found in the other Gospels; for instance, that those who came to take Jesus "went backward and fell to the ground," and yet respecting the Saviour's agony he makes not the slightest mention. John accompanied Jesus also to the cross; yet he says not a word of His having been forsaken of God, although he relates a multitude of other circumstances, which prove that the Saviour was as calm there as when he describes Him to us in the garden. A man who had written the history of the sufferings of the Saviour would not have failed to relate things so deeply interesting, and of which he had himself been an eye-witness. Matthew also would have related the remarkable incident which occurred in the garden of Gethsemane, of which he was an eye-witness, namely, that they all fell to the ground; but he does not mention it, whilst he gives an account of the agony of Jesus and His prayer, although he was not one of three who accompanied Him at that time.

Now if you examine these Gospels, you will find that this peculiarity—inexplicable as it would be if they were not inspired—becomes quite inteUigible, when we recognize their inspiration. One and the same author wrote them all. The Holy Ghost, whose office it is to take of the things of Christ and to shew them unto us, furnishes us in John with those circumstances of the history of Jesus, which would bring out the glory of His Person as Son of God—the glory of Him "who offered Himself to God" for us. In Matthew He gives us that which is needed to make known the suffering Messiah. The result is, not only harmony between the parts of each Gospel, but also between all the Gospels; producing a perfect whole—exhibiting the design and the workmanship of one and the same author. This principle is applicable to the entire contents of the four Gospels. I have only called the reader's attention to the garden of Gethsemane and to the cross, as striking instances. One who is well versed in the Gospels, and who has spiritual discernment, would know by the manner in which a subject is presented in which Gospel it is to be found. Compare the connection between the end of Matthew 21 and the parable in the beginning of chapter 22: also the way in which the corresponding parable in Luke 16:16 is introduced, with that of the husbandmen in Luke 20, and you will perceive that the substance, the form, and the diversities of these parables are in perfect harmony with the design of each Gospel. In Matthew, we have the rejection of Christ in connection with the relation of the Messiah to the Jews; in Luke, the moral order of the events, the acts and ways of the God of grace, founded on the broader, more moral, and less official basis of the character of the Son of man. The same thing may be observed in comparing Matthew 24 and Luke 21.

There is another testimony to the truth of inspiration, the peculiar character of which deserves the reader's attention. It applies specially to the Old Testament, but it brings out very clearly the difference between the inspiration of the Old and that of the New. It is that the prophets did not understand their own prophecies, but studied them as we might do. We read in 1 Peter 1:11, "Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves but unto us they did minister," etc. The prophets searched into that which the Holy Ghost had spoken through themselves. Their inspiration was so absolute, and so independent of the workings of their own minds, that they inquired into the meaning of that which they uttered, as any of us might do. This is not precisely the character of the inspiration of the New Testament; but it is not, therefore, the less real. Its character is declared in the succeeding word— "reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven."

"The Holy Ghost sent down from heaven" leads into all truth; and thus inspiration acts in the understanding and by the understanding; but it is not on that account the less inspiration. On the contrary, the apostle Paul preferred the inspiration which acts by the understanding to that which is apparently more independent of it. 1 Corinthians 14:14-19: "If I pray in a tongue, my spirit prayeth; but my understanding is unfruitful." Daniel 12:8, gives us an example of that which Peter describes— "And I heard, but understood

not; then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end."

The reader will remember that the passage I have quoted is the one to which the Lord Himself referred the disciples, in order that they might understand it. Now if the prophet did not understand the revelation he gave, if the prophets searched into the signification of their own prophecies, it is most evident that those prophecies were given through direct and positive inspiration.

I desire to add a thought which tends to confirm the truth I seek to maintain, and which applies to the whole of the Bible. Our attention is called to the fact that the Bible is not one book, but a collection of writings by different authors. It is precisely on this fact that I ground my argument, adding also that they were written at periods very remote from each other. In spite of this great diversity of times and of authors there is a perfect unity of design and of doctrine: a unity, the separate parts of which are so linked with each other, and so entirely adapted to each other, that the whole work is evidently that of one and the same Spirit, one and the same mind, with one purpose carried on from the beginning to the end, whatever might be the date of each separate book; and this, not at all by means of mere uniformity of idea, for the promises are quite distinct from the law; and the gospel of grace is distinct from them both. Nevertheless, its parts are so correlative and form so harmonious a whole, that, with the least attention, one cannot fail to perceive, that it is the production of one mind. Now there is but One, who lived through all the ages during which the various

books of the Bible were written, and that One is the Holy Ghost.

Look at Genesis: you will find in it doctrines, promises, types, which are in perfect harmony with that which is more fully developed in the New Testament; but in this book they are related in the way of narrative with the greatest simplicity, yet in such a manner as to give the most perfect picture of things, which should happen in after ages. Feelings natural to piety (speaking historically) are so related as to possess a meaning, which, when we have the key to it, throws light upon the most precious doctrines of the New Testament, and the most remarkable events of prophecy.

Look at Exodus, and you will find the same thing. Every thing is made according to the pattern seen by Moses in the mount, and furnishes us with the clearest exposition we possess of the ways of God in Christ. At the same time the law is given—and yet the law is not imitated in the gospel, which does not so much as contain a copy of it. Nevertheless, the law is linked with the gospel in a manner which makes it impossible to separate them, and which gives to the authority of this revelation a divine and absolute character. Were it not so, Christ would have died to suffer the consequences of a partially human institution; for He bore the curse of the law. Observe this carefully: it was “the curse of the law “revealed to man, and of which He said, that not one jot or tittle should pass away till all were fulfilled. And moreover, it was not when reasoning with the Jews, upon their own ground, that Christ said this, but when teaching His disciples, according to His own perfect wisdom, and solemnly setting before them the principles of His kingdom.

Take Leviticus: the details of its sacrifices furnish a light, which throws upon the work of Christ rays so bright that nothing could replace them; supplying a key to all the workings of the human heart, and an answer to all its need, such as it is found even among the heathen. These details prefigure every aspect of the work of Christ, as doctrinally unfolded in the New Testament, whether by Himself or by His apostles; yet, to their inspired writer, they were only Jewish ordinances.

Take Numbers—the history of the journeyings of God's people through the wilderness. "These things," says the apostle, "happened to them for examples [types], and they are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come." Who was it that wrote them for us? Certainly not Moses (although he was the human instrument), but He who knoweth the end from the beginning, and who orders all things according to His good pleasure.

All the circumstances of Christian life are found treasured up in these oracles, in so complete a manner, that the apostle could say, "They are able to make us wise unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ." On the other hand, the New Testament is equally far from merely repeating the substance of the Old, or from making void its authority. It brings in an altogether new light—a light which (while setting aside a multitude of things as fulfilled) throws upon the Old Testament a radiance which alone gives its contents their true bearing. All this applies to the moral and to the ceremonial law; to the history of the patriarchs; to the royalties of David and of Solomon; to the sentiments expressed in the Psalms, as well as to other subjects. Is

it not one mind which has done all this? Was it the mind of Moses or of Paul? Assuredly not.

Observe also, that all this refers to Christ, and to all the various glories of Christ—glories which God alone knew so as to reveal them beforehand, and to give, in the history and ordinances of His people, and even in that which is related of the world, precisely that which would serve for the development of all that was to be manifested in His Son Jesus. Accordingly, what says Peter? (Acts 2.) “Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and seeing this before, he spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.”

I do not go through other books of the Bible to furnish proofs of this unity of design, which is manifested in a work wrought by such various instruments, and at periods so remote from each other—a unity realised in such a manner as precludes all idea of its having been intended by the persons who executed it. I only use the fact here in confirmation of the principle which I maintain; but to one who has any knowledge of the word of God, it is an incontestable proof.

I add but one word. In judging of inspiration by the precision of the account, a mistake is often committed as to what should be sought for. The Holy Ghost does not aim at that accuracy which would be needful to prove the truthfulness of man. The Holy Ghost has always a moral or spiritual object—the revelation of some eternal principle of truth and grace. Every circumstance which has no bearing upon His object is omitted. He regards

not accuracy in that respect. But the moral accuracy is all the greater on this account, and the picture presented to the conscience much more complete. The introduction of something needful to human accuracy, would spoil the perfection of the whole as God's testimony. God does not seek to amuse the mind of man by stories to no purpose, but to instruct his heart by truth. This might sometimes make it rather difficult to balance the whole as a mere narrative; but there are two ways of explaining the cause of a difficulty—the ignorance of him who feels the difficulty, or the impossibility of the thing which has perplexed him. And man willingly attributes to the latter cause that which proceeds from the former. He who understands the designs of the Holy Ghost in what He says seizes the perfection of the word, where the mind of man is perplexed by a thousand difficulties.

1 On God's part, I say, because no one disputes the possibility of man's falling into error through his own folly or negligence.

2 What is true in this respect of one apostle, or sacred writer, is no doubt true of the rest. No one would venture to assert that the communications made through Paul were of a different character, or of another nature, from those given through Peter, or John, or any other prophet.

3 Where there is similarity between Jude and Peter, there is a profound moral difference: Peter speaks of wickedness in connection with government; Jude, of apostasy from a first estate.

On The Work Of Christ;

Or, Remarks On The Second Letter Of Mr. Edmond Scherer4 Mr. Scherer has added a second letter to that already known and has just published them together. His aim is to shew that faith can abide intact spite of the denial of the inspiration of the scriptures; but this second letter is already the full proof of the contrary. The doctrine it contains is simply, in very fair phrases, the denial of the expiation of Christ and of the doctrine of justification by faith which flows from it.

The system of Mr. Scherer, who has not even the merit of originality, is only a diluted Irvingism. Besides it is the adoration of man, coloured with a certain mystic tint. Under the pretext of glorifying the Person of Christ, mysticism denies the efficacy of His work. Further, without the doctrine of expiation (such is the deceitfulness of the heart), admiration of the Person of Christ and of His life may be self-admiration. Christ was a man; and, by deifying man in Him, people put on themselves the crown of His glory under the pretext of the duty and capability of being like Him internally.

This system pretends to something more real, more intimate, more personal in religion. Poor heart of man! When will it learn that nothing so humbles it (and this is what is wanted), that nothing operates in it so strongly, in the way needed, as the knowledge that all has been done outside itself? Glorying in one’s humility, and being indeed humble, are two very different things. It is not by thinking of oneself, in order to imitate humility, that one becomes humble; it is by being debtor for all to the grace of Him who has saved us. Pharisaism does not

consist in attributing everything to oneself, but in blessing God for what one is, instead of blessing Him for what He is, Himself.

I do not pretend to handle this question thoroughly, but only to examine some points in Mr. Scherer's letter.

There is no novelty in his system, except that he excludes, as uninspired, what the mystics confine themselves to letting alone, namely, all the Holy Ghost's teaching by the apostles. See pages 33 and 34, where the thing is plainly stated. "You ask me," says he, "what remains of Christianity, when the dogma of inspiration is thrown out? 'Jesus Christ remains.' What remains of scripture? 'The history of Jesus Christ.'"

We find in this second letter the same levity as in the first in assertions about serious matters, and in cases when the smallest examination would have shewn how destitute of foundation those assertions are. There is the same inflation of style, serving to veil capital vices in the reasoning, and to conceal unbelief and the desire of exalting man. "Have you not found," says he, "salvation and life in Jesus Christ? and if it is so, how can you fear, lest any fact whatever should weaken this fact of immediate certainty?" (Page 28.) But it is not the fact of my possessing eternal life that this foolish doctrine weakens; it is the certainty of the truths that God uses as the means to communicate and maintain fife. To deny inspiration is to deny the certain communication of truth on the part of God.

"Very far" (the author tells us) "from being incompatible with criticism, faith carries a critical force in itself." (Page 29.) This contradicts the sufficiency of moral certitude, and the historical proofs of which he

speaks in his first letter. But, passing over that, there is little but words in this phrase. How does the fact that faith possesses a critical force shew that something else has that force? So far as there is any force in the reasoning, the reasoning itself precisely shews the contrary of what Mr. Scherer pretends to establish; for, if faith carries a critical force in itself, faith, having made its own criticism, excludes thereby the possibility of questioning its judgment: otherwise, its judgment is null. It pronounces, because it discerns. If I say, the tongue has in itself the capacity to discern the taste of what touches it, by attributing this faculty to the tongue, I exclude all judgment pronounced on the decision of the tongue; if not, I deny what I have just affirmed. The tongue says that honey is sweet. Who disputes its decision? Who disputes the power of the tongue—the very thing one has just been affirming? And this is owing to a special connection between the quality of an object, and the capacity to discern this quality. Thus, faith is faith, because it receives and understands the things of God, which are in connection with a capacity proper to faith; that is, the critical force which it has in itself implies the incompatibility of all other criticisms. This is so much the more true, because the quality recognized by faith excludes by this very fact all other criticism; for faith recognizes the authority of God in that which it receives; it believes God; otherwise it is not faith. Who will criticize God and His words? But, until one has received a communication as being such, faith is not in activity.

This manner of expressing oneself is, however, very imperfect, because it takes in only the fact of the existence of faith in man. The word of God, as is always

the case, gives us much more light than the best reasonings. “The spiritual man,” it tells us, “judgeth [discerneth] all things, yet he himself is judged [discerned] of no man,” 1 Cor. 2:15. There is the criticism with which all other criticism is incompatible. And what is the force of this expression? It is, that God is there introduced, and that the Spirit of God is in the spiritual man, directing him and conducting him. He discerns all things because he is spiritual.

Now, mark well too the effect of this truth. The Holy Ghost, working in man, does not exclude the responsibility of man; on the contrary, it gives him the right feeling of his relationship with God, and judges all that is inconsistent with that relationship. He does not act independently of the Lord, because He subjects man to God, and to what God has said. This was true in the case of Christ, and perfectly true in Him only. In us “the flesh lusteth against the Spirit,” tending always to produce imperfection in discernment and conduct. And again the Holy Ghost, working in man, does not exclude the faculties of man; He uses them; He is not judged by them. He uses them, so that it is human intelligence employed on all the subjects with which the Holy Ghost can occupy it, but employed by Him, enlightened by Him, receiving a capacity, in a certain sense, divine, without ceasing at the same time to be human. Man is thus delivered from the dominion of his corrupt nature. Reason neither judges nor governs; for if it does, it is only the will of man aspiring to independence, that is, excluding God, and always wrong by the very fact of this exclusion. When God is not already supreme, and His authority absolute in the eyes of a man, the man is altogether in a lie, because he is not in his moral place.

But, while employing and in a divine way enlarging the capacity of man, the Holy Ghost submits him necessarily to God, makes God known to him, makes him receive what is of God—the word—because it is the perfect expression of the judgment of God. It is true that the flesh "lusteth against the Spirit," so that imperfection is there. The result is not one of absolute perfection. It is only in as much as he is spiritual, as I have already said, that a man discerns all things.

The Spirit not only makes man subject to God, places him thus morally in what is true, and renders him capable of morally discerning; but He delivers him from the influence of the carnal motives which constantly vitiated his judgment. The Spirit presents to the affections of man, God in Christ, as well as a development of the truth, in all the relationships of man with God, as sinner and as saint, and that according to the height of the Person and work of Christ, and it is His work alone which gives us the true estimate of sin. Christ always estimated sin according to God; but, as to us sinners, it is only in the cross that we perfectly estimate it, because we there see it outside ourselves, in whom all is darkened by sin. It is there that the hatred of man against God, and the love of God for man, have met in one and the same act; and it is there that the moral state of man and the perfect revelation of God have been completely brought into evidence. That act is, at the same time, righteousness and salvation, death and judgment, as they were never manifested before, and never will be; and in that act they have been manifested as salvation and as life, the means which God has opened for His sovereign love and the salvation of the believer.

The insulting spear, which struck the Saviour when already dead, only brought forth the water and the blood which atone for and cleanse the sin which made them flow.

Man, morally, his affections, his judgment, are thus purified by that Jesus whom the Holy Ghost presents to him, that he may possess Him in his heart. Sweet and sanctifying proof of the Father's love! The Holy Ghost in man is a real and divine power; but He also works morally, and in the intelligence of him in whom He dwells. The spiritual man discerneth all things. All means are at his disposal. He judges all things, he takes knowledge of all things if needful, according to the Spirit and by His direction. It is not his reason which judges; he judges spiritually of all things. He judges himself instead of pretending to judge God, as if he had a capacity independent of Him. It is this that is incompatible with faith; this is that criticism which is incompatible with faith, because faith acknowledges God, and judges that proud criticism, which, in its folly, would judge God.

If then one would speak of faith, it is because it has a sovereign power of criticism, because it is incompatible with criticism. That which criticizes supremely cannot be criticized, it would be a flagrant contradiction. "The spiritual man," says Paul (for faith is an abstraction), "judgeth [discerneth] all things, and he himself is judged [discerned] of no man," 1 Cor. 2:15.

What is this "transformation" of faith or of truth? It purifies itself, you say, rejecting every foreign substance. Well and good; but what is that movement in which "the constitutive elements of truth are found to be carried

away”? Is not the truth of God stable, immutable, and eternal, transforming man by its power and by grace, but remaining ever itself, and ever the same?

Mr. Scherer—and this is convenient—wishes one to have the courage to set aside the dogmatic notion of inspiration, and place oneself, with the appearance of faith, on the free ground of the historical point of view, etc. It is clear that if I do that, all is done. “The assurance of faith,” say you? In what? Founded on what? On Jesus Christ, will you tell me? But how should I have a divine history of Him, without there being a divine capacity to write it? It is a book that I read, it is not Himself that I see. Mr. Scherer will tell me that what I read is evidently divine. Agreed. But you must fully bear in mind that you have not Jesus personally. You have only what is written: it is that which must be divine, if the Jesus whom I know is divine. Is it man that does what is divine?

Mr. Scherer acknowledges fully that, in order to invent Jesus Christ, one must have been Christ himself. In effect, it is morally impossible to form a just idea of such a character, without having in one the moral elements of that character— without being oneself what He is. I add, that we have this security further than the fact of invention—for this fact would have been the denial of that character, so that we must necessarily have the thing itself. Now, this is what we have by writing: who is capable of it? Man, or the men who wrote it? Then they are all Jesuses—they are all inspired! This is so much the more evident, because, in order to have this perfect and adorable being, more men than one were employed. This history is not their own act; it is a whole which reproduces Him of whom they speak. Finally, if a man

who has faith rids himself of the scriptures which serve as a foundation to faith, the question is not to know if he loses his own faith, but if he has not destroyed the foundations on which the faith of others may rest, and level the faithfulness of God, if he has not destroyed the very foundations of his own. For, if God has not spoken, on what is faith founded? If God has spoken by a man, then the man is inspired.

Mr. S. wishes us to “believe in the truth.”5 “You believe in Jesus Christ: believe also in the truth.” This is all very fine; but what does it mean? Truth is an abstraction. It must subsist somewhere. There is such a thing as the truth— moral perfection in relationship with the Supreme Being, or, at least, a just estimate of those relationships—a life and a position which expresses that estimate. A man who tells me things just as they are tells me the truth; but to tell of things just as they are in connection with God is to say a great deal. If everything in these relationships is in its normal state, it is moral perfection.6 In a state of sin the truth does not exist. All is a lie. I said, in the relationship with the Supreme Being; because, in the case of the creature, to exclude God is falsehood itself. It is what Jesus says of the adversary— “He abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him,” John 8:44.

One cannot say, God is the truth, because God is perfect in Himself, and again, no relationship is obligatory for Him. To say that a thing is the truth, there must be a point of comparison by which I can judge of the conformity of what is expressed to that which ought to be expressed. But this is not the case with respect to God. Viewed in His essential existence, God does not express Himself. He is what He is. He cannot be

compared with anything; He, as the word expresses it, “Dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto,” 1 Tim. 6:16. How then is one to have the truth?

The truth is in Christ Himself. He is moral perfection in the relationship which can subsist with God, and in the most perfect way—the expression of God in His relationship with man. His life is also a life which is the just estimate of these relationships, amidst the evil where man is fallen. “He is the way, the truth, and the life.”

This is what Mr. Scherer says (it may be objected). “Can one,” he says, “truly believe in one without believing in the other?” But mark it well, for Mr. Scherer there is one and the other; and as to that other thing, the truth, where does it subsist—out of Christ? Where is it realized or possessed? Realized out of Christ? No one would dare to pretend such a thing and call himself a Christian. There would be another Christ. But possessed? Well, possessed out of Christ— where? There would still be another Christ; for to be this in thought, as we agreed, we ought to be this in point of fact. The man who possesses the truth outside of Christ does not want Him; he is himself the thing that he seeks. What then would be this truth which would be something besides Christ? When I know Christ, I know I possess the truth. I am certain that that truth will be glorified, because it glorifies God, and gives to each thing its own proper place. Although I might abstract, my confidence is not in an abstraction; it is in a living being, in Christ, and in God who glorifies Him.

Why distinguish confidence in the truth from confidence in Christ? Because the first is confidence in man—confidence in oneself.

This is most evident.

You have no confidence in the force of the truth as to a tree or an animal, and you are right. Why? Because they lack the necessary capacity to receive it, and they can neither taste nor appreciate it. The force of the truth is then in the moral capacity of the one who receives it; that is to say, your confidence is in the moral state of man. It is true that the truth in Christ is adapted to the conscience of every man, whose rebel will rejects it. Under the influence of grace the soul tastes its truth. As to the natural man, “the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not,” John 1:5. For the rest, it is certain that truth came by Jesus Christ. What has been outside grace—its force in the heart of man? It is this, that the history of our precious Saviour can teach us. Does Mr. Scherer believe that Christ is the truth? Was Christ received? Had the truth in its perfection that force which compels one to receive it? What then does that expression mean— “believe in the truth”? that is to say, believe in its intrinsic force to make itself received? It is but the adoration of man, in face of his conduct towards Christ. Would Mr. Scherer produce a truth more perfect than Christ, or believe in the efficacy of something less perfect? If one distinguishes between the truth and Christ, to believe in the truth is but unbelief with respect to Christ. You confide in your attachment to the truth, which without that attachment is nothing. Man as a sinner, man obeying his lusts, is not attached to the truth; the truth has no influence on him.

But one may tell me that the man who possesses the truth, who loves it, who tastes it, has confidence in it, as well as in Christ. Is it a living being, and outside of Christ? Where does it exist? In the mind of him who has confidence in it.

But by what means will it have the force which inspires confidence? It is either by the power of God, and then it is faith by the power of grace; or else it is by the acceptation of him who approves of it—that is to say, by man. Now God is here left outside. The work of God is faith in Christ. In the other case, it is confidence in man, confidence in oneself.

It is at the bottom that which Mr. Scherer acknowledges. For him "faith in Christ is a sacrifice of self; confidence in the truth is a sacrifice of our timidity, of our prejudices, of our party spirit." Who is it that thus overcomes himself? It is man. The man who is true in his heart, in his motives, but outside of Christ; for if it is Christ as power, as motive, and as object, it is faith in Christ, and it is not to believe also in the truth. This new God (for in order for us to confide in Him, He must be God) this new God, I say, is only man after all.7 Truth is of all importance. One of the most important characters of the church is to be "the pillar and ground of the truth," 1 Tim. 3:15.

We are going to see if Mr. Scherer upholds it.

He tells us that "Revelation supposes … the knowledge of God and the conscience of sin." Is that truth? The Saviour said, and Mr. Scherer reminds us of it, "they that are sick need a physician." No doubt; but He did not say, those who know themselves to be sick. But as to the knowledge of God, what does it reveal? The apostle

said, that “by the law is the knowledge of sin” (Rom. 3:20), and that without law he would not have known sin; Rom. 7:7. The Lord Himself says that the Holy Ghost would reprove the world of sin, because they did not believe in Jesus; John 16:7, 9. If Mr. Scherer only means to say that every man has a conscience, I do not dispute it. But to say that the gospel supposes and does not create the sense of sin, and that the revelation of Jesus as light does not produce by grace, in the heart of man, the consciousness of what he is, this is to be as far off as possible from the truth. Mr. Scherer’s own words shew us the true consequence of this idea, that the gospel supposes the knowledge of sin; and they prove that I do not exaggerate, in supposing that he means to say that the gospel is not given to produce it. He says, “the gospel is not for everybody; it addresses itself very directly to some, whilst with others it has not one point of contact.” (Page 32.) Every Christian knows the contrary, and the word of God has a language entirely opposed to this. And if one has the consciousness of sin, without a revelation, why, as Mr. Scherer will have it, is it faith which supposes a revelation that weeps and is prostrate in the dust; or which, like that of the woman which was a sinner, covers the Master’s feet with her tears of repentance and stifled sobs? (Page 32.) If one has the sense of sin, without a revelation, and thus without faith, how is there but one faith, that of the publican prostrate in the dust, or that which shed the tears of repentance—that is to say, which has a true sense of sin? And, besides, is that indeed the only faith? “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, and peace,” Gal. 5:22. We have “not received the spirit of bondage again to fear,” but we “have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth

witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God," Rom. 8:15, 16. Is that a false faith which says, He "loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father" (Rev. 1:5, 6); and which also says, "in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory"? (1 Pet. 1:8).

Is all that tears, prostration, or stifled sobs; or else did the apostles, notwithstanding, "religious inspiration" that Mr. Scherer attributes to them, describe a false faith? Is it that I despise these precious movements of a renewed heart and conscience? God preserve me from it! But, with the habitual pretension of sentimental spirituality, Mr. Scherer confounds the first movements of the quickening Spirit in the heart with the simplicity of peace, with the calm of spirit and rest which are the portion of him who knows Christ. If there is no other faith than that which sighs and covers the Master's feet with its stifled sobs, what was the faith of this very same woman, when she went away in peace, because her sins were forgiven, and when she knew, from the lips of Jesus Himself, that this faith had saved her? But, if one would tell me that in the gospel faith receives an answer which removes the sobs and the tears, it is in that case nonsense to allege there is but the faith which weeps. Here is faith in the gospel of the grace of God, which gives peace and joy, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us; Rom. 5:5.

Sentimental people love their own sobs, not the grace which produced them. The Christian, feeble as he may be, loves God, because God loved him first. He thinks not of his repentance, but of Him who vouchsafed it to

Him, who gave him access to Himself by the blood of the Lamb, and who made him joint-heir with Christ His Son, according to His ineffable love. This ignorance of the gospel explains itself by things still more serious, that we meet with farther on in this letter. But before pointing this out I shall say a few words on another matter which, according to Mr. Scherer, the gospel supposes, namely, “the knowledge of God.”

What vagueness! what a superficial way of treating serious questions! What is the knowledge of God? One asks oneself if the man who affirms that the gospel “supposes” this knowledge of God has himself the knowledge of God. “He who loveth not, knoweth not God,” says the apostle John; 1 John 4:8. “When ye knew not God,” says another apostle, “but now ye have known God” (Gal. 4:8,9); and elsewhere, “the Gentiles who knew not God,” 1 Thess. 4:5. “The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not,” John 1:5. Because the natural conscience tells a man that he is guilty, and that there is a God of judgment, does that man know God? He who speaks of a distinct motion in the soul, as if it was the knowledge of God, ought not to cry out against dogmatism and intellectualism, as evils of a religious life.

I come to things more serious still than the vagueness which reigns in these pages. All the gospel, Mr. Scherer tells us, centres in Jesus Christ… “If one cuts off the dogma of inspiration, there remains Jesus Christ… What remains to faith? The Person of Jesus Christ. He is the beginning and the end, the centre and the whole.” Not a word of His work, mark it well. After having cut off the dogma of inspiration, what remains of scripture? “The history of Jesus Christ.” A history, mark it well,

imperfect as the men who wrote it; for, not having been kept by inspiration, their writings are but fallible accounts like those of other men. But is there nothing but the history of Jesus Christ, nothing of the witness of the Spirit as to the efficacy of His work? Does there remain nothing of it, even if it were not inspired? Did the religious inspiration of the apostles occupy itself with things of no value, when enlarging on the value of the work of Christ? No, according to Mr. Scherer, there remains nothing but the history of Jesus Christ, the Person of Jesus Christ. “It is the beginning and the end, the centre and the whole.” For him the work of Christ is a nullity, and he declares himself that it is the suppression of the dogma of inspiration which does this. But there is something more definite still, and it is with deep sorrow that I revert to some lines of the author, which are simply the denial of the doctrines which are essential to true Christianity. However, it is a mercy of God to have permitted that the effect of the rejection of inspiration should be at once stated by the very man who rejects it, stated immediately, so that the weakest Christian, the very moment he hears such words, should be warned of their bearing. I accept the truth that the Person of the Lord is the great object of faith; but there is, on this point, something very ambiguous in the idealism of the author, for I can no longer call it his faith. “Something supreme,” says he, “pierces through His perfection, which is so really human. Sincerely man like us, He has however the consciousness of being above man. Humanity in Him rises up to divinity. He alone knew the Father, with whom He was in a relationship which was unique. He who has seen Him has seen God. All things have been put into His hands—He abides with His own unto the end of the world. The

church worships Him, and prays to Him; it acknowledges that its Saviour reigns in the heaven and on the earth, and that the reconciliation is accomplished by Him, because it is accomplished in Him, namely, in the very union of the God and man." (Pages 35, 36.) Is He God, the Lord Jesus? Was He God before He became man? What pains, what subterfuges to avoid saying this word! "Humanity in Him rises up to divinity… He who has seen Him has seen God." The Lord said: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9), and yet He was not the Father. "Reconciliation was accomplished in him, namely, in the very union of the God and man." Why of the God? Was He God? The last phrase which I have just quoted is perhaps the clearest on the subject of the divinity of Jesus; but the union of God and man leaves after all, as to the Person of Christ, and as to the true divinity of Jesus, a vagueness which nothing elsewhere can destroy. The word of God has nothing like this. "The Word," it says, "was with God, and the Word was God." "All things were made by him," and "the Word was made flesh," John 1. It is not humanity which in Him rises up to divinity, a sort of divine moral quality… It is God—God, before being man —God who had made the heaven and the earth. "All things were created "by the Son, and for the Son, as the apostle tells us in the Epistle to the Colos-sians; Col. 1:16. "Thou, Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thine hands," Heb. 1:10. One must not deceive oneself as to the meaning of words, and speak to us about dogmas. Was then Jesus the true God? He who, before becoming man, created the heavens and the earth—is He the Creator? "To raise humanity to divinity … a union of God and man." These are things that may be

agreeable to man, they exalt ideal man; but was Jesus God outside man? Was He the Creator?

Mr. Scherer leaves us on that point in a painful uncertainty. Now, it is important for a serious man to know if his Saviour is God or not, and not to worship one knows not what.

On this capital point of reconciliation Mr. Scherer is by no means obscure. He denies the truth in the clearest manner. “Reconciliation was accomplished by Him, because it was accomplished in Him, namely, in the very union of God and man.” Of sinful man! Is it that the reconciliation of sinful man (of a nature in which, according to the apostle, there is no good) has been effected by the union of this sinful nature with God? And what was this nature which needed to be reconciled? Was it not a sinful nature, and precisely because it was sinful? Is it that which was united to God, or to the God who united Himself to man in Jesus? And further, is it by the union of God and man that reconciliation is accomplished? “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them,” 2 Cor. 5:19, 20. I quote the passage the nearest to Mr. Scherer’s idea, inasmuch as this passage speaks of that which preceded the death of Christ; but this passage shews the complete falseness of Mr. Scherer’s doctrine. For if God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, and not imputing their trespasses unto them, humanity was not reconciled by its union with God. God in the man Christ was occupied with this work of love in the midst of men still sinners. Alas! men would not have it, and something else was necessary. It is that which is found at the end, in verse 20, precisely what Mr. Scherer rejects, namely, an accomplished work to which the Holy

Spirit gives testimony by the apostles. “He hath committed unto us,”8 says the apostle, “the word of reconciliation.” We beseech men to be reconciled to God, for He hath made sin for us Him who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

Such is reconciliation, according to God: not the reconciliation of humanity towards God in Christ, (which is nonsense, because in Christ humanity was without sin, and it was the sinner that needed to be reconciled) but the reconciliation of men as sinners, of us poor miserable ones, estranged from God, and that by a testimony of love, founded no doubt on the Person of Christ, but which is founded on His work; not that He mingled humanity in holiness to Himself, but in that He who was holy and who knew not sin was made sin for us.

It is good to put the truth solidly and simply, without equivocation, in face of the extravagant dreams of man, who would make use of the perfection of the Person of the Christ-man in order to exalt himself under the name of humanity. Christ was made sin because we were sinners. This is the truth we have need of. Call it a dogma if you like; no matter. It is a dogma which, received into the heart, gives peace according to God. Other passages are quite as clear. “Having made peace by the blood of his cross.” And you, it follows, “He hath reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy, unblameable, and unreprovable in his sight,” Col. 1:20, 22. We may notice, in reading what precedes, that the work of Christ is distinct from His Person.

“But now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were afar off are made nigh by the blood of Christ,” Eph. 2:13. The

reader can examine the verses which follow: they fully confirm that the doctrine of reconciliation is by the death of Jesus, and not by the “union of God and man.”

But Mr. Scherer makes his opposition to the truth still clearer.

“The work of Christ is His Person in action, as the Person of Christ is His work in power. His death is the culminating point of this work. The sufferings of Golgotha formed besides the historical condition of the struggle of the just with the world, and of the Holy One with evil… But there is here more than a simple law of history. The work of Christ is a work of salvation. Jesus saves us by His partaking of humanity, by His realization of holiness, and by the manifestation in Him of the love and of the pardon of God. In fact, if all men have been made sinners by the disobedience of the first Adam, the power of sin has been broken thus for all by the obedience of the Second.” (Pages 37, 38.)

Would one wish for anything clearer to erase expiation from the Christian doctrine? Alas! it will be found.

“Heaven is too much considered as a dwelling-place which one may enter by pardon as one enters through a door, and where one is admitted as the consequence of an entirely judicial sentence, which is justification, in virtue of an altogether outward condition, which is the substitution of Christ, and of another condition quite arbitrary, which is faith in this institution: gross notions, which confound with the internal nature of things an imperfect symbol borrowed from the customs of men.” (Page 49.)

Mr. Scherer does not believe in reconciliation by the union of God and man. The substitution of Christ is a

death of Christ; it is accomplished in Him by the gross notion! His work does not even find a place in the enumeration that Mr. Scherer makes of that which, he says, people call the truths of Christianity.

“The church,” he says, “would suffice to propagate what is called the truths of Christianity, original sin, the Trinity, the divinity of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the final judgment.” (Page 41.)

Need I recall to the reader what a place the death and work of the Saviour holds in all the Bible, from the sacrifice of Abel and the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah up to the song of the apostle and church in the Revelation? We have seen the apostles attribute reconciliation to His death, to the death of Him who suffered “the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.” He “came to give his life a ransom for many,” Matt. 20:23. “Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many,” Heb. 9:28. “Who, his own self, bare our sins in his own body on the tree,” 1 Pet. 2:24. “He is the propitiation for our sins,” 1 John 2:2. “Who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification,” Rom. 4:25. It is, I think, useless to multiply passages, if the words of Isaiah, of Jesus, of John, of Peter, and of Paul are not enough. As to Paul, we have the declaration that it is of this truth, founded on the Person of Christ, that he has been ordained preacher. “For there is one God and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time, whereunto I am ordained a preacher,” 1 Tim. 2:5, 6, 7. Now it is not here only a question of inspiration. The ministry of reconciliation was confided to the apostles.

One of two things: either the apostle was mistaken in supposing that the ministry of reconciliation was committed to him, and was also mistaken with respect to the means of this reconciliation and the subject of this ministry… or the doctrine of Mr. Scherer denies Christianity.

Yes, it does deny Christianity.

I admit that the Person of Christ is the object of faith. I admit that, in all those who possess it really, this is living faith. But the reconciliation of which you, reader, and myself have need, which is our great business, the whole of our eternal blessing, the apostle attributes to one thing and Mr. Scherer to another, yea, rejecting as a gross notion the apostolic doctrine!

“The work of Christ,” Mr. Scherer still tells us, “is His Person in action.” (Page 37.) Did He not suffer? What was His activity when He was forsaken of God? “Jesus saves us by His partaking of humanity and His realization of holiness.” (Pages 37, 38.) But “without shedding of blood there is no remission,” Heb. 9:22. “A propitiation through faith in his blood,” Rom. 3:25. It is a sacrifice offered once for all to God, which replaced all the offerings presented under the law. He has “offered one sacrifice for sins,” Heb. 10:12. In a word, the gospel of Mr. Scherer is another gospel, which is not one at all.

If the apostles preached the true gospel, Mr. Scherer does not possess it; if the Christianity which the apostles taught, which Jesus Himself taught, is the true gospel, that of Mr. Scherer is not; it is on the contrary the denial of it. Mr. Scherer may pretend to be more spiritual, to be fond of more living doctrine. It may be that the theology and the sterile dogmatism of schools have disgusted

him: he cannot have a worse opinion of them than myself. Nothing more than theological pedantry extinguishes life, vitiates spiritual judgment, and feeds the flame of pride. The Person of Christ, the perfection of His humanity, has an importance that no one can exaggerate; but that alters nothing. It is none the less true that, betrayed by the workings of the intelligence on these points, Mr. Scherer denies Christianity on the principal point of the reconciliation of man with God. Mr. Scherer teaches a false gospel. If he believes from the heart that Christ is the true God, and that He has been it from eternity—if he believes that the Word which created the world became man, he gives himself at least a great deal of trouble not to say so, or to say it in such a way as to satisfy those who do not believe it, and not to appear to share the faith of those who do believe it. Now, it is of importance to know if it is the Creator God who is my Saviour; or if I adore one who is not really so. Let people cease speaking of the Person of Christ, if they are not sure that Christ is God. A sterile admiration of a beau ideal is not faith in the Son of God.

The doctrine of Mr. Scherer is but a vague and equivocal doctrine on the Person of Christ, a complete and formal denial of the gospel preached by the apostles, and of the teaching of the Holy Spirit on the subject of the work of Christ.

I will but add one instance of the same contempt, or the same negligence of what the Saviour said, which I have pointed out as characterizing these letters.

To deny inspiration yet more, Mr. Scherer tells us, “We find (in the biblical accounts), preserved by an authentic tradition, deep traces that Jesus had left in the memory

of those who surrounded him." (Page 41.) Very satisfactory means, it must be owned, when it is a question of possessing the words of Him of whom it is said, "He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God," John 3:34. Happily we have received from the very mouth of Jesus the assurance that what we possess is not "profound traces preserved by tradition." "The Comforter, who is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you," John 14:26. But be it the apostles or the Saviour Himself, it matters not to Mr. Scherer, provided he hears the "noble accents of the human voice," and that it is not God who speaks to him.

If human subtilty was to attack divine inspiration, one has but to bless God after all that this attempt has been so soon followed by a denial of the work accomplished by the Saviour to reconcile the sinner to God. The believer will understand that it is a question of the foundation of all his hopes, of his salvation, as well as of the glory of his Saviour. He will understand, that to deny inspiration is to deny the teaching of the Holy Ghost on the work of Christ and on salvation; that it is to reject all this as "gross notions," and reduce his knowledge of a living Christ to "profound traces preserved by authentic traditions! "He will understand that the scheme is another Christianity which is not one, a Christianity which takes the place of the Bible, and that all that remains to him of the volume which he possessed is only, according to Mr. Scherer, some treatises containing traditional remembrances, which teach us to do without the doctrine of the apostles; a God known without a single revelation, and traditions in order to know Him

better; a beau ideal of humanity, which raises itself up to divinity; but no more propitiation for the sins which made us guilty before God. Fine inheritance! instead of the certain truth of our God, and of an accomplished salvation, which glorifies at the same time perfectly both the Person and the work of the Saviour, which gives perfect peace to a heart fully reconciled, and which introduces one as a child into the communion of a God of love.

Faith in the work of Christ does not prevent us from living by Him. It is he who eats His flesh and drinks His blood who dwells in Christ, and Christ dwells in him.

4 Translated from the French of J.N.D.: Geneva, G. Kauffinan: Paris, Cherbuliez, 1850.

5 This thought is borrowed from Mr. Vinet.

6 I speak of intelligent and responsible beings; as to other creatures, it would be merely material perfection.

7 I shall hardly be accused of upholding theology and dogmatism; I hold them in horror. I think that Mr. Scherer says something very true about them. For the greater part of those who occupy themselves with it3 theology is like a surgeon who would dissect his friend instead of loving him. But truth which is not Christ is nothing else but dogma.

8 In reading this passage in Greek, which treats of the chief point of Mr. Scherer’s system, and which teaches as being essentially the gospel precisely what Mr. Scherer denies, the light becomes still more striking. Three participles are dependent on the words, “God was in Christ,” and point out three things which flow from this, of which the last is ministry of the Spirit confided to

the apostles, to render testimony to the work of Christ as means of reconciliation, by the truth of God, after Christ had been rejected as living on the earth. “God was in Christ” reconciling, not imputing sins, and committing to us the ministry of reconciliation. But this ministry was founded on the fact— become a dogma, in the ministry which spoke of it—that Christ has been made sin for us. Reconciliation is not then the reconciliation of man, or of humanity united to God in Christ, but reconciliation performed by Christ—made sin for him who was separated from God.

Remarks On “Christianity And Modern Progress”

By the Rev. A. Raleigh, D.D.

Allow me to draw your attention to a recent publication which professes to give grounds for harmonizing Christianity and modern progress. Such a production ought to produce pain and sorrow, and be dealt with in the spirit which such sorrow will, through grace, engender.

Still I feel, as it has been brought under my eye, that I ought not to pass it over.

No one, of course, is strictly responsible for it but the author; still, as it is an address from the Chair of the Congregational Union of England and Wales at its annual meeting, it acquires a weight which a mere individual discourse would not have. It shews the tone of the dissenting mind— what finds utterance from the lips of those whom it sets in its high places and in the chief seats of its teachers. It shews us to what point the dissenting body is come in the conflict now going on between faith and unbelief; how completely the high and holy ground of possession of the truth by divine revelation is abandoned, to look for tolerance from the infidel reason of man without God in the world. It is, in fact, a humble supplication to the infidel to be allowed to have share in the inheritance of truth, admitting that they have it in their sphere, and craving the admission that the Christian has it in his.

The infidel reasoners are far enough from troubling their heads about the petitioners; as Dr. Raleigh admits,

they turn up their noses with contempt at the evidences of Christianity. The air, he tells us, is weary with their repetitions of scorn at Christian creeds. But Dr. Raleigh begs for quarter. If they have scientific facts, Christianity has historic facts.

No doubt Christianity has facts far better proved than any other facts of history, as every sober mind admits. Science has no such facts really. What are called the facts of science are merely the general laws deduced from phenomena or appearances; many, of course, I admit, adequately proved; but these, when of importance to our subject, are not really facts. Nobody unless some rare German, for I have known such, doubts of the astronomical system, demonstrated by the laws of a principle we call gravity. It is admitted because it accounts for the phenomena. I admit, if you please, as a fact, that the earth goes round the sun. Hence, when these laws are known, calculations can be made as to what will happen if all goes on as usual. In a word, appearances, accounted for by general laws, enable man's mind to draw mental consequences, that is, to calculate the ordinary succession of phenomena.

In natural science facts have another place. They are observed in their present existence, and what is observed, and that only, is a fact. These facts are then generalized. Not into laws, such as the law of gravity, but into general principles of causes, or rather similarity and succession of forms. Be it that all animal being is reduced to cellular atoms: I have nothing against it. I leave science in possession of its facts, and the gradual development of theories connected with them. The uniformity of succession of facts may be adequately ascertained. Harvey may find that nothing had living

being which was not previously in an egg, and sufficient instances may be found in various forms of being to justify a general conclusion. It may or may not be adequately investigated to justify the conclusion that the fact is universal. In these cases I dare say it is. Still the conclusion is not a fact. It is sufficient to make a science for classification, and for man to act on and to learn by.

So in geology, though facts are much less accurately ascertained, still we may say a general succession of formation in a certain order is pretty well ascertained, sufficiently so to classify, though with defects and difficulties, and to form a science. Now no Christian has the slightest interest in combating these facts, nor, if done honestly and simply, scientific generalizations from them. But man's conclusions are not facts. Sir C. Lyell finds a skull or some evidence of human existence in the delta of the Mississippi, begins to calculate the silt deposited by the river, and says man must have lived 100,000 years. This I read in his second edition. I gave it away and got afterwards the third, and here he admits he was wrongly informed as to the data, and it must have been 50,000 years. Now, when I find such leaps as this, to say nothing of other questions, can I speak of facts? The fact is that there was a skull in the delta. All the rest is calculation or supposition.

We get some human remains in the Floridas. It must have taken 10,000 years for the coral insects to make the coral. But all this assumes depth of water, and rate of increase of the growth of coral, which are not facts: the only fact is that some human remains are in Florida. The case of cutting through what the Tine torrent has brought down has been insisted upon—Roman remains, bronze remains, and then those of the stone period, and

then a skull (one thus thousands of years old). I was assured by a member of the Antiquarian Society, referred to in the account, that they all thought this a mistake, and that the skull was clearly stained with bronze on one side. Now I am not a geologist like Sir C. Lyell; but when we have got the facts, others are, or may be, as competent to reason. We have to remember that "is" represents a fact; "must be" is always man's reasoning: a very different thing from facts. It is a fact that there is a layer of sandstone of many feet thickness. It is a reasoning, not a fact, that it must have taken 20,000 years to have formed it. When I come to reasoning, and to probable calculations, and probable causes, I come to the uncertainty of man's reasonings, and to speculation as to how things came about, in which a thousand possibilities come in to make the "must be "uncertain. My experience of scientific investigation of causes and calculations has led me to conclude that they are extremely uncertain, and little to be relied on. Astronomy, being a question of mathematical calculation for the most part, is of course not liable to the same uncertainty. In general we may say, science is not a system of facts, but of conclusions from phenomena; and conclusions, however interesting and often adequately proved for common life, are never facts.

But on what different ground matters stand, as Dr. R. puts it, is soon seen when the real question is stated.

Those who take this suppliant ground with the infidel admit that, if the man of science has his facts, all must give way. "When so proved," he tells us, "we have but one thing to do—accept it." "No matter what they may seem to involve or bring after them. No matter what

cosmogonies, ethnologies, chronologies, the facts may seem to favour or frown upon." Now I am perfectly assured that God's work and God's word cannot contradict each other. But this is not the real question here, but the means of certainty of knowledge, our knowledge. And Dr. R. says, "if they are facts, professed and declared such by the whole scientific world," etc. Now turn the case. Scripture affirms plainly and positively something, in the clearest way, as a fact. It upsets the theory of the scientific world. Will Dr. R. say, Well, if scripture professes and declares it, it is to be accepted, no matter what scientific conclusion it favours or frowns on? If not, he has accepted the authority of science as a means of certain knowledge, and rejected the title of revelation to be such. It is a question of authority, and certainty of knowledge.

I admit that science is not the object of scripture in any way. Of course it is not. It deals with the relationships of man with God. Material facts are before men, and left to men. Scripture speaks on ordinary subjects the ordinary language of men, that man may understand it. It says the sun rises; it does not speak of the sun's rays being, by the revolution of the earth, a tangent at the point forming the horizon to the eye of the spectator. But there are cases where scientific conclusions, not facts, come across the domain of scripture: say, such as the unity of the human race, involving the race in the ruin and effects of the guilt of the first parents of that race—cases, consequently, where it is a question of means of certainty. Which am I to trust, man or God? Thus, there are blacks: that is a fact. Many of these new philosophers conclude that there were originally more races than one. That is a conclusion, not a fact. I read,

“by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned”; and that God “hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth.” Now I am not discussing here the point in itself of races of men, but what authority is the word of God to have? Which am I to trust, man’s conclusions, or the statement of scripture, because it is a revelation?

I find men differing. Mr. Agassiz may tell me (he is a naturalist), that it is not Darwinian development, that this is utterly unfounded, but that there are many races, that the types of animal forms are different in different quarters of the globe, and that man in each partakes of this typical and characteristic form. Dr. Darwin and followers may insist that the gorilla of Africa, of one quarter of the globe, is the original type of the whole human race everywhere, his own ancestors, as the gorilla is the development of some less perfect form still, and that a stupid penguin may, in a sufficient number of ages, be formed into a clever man by natural selection, let alone gorillas. The ethnologist assures me that negro faces are found in Egyptian monuments in the times of the Osirtasens and Rameses in the earliest records we have of man, and that there must be two races.

Pictet, by accurate investigations of Zend and Sanscrit, assures me that no data of pre-historic man goes beyond some 3,000 years before Christ, as a limit. Now the only fact in all this is that there are figures of negroes on Egyptian monuments, and, if you please, different kinds of pigeons; the causes of which difference of typical form no one has yet adequately explained. But scientific facts, Dr. R. tells us, we are to accept, no matter what cosmogonies or ethnologies they seem to favour or

frown on. If they set aside Moses' account, so much the worse for Moses; or Paul's declarations, so much the worse for his ignorance. "It is just as certain (Dr. R. tells us) that there are errors and mistakes in the Bible, considered as a human book … as it is certain that fallible men wrote the several parts of it, distinguished and selected them one by one from other contemporary writings," etc.

Now I will give all possible credit to Dr. R. The gap I have left out contains this salvo …" which, however, do not affect the substance of its inspiration, or impair the certainty we have of the complete communication of the divine meaning in it." What is the substance of its inspiration? Who is to put the limits? For instance, is the unity of the human race involving all in sin? The real question is that of the authority when scripture has spoken.

Critical examination of copies or translations are the careful ascertainment of what is scripture, the oracles of God having been committed to man, though secured to us by God in grace and providential care. The authority of what is ascertained to be so is another question. As to this, we have Dr. R.'s assertion, "It is just as certain that there are errors and mistakes in the Bible, as it is certain that fallible men wrote the several parts of it." What then is inspiration? What the authority of the scriptures? We find in the word that in the perilous days of the last times we are referred to the scriptures; and it is declared that every scripture is given by inspiration of God, and that what the apostle taught, having received it by revelation, he communicated not by words which man's wisdom taught, but which the Holy Ghost taught; 1 Cor. 2. And Peter says, holy men of old spake as they

were moved by the Holy Ghost. I need not recall how the Lord Himself puts His seal on the authority of the scriptures, and uses them as of divine authority against Satan, and in reference to Himself. The facts of Christianity, Dr. R. tells us, are adequately proved by history, and this is sufficient.

Proved by what? “They stand on the highest ground of historic credibility.” No doubt they do, so as to prove the folly of infidels. But what has this to do with the authority of the word of God—our one security, according to the apostle, in the last days? But still, if all rests on historic credibility, there may be mistakes; and where is the authority of the word? “But here is our case” (says Dr. R.), “that out of this book, as history, and out of other books as histories contemporary and subsequent, there arise up to our view, first dimly in type and shadow, then clearly in personal life, the great facts which stand at the heart of Christianity,” etc. Now here the scriptures, Old and New Testaments, I suppose, and other books, are heaped together to prove facts historically. One book may be more exact than another; they are all histories written by fallible men. And all this is to curry favour with, to get a little allowance from, those who care not for them, and will not have, save as an historical document (such as others are for ethnology), their book nor their Christianity at all at any price.

What shall we say to such pandering to infidelity? “For his princes were at Zoan, and his ambassadors came to Hanes. They were all ashamed of a people that could not profit them, nor be an help nor a profit, but a shame and also a reproach.” If the church rests on the authority of God and of His word, they have a place which that

authority will sanction and give honour to. “He that believeth not, hath made God a liar.” “He that is of God heareth us.” If they relinquish this to try and put themselves on a level with men, if they try and drag in Christianity after them, they have lost all their vantage ground, divine authority over the heart and conscience; and the infidel, to use an oriental expression, will make them eat dirt, and will not be bothered with their Christianity. And this is the ground leading dissenters have now taken. This is what it is important to notice in what is passing around us. They are giving up the only solid ground of truth. We must know now-a-days who is to be trusted. Christians must be Christ’s and on the ground He has laid for it in the revelation He has given. God’s word must have authority over men; or it is not His word, and it, and they who should have wielded it as the sword of the Spirit, have lost their place and title and true greatness.

And now see what a singular and strange blindness this treachery to the authority of God’s word, this pandering to infidels, brings in. It is perfectly incredible that an intelligent man should have fallen into such utter darkness, if it were not that unfaithfulness to God ever brings in blindness and confusion in man. Men, Dr. R. tells us, were to be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it. Man “was made,” he tells us, “for this world” (the italics are his), “as we may say, an earthly man in the higher sense—reproductive, progressive through the ages, industrial, scientific, artistic, conquering, lordly.” Is this Adam in paradise, or out of it? How wholly is the fall ignored here! But to pursue. “But this is not all: the first chapters of Genesis are full of art and science. Poetry, music, metal working,

husbandry, architecture; a whole city is built almost before Eden had time to wither. So far is it from being true that natural knowledge is the natural enemy of revealed religion, we see them here in their cradle, and they are twin sisters." Who would have thought that all here referred to sprung up under the hand of Cain and his family, after he had killed Abel, the accepted one of God and because he was so, and when God had driven him out from His presence because he had thus filled up the measure of sin, and had chased him as a vagabond (Nod) from before His face, from which Cain declares he was now hid—that Cain had now built the city and embellished it, invented the music and the metal working, to get on as happily as he could without God, and that the result of all was the flood? "This they willingly are ignorant of," even how the world that then was perished—the result of the mixture of the sons of God with the daughters of men.

Let us see the account from which the statement is drawn:— "And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand. When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth. And Cain said unto Jehovah, My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me. And Jehovah said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And Jehovah set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him. And Cain went out from

the presence of Jehovah, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden. And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he builded a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch. And unto Enoch was born Irad: and Irad begat Mehujael: and Mehujael begat Methusael: and Methusael begat Lamech. And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. And Adah bare Jabal: he was the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle. And his brother's name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ. And Zillah, she also bare Tubal-cain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron: and the sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah," Gen. 4:11-22.

And then Abel and Cain and his city of progress are twin sisters in the same cradle! Is it possible to conceive a greater degree of infatuation than that to which this pitiable servility to infidelity has reduced the writer of the address? Cain, driven out from the presence of Jehovah, hid from His face, a mark set on him by God, establishing a city where God had made him a vagabond and embellishing it with arts and sciences to make it pleasant without God—for God he certainly had not—and which ended in result in the judgment of God in the flood: this is our pattern, this is the twin sister whose embraces we are to court! We are to learn by it, we are told, that there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.9 Is it possible for infatuation to be more complete? But such is the ground taken by dissent now; and, while reading that the friendship is enmity against God, pandering to the

world, that the world may, in some small degree, admit it to its company and its career of progress.

And what is the grand point of agreement? “The need is just this—that each party (if we may speak of parties in the matter) shall accept frankly the facts which are universally accepted by the other.” Can anything be more absurd? Why, as to facts, am I to accept all that are accepted by another party? Why are infidels to trust the facts the Christian party accepts? It is merely trusting the competent investigation of the party, they would say their prejudices, a book or fifty books full of errors and mistakes, according to Dr. R. Why should I accept the facts other people accept, without knowing their infallibility or competency as conclusive, or investigating for myself? I take facts on adequate testimony, not on other people’s accepting them. Nothing can be more absurd. A treaty of peace with those who reject the truth of God on such ground as this: because indeed my party believes it, they are to do so too, and I am to be bound by their facts as they choose to state them! And where is God in all this, where a revelation? Where a word sharper than any two-edged sword? Men’s opinions (for the acceptance of facts is only that) are to be trusted, and trusted on both sides without examination, by an agreement between Christians and infidels; and this is to be the ground of faith and common progress: a ground impossible, I do not say to a Christian, who would be abhorrent from the whole scheme, but to an honest man.

But my object is not now to discuss the scheme, which seems to me the shallowest thing imaginable, and base in its servile pandering to infidel men of science; but in these days, when everyone sees that all is breaking up

(and dissenters know it as well as anybody else, and this discourse is the proof of it, and the betrayal of their fears), we need to know what we can trust, and whom; and while I doubt not that there are many beloved brethren amongst dissenters, saints who believe in and trust the word of God as I do myself, such a testimony from such a place is a witness and a proof that we cannot trust for a moment the ground on which dissenters have placed themselves, nor the dissenting body as standing on the sure ground of divine truth. I urge, and such statements should only press upon the soul the need of doing so, every humble soul to hold fast the word of God and its authority, its divine authority.

We all know translations are man's work, and of course in a measure partake of his imperfection. All may know from the word of God that the oracles of God were committed to men to keep. But they are prophetic or inspired writings which were so. Their authority is a matter of faith. And though man's failure in faithfulness may affect details, as in the work of his own salvation, they are given, according to the wisdom and will of God to be His word, and are their own evidence, as the sun in the firmament. Man may, in one sense, labour for his own salvation; he may diligently seek to have the word of God pure; but the soul taught of God knows God has given both, and will have both owned as His and appreciated as His. It is God's will that man should use diligence thus; but the humble soul taught of God knows on whom it leans with confidence, and from whom it has received alike eternal life and the word by which it has been engendered in him. He may make mistakes in his path, in his interpretation of the word, but he is, for all that, led and guided of God in both, and attributes his

mistakes to man in both, and faithfulness and truth to God. He says, “Let God be true, and every man a liar,” and he knows God has not left him in darkness, but that God has given him a revelation from Himself, a revelation of grace and truth come by Jesus Christ, and of all His preliminary dealings, so important to the full understanding of that, and that the scriptures are able to make men wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus—able to make the man of God perfect, and that the entering of God’s word gives light and understanding to the simple. The Christian is one who, by divine teaching, knows the truth and authority and power of the divine word. He accepts it in the largeness and fulness in which it is given, thankful if learned inquirers, as hewers of wood and drawers of water, can give it to him as free from all human imperfections as possible, if they labour that no earthly particles of mud be in the water; but the water he knows to be water, and drinks it and lives.

9 Spoken wholly and exclusively of spiritual gifts.

Dr. Colenso And The Pentateuch

Introduction

It is impossible to treat the author of this book as a Christian. I do not say this as forming any judgment of his personal state in any way; I speak of the public profession of a religion he belongs to—Christianity, as contrasted with heathenism, Mahometanism, Judaism, or Buddhism. Dr. Colenso states that “our belief in the living God remains as sure as ever, though not the Pentateuch only, but the whole Bible, were removed. It is written on our hearts by God’s own finger as surely as by the hand of the apostle in the Bible, that ‘God is, and is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.’ It is written there also as plainly as in the Bible, that ‘God is not mocked, that whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap,’ and that ‘he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption.’” (Pages 53, 54.) That is, with the Bible, or without the Bible, Dr. C. believes in the existence of God and His rewarding them that seek Him, and in natural conscience. In other words (as far as his book goes, which he puts forth as a manifesto), he is a profound Deist. Even with the Bible he only believes so much as his heart and conscience recognize, and that the latter is to be preferred to the Bible as the means of knowing God: “that He Himself, the living God, our Father and Friend, is nearer and closer to us than any book can be; that His voice within the heart may be heard continually by the obedient child that listens for it, and that shall be our teacher and guide in the path of duty, which is the path of life, when all other helpers—

even the words of the best of books—may fail us." (Page 54.)

Now it is clear that neither believing that God is, nor natural conscience, is believing in the special facts of Christianity— the incarnation, atonement, resurrection, redemption, being born again, the exaltation of a Man to God's right hand, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. In a word, no special truth or fact of Christianity is "written on our hearts by God's own finger," or can be possessed by mere natural conscience or belief in God. All intervention of God is left out. But it is in this, and the statement of what led to its necessity, that revealed religion consists. There is a conscience in every man: the word of God acts on it. I do not doubt that there is an instinctive knowledge of a God and of judgment. This is all Dr. C. owns, with or without the Bible. Revealed religion is a series of divine and marvellous facts and truths, unfolding an intervention of God in grace with sinful man. He sets this aside; his relationship with God is not founded on it. He prefers, as teaching, what he has without it; that is, he wholly and professedly sets aside Christianity. He goes farther; he recognizes "the voice of God's Spirit… not in the Bible only, but out of the Bible; not to us Christians only, but to our fellow-men of all climes and countries, ages and religions, the same gracious Teacher is revealing, in different measures, according to His own good pleasure, the hidden things of God." (Page 222.)

Dr. C. has, in substance, solemnly declared that this is not so (see Article 18 of the Thirty-nine Articles); yet I suppose this is no matter with rationalists. But his statement amounts to this:—Christians and heathens have all their particular religions; but, besides and

within all this, all have a communication in their own hearts of the hidden things of God. The knowledge of God is not in the religion; for heathens and Christians have it more or less, whatever their religion, in their hearts. He confirms this by quotations from Cicero, Sikhs, and Hindoos. Cicero's statement (I suppose Dr. C. did not find it out) is merely asserting natural conscience, with the addition of a denial of the foundation-fact of revelation that man is a sinner driven out from God. "Whoever will not obey this law," says Cicero, "will be flying from himself, and having treated with contempt his human nature, will, in that very fact, pay the greatest penalty, even if he shall have escaped other punishments, as they are commonly considered." Now this makes human nature the measure of good, as indeed Cicero everywhere does. And just see the result, which neither Dr. C. nor Lactantius, from whom he quotes, seem to have noticed. This law, or right reason, "to the good never commands or forbids in vain, never influences the wicked either by commanding or forbidding." Could grace be more fully denied? Could the effect of law or conscience be more entirely mis-stated? There are good or wicked already— God knows how; and this law, or right reason, changes nothing— always succeeds with one, and leaves the other where he is. This is, we are told, "a voice almost divine." "The same divine Teacher revealed also to the Sikh Gooroos (teachers) such great truths as these." (Page 233.)

He then quotes statements of the unity of God, but what is Pantheism, that is, that God is in everything; statements which recognize Mahomets, Brahmas, Vishnus, Sivas—of course not Christ: and that is a revelation of God for Dr. C.! He then quotes from Hindoo

writings “the following words, which were written by one who had no Pentateuch nor Bible to teach him, but who surely learned such living truths as these by the direct teaching of the Spirit of God.” (Page 224.) In these words God is celebrated, and there is a good deal of moralizing, such as may be found anywhere, but in which we find, “He that partaketh of but one grain of the love of God shall be released from the sinfulness of all his doubts and actions” —a comfortable quietus. “I take for my spiritual food the water and the leaf of Ram.” “God dwelleth in the mind, and none other but God.”

Dr. Colenso admires what is the avowed doctrine of these same teachers, without finding out that it is the grossest folly of Pantheism. “God is the gift of charity, God is the offering, God is the fire of the altar, by God the sacrifice is performed,, and God is to be obtained by him who makes God alone the object of his work.” Everything being but a development or expansion of God, we are too, and of course, so far as we realize God in it, become God in a superior degree. But all is God; and it is true of all things, man among the rest. This last sentence, as Dr. C. approvingly quotes, was by “one who had experienced somewhat of what Job had experienced.” (Page 223.) All this is but extracting Deism from Christianity and heathenism alike, and making conscience the judge of what is to be received from each; only, unfortunately, Dr. C.’s conscience accepts the very grossest Pantheism, without so much as finding it out.

But there is more than that. This book does not believe as much of Christ as Mahomet did. Dr. C. openly professes to know much better than Christ upon the subject of the divine authority of revelation. Mahomet

held Christ to be a prophet, and that He will judge the world. On the last point the book does not declare itself, if it be not an intimation borrowed from Cicero. Here is Dr. C.'s estimate of Christ's authority in what He declared: "We are expressly told in Luke 2:52 that Jesus increased in wisdom as well as in stature. It is not supposed that in His human nature He was acquainted more than any educated Jew of the age with the mysteries of all modern sciences, nor, with St. Luke's expression before us, can it be seriously maintained that, as an infant or young child, He possessed a knowledge surpassing that of the most pious and learned adults of his nation upon the subject of the authority and age of the different portions of the Pentateuch. At what period, then, of His life upon earth is it to be supposed that He had granted to Him, as the Son of man, supernaturally, full and accurate information on these points, so that He should be expected to speak about the Pentateuch in any other terms than any other devout Jew of that day would have employed? Why should it be thought that He would speak with certain divine knowledge on this matter more than upon any other matters of ordinary science or history?" (Page 32.) That is, when Christ, the blessed One, spoke of the authority of the word of God—spoke authoritatively of the scriptures and of Moses—He merely followed the ignorance and prejudice of the pious rabbis of His nation.

Dr. C. has more knowledge, and is freed from the prejudices, and in consequence can tell us positively that Christ was wrong! He has found out that it is impossible that such things as are found in the Pentateuch could come from our loving Father. This, if

we are to believe Dr. C, Christ had not moral discernment enough to find out, and took for granted all was right, so as to believe that what Moses wrote came from God. Now Christ says, “We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen,” for He was of and in heaven; and the question is (not how He learned what He knew, but), when He taught positively, did He teach perfectly, or only under the influence of national prejudice? Dr. C. quotes the following passages of Christ’s words:— “Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me; but if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?” But it seems this appeal was all beside the mark, for Moses never wrote it at all. Hence, of course, they were not called upon to believe Christ’s words either. “Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush.” This too was quite a mistake. “They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.” “If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.”

But all this solemn appeal of Christ to Moses, as of equal authority and weight with His own words and resurrection, as a proof of truth, is a mistake, the prejudice of pious rabbis of His nation! Dr. C. is freed from them, and can prove he knows much better than Christ did. And this man is what is called “Bishop of Natal”! I may be asked, “Has he not declared his belief in all the canonical scriptures, and bound himself in this office to require it of those he ordains?” He has. What then does he do with his conscience? He tells us that too: it is governed by the Court of Arches. It is a mercy for upright men that modern rationalists so plainly shew themselves morally. I do not think I ever read anything

so morally base as the reasons for signing the articles in the “Essays and Reviews.” Old infidels broke with Christianity: it was sad enough; but modern ones keep their places, and only give up their faith.

The boldness of Dr. C.’s assertions, and the excessive carelessness of his statements and conclusions, are alike remarkable. He tells us that he does not believe in the deluge, because he does in geology. He has studied it in the Zulu country, and he now knows for certain (for Sir C. Lyell is infallible, if scripture and the Lord Christ be not) that a universal deluge could not possibly have taken place. Now Sir C. Lyell is unquestionably an able geologist, as well as the constant resort and refuge of infidels; but he has a system, and a system which geologists, less speculative and at the very least as able as he, entirely reject. Nor does he deny that the science is in its infancy. The ablest inquirers believe in a universal deluge; the latest researches tend to prove it. I say “tend,” because no certain conclusions can yet be made from geology as to dates. I do not hesitate to affirm (and I am supported by the ablest geologists), that geological dates and periods stand on the most uncertain and unsatisfactory footing. Sir C. Lyell’s system is utterly unsatisfactory—irreconcileable with the evident facts of the upheaval theory, which is generally admitted. Dr. C. assures us that a partial deluge is no better; so that in spite of universal tradition, scripture, the authority of Christ, who refers specifically to the deluge as true (Matthew 24:37-39), and much geological research, we are to have no deluge at all. I do not know that I should ever have noticed this point, as it is impossible to follow it out here, but as affording a proof of Dr. C.’s manner of reasoning. It was

not partial, he says, because a flood that should cover Ararat must in due time sweep over the Puy de D6me, because water finds its own level!—that is to say, water 16,000 or 17,000 feet deep in a narrow locality must have been some 5,000 feet deep at thousands of miles distance, when it had spread that distance in every direction! And a man who reasons thus is to call in question the accuracy of scripture!

But Dr. C. assures us the scriptures never affirm their own infallibility. Abstractedly “infallibility” belongs to a person, not to what has been already said. But they affirm that they are inspired by God, and that they have His authority. The Lord says, “the scripture cannot be broken” —appeals to it, as we have seen, as of equal authority with His own words— refers to them as testifying of Him—expounds them after His resurrection in what they taught concerning Himself—declares all that they said must be fulfilled—opens His disciples’ understanding to understand them—declares that His rising from the dead would be useless to convince those by whom they were not believed. They are quoted by Him as absolutely conclusive authority. Facts here questioned, or borne with, because they may be “fairly disposed of,” are referred to by Christ as undoubted history. So the apostles write whole epistles, in which their entire teaching is based upon the truth and inspired authority of scripture. Paul speaks of the scriptures “foreseeing”; so completely does he identify them with God. “But what saith the scripture?” is conclusive; not only so, they declare them to be by inspiration. They are called “the oracles of God,” and the possession of them is counted to be the main privilege of God’s people; so the law is called “the living oracles.”

Peter says, “No prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” I dare say Dr. C. will call the authenticity of this in question. Take then the first epistle (though I am perfectly satisfied of the authenticity of the second): there he states that the prophets searched as men into their own prophecies, as given by the Spirit of Christ which was in them. Paul declares that “every scripture is given by inspiration of God,” the security of the saint in the perilous times of the last days; 2 Tim. 3:16. He calls the scriptures “prophetic scriptures,” scriptures of the prophets; Rom. 16:26. I have no doubt this refers to the New Testament; but, if it be the Old, it is saying they are inspired. So his own teaching he declares to be by “words which the Holy Ghost teacheth.” The prophets were infamous impostors, if what they said were not the direct testimony of God Himself, for they say, “Thus saith the Lord.” As to Christ, it is said, “He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God, for God giveth not the Spirit by measure [unto htm].” Thus, as Son of man, what He spoke, He spoke—to refer to Dr. C.’s question—“supernaturally,” and His words were “the words of God.” I am aware that Dr. C. says that on such subjects He was no wiser than other pious Jews, and that he thinks himself wiser than Christ and the apostles on such; but does he expect every one to have the same opinion of him that he has of himself? Does he think that many even will respect the judgment of one called a bishop who persuades us that Christ was prejudiced, and he is not? Poor human nature!

Allow me to ask you, Dr. Colenso, do you believe in the resurrection? Do you believe in this stupendous exercise

of divine power, so suited to man subject to death?—I mean the resurrection of Him who was “delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.” Is it not something, this coming in of God to take out of death, and from among the dead, His own Son given for our sins? Do you find this without a revelation? Does Cicero furnish you with this, or do Sikh Gooroos, or Pantheistic Brahmins? They may say fine things about God and patience, and do the same things (as Paul says) as the rest: can they tell of the deliverance of sinful man? I can conceive no greater proof of imbecility and wilful ignorance of facts than to compare the revelation first of the whole history of man under God’s dealings with his responsibility, and then of atonement, and the intervention of God in deliverance, with the fine sayings of some heathen—one too who shews men to be incapable of knowing God, as Cicero does, or with the moralizing of Pantheists.

But I close. I am not writing a book on these things, but penning an ephemeral article on the poorest piece of infidelity I ever met with; and I turn to the objections to run over them rapidly. Let my reader only remember that the object of scripture is not to meet objections, or give history, but, on the part of God, what is divinely instructive to man; that, if the Old Testament gave the perfection of the New, it would prove it was not true, for the true light did not shine till Christ came; that meeting objections does not give the force of the positive proofs. It seems candid to quote Kurtz and Hengsten-berg (men who, however respectable, know little, as I judge, of the power of scripture). But in merely giving answers to objections all the positive proofs are of course left out. If no answer could be given to an objection, and yet there

were positive proof of that against which the objection was brought, this would only prove the solution of the difficulty was not known. The positive proofs of the truth of scripture are such, that the denial of their being, as they are called, “the oracles of God,” is an evidence only of the moral darkness of the rejecter of them. It is quite true I cannot explain light to a blind man; but every one who sees knows he is blind.

Above all, let my reader remember that the Lord Himself treats the scriptures as absolutely inspired and authoritative, quotes them as we now have them, and declares that all written of Him must be fulfilled—that “not a jot or tittle can pass from the law till all be fulfilled,” the law which Dr. C. pronounces he could not attribute to God, save as he selects bits according to his own fancy, for he has of course a perfect judgment—a man who sees nothing in the minutiae of the law, which (while a yoke in the letter), as a shadow of good things to come, is full of the deepest instruction; let him remember that Dr. C. presents himself as wiser and better informed than Christ, and, if he have faith to do it, pray for one who can think so, and publish a book to tell the world he does.

Such views, they tell us, will unite all pious people in one mother church; and if such questions should disturb men’s minds (and a serious person would ponder and weigh them before doing so), he has only to remember that Dr. C. has such a sense of the petty importance of his own position, that he cannot have leisure (so he tells us) to ponder awhile before he gives forth, pretending to be wiser than Christ, opinions which contradict what Christ says.

The Family of Judah

The first objection is that in Genesis 46. Hezron and Hamul are stated to have gone down to Egypt, and consequently to have been born in Canaan; but that this is impossible if the ages of Judah and Joseph be considered. It is contended that Judah was forty-two when Jacob went down into Egypt, inasmuch as Joseph was thirty-nine. Genesis 30:24-26; ch. 31:41, are cited to prove that Joseph was born in the seventh, Judah in the fourth, year "of Jacob's double marriage." The impossibility of Hezron and Hamul's going down to Egypt arises from this, that Judah was twenty when Joseph went down into Egypt, and that Hezron and Hamul, who rank in point of time with Judah's great-grandchildren, though his own grandchildren by Tamar, could not have been born when he was forty-two, that is, twenty-two years afterwards. On the other hand, it is insisted that the narrative of Jacob's going down makes sixty-six souls go with him, and there are not sixty-six without Hezron and Hamul.

There is no ground for the objection at all. I do not insist on the uncertainty of the exact difference between the ages of Judah and Joseph, as what might be added, even if just, would hardly clear up the point; though, bringing it perhaps within the limits of possibility, it is sufficient to throw doubt on Dr. C.'s assertions. But Genesis 46 is simply to record the immediate descendants of Jacob who were associated with himself in Egypt to give his family. Thus Er and Onan are noticed; only, it is added, they died in Canaan. It is then added, "and the sons of Pharez were Hezron and Hamul." This twelfth verse is distinctly genealogy, not that all went down into Egypt who are named in it; for Er and Onan are named

because they are sons, while it is expressly stated they did not go down at all.10 In verse 12 the introduction of “were “is emphatic, and the phrase, I apprehend, clearly intended to be supplementary. It is not “Er, and Onan, and Shelah, and Pharez, and Zarah, and the sons of Pharez, Hezron and Hamul,” which would clearly have been the case if they had been goers down into Egypt. But the historian stops at Zarah, and adds supplementary information: Er and Onan were on the list of sons, but they did not go down—they died before —and Pharez’s sons were Hezron and Hamul. They are looked at as filling up the breach, but the latter half of the verse is (in contrast with going down) an explanation of the history of that family. As If he had said, These were Judah’s sons, but I must add this explanation to the statement: Er and Onan never got down, for they died, and Pharez had two sons, who are counted in to supply their place. For though the leading thought be the going down of the family into Egypt, yet in order to this he gives the whole family; and that this is so is evident, for he introduces Joseph’s sons, adding, that they were born in Egypt. Indeed I think it very questionable whether all Benjamin’s sons were born when he came into Egypt.

It was after Joseph’s birth that Jacob agreed with Laban to stay longer, and stayed six years. He then journeyed to Palestine, when Joseph must have been seven years old. He was sold into Egypt at seventeen. Hence Jacob had been only ten years in Canaan when Joseph went there. Jacob had settled first at Succoth, then near Shechem, and Dinah, who was probably nearly of Joseph’s age, was old enough to be ill-treated by Hamor before Benjamin was born. For Jacob went off to Bethel after the destruction of the men of Shechem, and after

leaving Bethel Benjamin was born and Rachel died. He does not appear either in the history. Joseph is a boy, the son of Jacob's old age. Benjamin could only have been two or three years old when Joseph went down; for if Dinah were seven or eight years old when she came to Canaan (say she was fifteen or sixteen when Hamor wronged her), seven or eight years had elapsed in Canaan before Benjamin was born, and two or three years more elapsed before Joseph went down. We must add twenty-two for the interval between Joseph's and Jacob's going down. Benjamin was thus at the utmost twenty-four or twenty-five. So he is called a "lad" (nahar) in chapter 43:3, and a "little one" (katan) in chapter 44:20, and (nahar) again in verse 31. This being so, and giving the fullest possible age of twenty-five, which, with the three terms, is very improbable, it is very little likely he had ten sons born to him. I doubt even whether Reuben's sons were all born, as he says, "slay my two sons."

On the whole, I think it is evident that this is a genealogical list without reference to the place of birth —the statement of the whole family, as a family, who went down. The manner of giving a genealogy complete, and a general fact which is not accurately true as to each individual in it, though it characterizes the subject of recital, we have other examples of. Thus, to go no farther than chapter 35, all Jacob's sons are given, including Benjamin immediately after the account of Benjamin's birth in Canaan; and it is added, "these are the sons of Jacob which were born to him in Padan-Aram."

The exact genealogy was the important thing, and it is given accurately. The main fact which characterized the

family was their birth away from the land of promise, in the country where Jacob served for a wife. It was no object to except Benjamin in the statement; it was to give the accurate history of his birth. I doubt not for a moment he is a special type of Christ in connection with Israel; the son of his mother's affliction, but of his father's right-hand. But it could be no mistake; for the writer, or compiler, or whatever he was, had given all the details of his birth immediately before, and speaks in the passage itself of Jacob's being in that land. But, Benjamin being born, the time was come to give the whole family. The subjects are given with divine purpose, in view of after dealings of God which He foreknew, not as mere histories to amuse; and hence we get distinct subjects without arrangements of dates.

Dr. C. states that Judah's misconduct was after Joseph's going down to Egypt, because it is said, "at that time." Now Judah's genealogy and ways were all-important, because our Lord was to spring out of Judah. But after this history of Judah, which lasts some twenty years at any rate, the history of Joseph's going down into Egypt is resumed where it left off. Judah's history is introduced as a separate subject parenthetically. The last verse of chapter 37, and the first verse of chapter 39 are connected, and the history of Judah comes in between as a whole of twenty years by itself. "At that time" is only the general epoch, and the whole history is given together. This is exceedingly common in scripture. But as Joseph was a remarkable type of Christ, so Judah was His progenitor according to the flesh. And this Pharez and his son Hezron were so. I must add that the relative ages of Judah and Joseph are anything but clearly proved. The relative dates of Joseph's birth and his

going down into Egypt, and of each to other events, are far more distinctly given.

On the whole the purpose of the statement in Genesis 46 is clearly to give Jacob's family; and hence some are noticed who did not go down to Egypt, and Hezron and Hamul are specially introduced into the verse, not with the list of sons but as associated with them. The saying, "Thy fathers went down into Egypt with three-score and ten persons, and now Jehovah thy God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude," takes up the general fact to shew the marvellous increase. The same is the case in the New Testament, especially in Luke.

Dr. C. in fact admits the whole case, where he says, "wishing to sum up the seventy souls under one category, he uses (inaccurately, as he himself admits) the same expression, 'came into Egypt.'" Now this settles the whole question. He gives a category of persons, that category being Jacob's family, with the general fact of that family's leaving Canaan and going into Egypt. But he introduces some who did not literally go down, though they were there. If this be so (and it is perfectly evident), Dr. C.'s argument is simply worth nothing at all. When he says, "all the souls which came into Egypt were three-score and ten," we have the demonstration that some at least who were born in Egypt, provided they were of the family that came, are accounted as coming. The case of Hezron and Hamul is much clearer, because there is only an accessory statement in the genealogy, "and the sons of Pharez were Hezron and Hamul." And we have no need to say again with Dr. C, "the description is of course literally incorrect, but the writer's meaning is obvious enough," for it is literally correct, and the meaning obvious too. But I may add Dr.

C.’s own remark, which shews the utter wilfulness and equal absurdity of his objection: “He wishes to specify all those out of the sons of Jacob who were living at the time of the commencement of the sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt, and from whom such a multitude had sprung at the time of the Exodus.” How soon Hezron and Hamul were born, we cannot say. They are brought into the list in connection with the loss of two of the sons of Judah, with whose history they were connected, one of them being ancestor of David and of the Christ.

The Size of the Tabernacle-court

The next objection is really almost too absurd to notice, but worthy of the futility of rationalist arguments. Dr. C. makes a computation of how far files of men, as many in number as could stand in front of the breadth of the tabernacle, would reach! Does he think the writer did not know, as well as Dr. C, that all the congregation could not have stood in the court? But he was not so morally dull as to think of k. Supposing the riot-act read to a crowd of a hundred thousand persons; and I say the riot-act was read to the multitude who stood before the magistrate, and I computed how far a hundred thousand men would reach, standing in a file directly before the magistrate; what would any one think of the sense of the person who made the remark? Or are the crowd not responsible because they cannot hear it? Away with such childish trifling. But the fact is, there is no ground for the remark at all. “Before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation “has a most important meaning in these ordinances. Within the tabernacle and holiest of all was the place of Jehovah’s communing directly with Moses; outside, yet in connection with the tabernacle,

the place of meeting the people, of God's going out, not in the revelation of Himself, but in communications from Himself to the people, and of the access of the people to Him.

All the court of the tabernacle of the congregation was held to have this character of "before the door of the tabernacle," and all done there and communicated thence was done "before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation." All brought up to the court was before the door. Thus, if all the people had been outside the court, and Moses had stood in the doorway of the court, they would have been "before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation." It was the general expression for coming up to the court or entering it, though not going near the tabernacle where the door literally was. "The women," we read, "assembled themselves in troops at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation." They did not come, when the tabernacle was set up in order, in troops between the laver and the holy place. But we have the matter definitely stated. In Exodus 40:29 we find, "he put the altar of the burnt-offering by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation … and he set the laver between the tent of the congregation and the altar." Thus the altar of burnt-offering, the first thing met with on entering the court, was by the door of the tabernacle. Now this was the place where God was to meet the children of Israel, as contrasted with meeting Moses within the veil.

Exodus 29:42— "a continual burnt-offering … at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before Jehovah, where I will meet you to speak there unto thee. And there I will meet with the children of Israel." Thus Moses, standing under the hangings of the court and

speaking to the crowd without, was speaking to them gathered before the door of the tabernacle. Had they been inside the court, he would have turned his back to them. So, when a person offered a burnt-offering, he offered it at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before Jehovah: he killed the bullock before Jehovah, and the blood was sprinkled upon the altar that is by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. They came up to Jehovah there, instead of offering it where they pleased, away from Him. And this was carefully secured by ordinance as a guard against idolatry. They had to bring all the beasts they slew up before Jehovah; Lev. 17:4. The gathering of the congregation to the door of the tabernacle was bringing them up to the court, so that Moses, standing there, might address them. And the place specifically pointed out for this was not at the door, but where the altar was, that is, next the entrance of the court where the people were to come up with their sacrifices, and Jehovah met with them.

Such objections as these are child's play, proving only entire ignorance of God's ways with Israel and of the purport of the ordinances, carelessness of research into them with the pretension (the common accompaniment of ignorance) to see clearer than others, and the desire to make difficulties in presence of all the divine light which is found in what is objected to. Dr. C. seeks to prove his candour and care by shewing that the elders of Israel were not all the congregation. He might have spared himself the trouble. And he has gone through sums of arithmetic to prove the size of the court! I really have not examined whether his multiplication is correct; I can suppose it.

Moses and Joshua Addressing all Israel

His next objection is as to how Moses and Joshua addressed all Israel; and he wisely informs us that the crying of the children, whose mothers must be supposed to have pushed to the first place, would hinder all but those close by from hearing. Was ever anything more childish? Supposing all did not hear, which may very well be believed, they were all put under the responsibility of what was addressed to them, of which those who were in earnest could easily put themselves in possession. Supposing the elders or heads of tribes were nearest, as is probable, they would have both informed and led the others according to what was said.

The Extent of the Camp

The next objection is to the possibility, with so few priests, of having the bullock for a sin-offering burned without the camp. Now I admit fully that the great object here is doctrinal, not historical. There is no history at all. What is ordained was only to be done in the case of the priest's, or the whole congregation's, sinning; it ought never to have happened, and it may never have happened. And from the way they went on (for they never circumcised their children, and certainly fell into idolatry, if the case did arise), they probably neglected the prescribed sacrifice. If it did happen once or twice, such a provision was no difficulty. That once or twice in forty years, or even in one year, such a toilsome ceremony should mark their sin was most appropriate. Nor do I doubt a moment that, though the priest was responsible, and must have had and seen it done, the Levites, or younger priests, might share the manual toil. And this is implied in the form of the Hebrew verb,

which is the Hiphil, “to cause to go forth,” used, no doubt, consequently for “bringing forth,” but which may be by another as by oneself (as it is used for causing an evil report to come on some one).11 For the rest, a walk of a mile and a half, or three miles, for their common bodily wants was nothing out of the way for a people who had nothing to do except to tend their cattle, which would in itself have taken them there. To suppose they used fuel as in London is simple nonsense. And they chose places where wells were, and God clave the rock when there was no water. It is really absurd bringing forward such objections. Had Dr. C. been a soldier, or lived in the dirt I have had to live in, he would have known that a walk of a mile and a half out of a city for the necessities of life was a very natural thing.

The Numbering of Israel

The fifth objection is, first, that the shekel is called the shekel of the sanctuary before there was a sanctuary; and that the money of which the silver sockets, etc., were made was the redemption-money; and that the census which ascertained the number of the people on which the redemption-money was paid was six months afterwards, by which time the number must have increased. This has no foundation whatever. As to the remark, that it was called the shekel of the sanctuary before the sanctuary was set up, the book is a history, and gives the sum taken according to the value of the money known when it was written. They paid at the time what was known when the book was written as the shekel of the sanctuary— perhaps settled at the very time. As regards the numbering, it is clear the computation of the sum that was paid is made from the

numbering itself, the result of which was known when the account of it was written. There is no continuing of the same number—Exodus 38:26; Numbers 1:46; it is the number itself. I do not know what is the ground for saying “six months.” The tabernacle was set up on the first day of the first month, the numbering took place a month after.

The sockets, chapiters, and filaments may have been made just before. They may perfectly well have given each man his money, and the actual numbering been made six weeks afterwards to verify it, and that number be given as the ascertained one, even if some few had attained the age of twenty in the short interval. The command to give the half shekel is given in chapter 30. But this was by no means all the silver, for many had offered willingly, but it was typically important that it should be understood that that on which the tabernacle of witness was founded was redemption; and what separated the service of God from the world was redemption. Hence the sockets of the boards of the tabernacle, and the hooks and chapiters on which the hangings of the court were fixed were of this silver. The actual numbering took place when the tabernacle was set up to verify the number redeemed, which had its own importance. If some shekels more were given, it was of no consequence whatever to notice them, as the direction for their use was given already. Some few might have died who had given their half shekel, some few reached twenty; but the sum when numbered is taken as the sum applied to the service. We know that the population in the wilderness was as nearly stationary as possible.

The Israelites Dwelling in Tents, and Armed

The next difficulty is, how they got tents on leaving Egypt, and carried them. I might fairly say I do not know. Some may have been badly off for want of them, have made them on the journeying, and while staying at Sinai for a year. As to carrying them, nothing is said; they had asses doubtless, perhaps camels, as well as oxen. The history says nothing about it. To say they could not have them is absurd; very likely they were at first greatly in want of them. All this is to the last degree idle; it is not the object of the history to give these details. Dr. C. then takes a very difficult Hebrew word to prove that, if it means “armed,” there are difficulties in knowing how they got arms, or how they were afraid of Pharaoh if they had. It is really tedious to go through such absurdities. The word probably signifies that they went out “in array,” not as poor hunted runaways; for God took them out with a high hand. “By strength of hand Jehovah brought us out of Egypt.”

But it does not by any means follow, if their faith were not lively, that they would not be alarmed when attacked by trained soldiers. It is said in this same chapter (13), that God did not take them the short way lest the people should repent when they saw war, and return to Egypt. And they were so disposed. God suffered their faith to be tried for a moment, and they did repent when they saw war: only now it was but to make His deliverance the more conspicuous. Nor, where faith was not in exercise, was it very wonderful. Accustomed to be slaves, with all their women and children and cattle, the way of escape barred, no practice in war or even in any common military arrangements, they were in face of the most experienced warriors on earth with chariots and cavalry

—themselves a great mixed multitude. When Dr. C. says “a body of six hundred thousand warriors,” he says what is false. They were not warriors. They were of an age fit for war, even if that were true of them; but they were poor brickmakers, though now roused by God’s intervention to leave the house of bondage.

The Institution of the Passover

The next objection, as to the Passover, is founded on misstatement and carelessness. Dr. C. insists that it was impossible to notify it, and have all ready in time. He tells us, the first notice of any such feast to be kept is given in this very chapter, where we find it written, verse 12, “I will pass through the land of Egypt this night.” Hence he argues it was impossible to have all Israel ready, and insists on this night, and on the use of the Hebrew word “hazeh.” But “zeh” has not this kind of exactitude always. At any rate the chapter shews distinctly the falseness of the conclusion Dr. C. has drawn from it. The directions had been given at the beginning of the month, and the lamb had to be kept up three days: “This month shall be unto you the beginning of months, it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying: on the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb… and ye shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month.”

Dr. C. says, this cannot mean that they had notice several days beforehand, because it says, “I will pass through the land of Egypt this night.” This is very bad indeed. Moses is told to notify to all the people, to take a lamb on the tenth, and to keep it to the fourteenth; and this we are told cannot mean that they got notice

beforehand, because the chapter says “this night,” when it comes to killing and eating it! And what else can it mean? If the lamb was not kept up from the tenth to the fourteenth, the ordinance was not kept at all. All this objection does is to disclose the will of the objector. No doubt the momentous ordinance itself is what occupies the inspired writer; but the beginning of the chapter fully suffices to shew that the objection, drawn from want of time and notice, is as perverse as it is unfounded. The rest of the article does not deserve notice. In the first place kids would do, so that there was no danger of all the male lambs perishing. As to notice to start, they ate it, loins girded, and staff in hand, ready to go, and were prepared long before to be on the move, to sacrifice in the wilderness. Nor is there a word to shew there was any sudden notice, or that their move was caused by the urging of the Egyptians.

The March out of Egypt

Dr. C. thinks that his own confusion, in fright from a false alarm, proves that there must have been hopeless confusion in Israel. But they had for a length of time been demanding to move with all their flocks, and were now with loins girt and staff in hand, so that we cannot doubt a moment that all was prepared and arranged. There is no hint of an order to start communicated suddenly. The Egyptians were urgent on them to go. They had already borrowed jewels from the Egyptians in anticipation of going. The whole theory of Dr. C. is simply inattention to the scriptural account. Because that account dwells chiefly on the great facts which have a moral import, he concludes there were none else, even when they are positively stated, and makes statements

moreover, and statements upon which all his argument depends, which are not in the passage or actually contradict it. I may add that I do not even admit that the six hundred thousand were only men in the prime of age; they were all above twenty—twenty and above—that were men, besides children. This would make a considerable difference in the numbers.

The Flocks and Herds in the Desert

As to how the herds were fed in the desert, it is certain they chose their encampment where there were springs. At Sinai God gave them water out of a rock. I may add that Dr. C. speaks of Mount Serbal as Sinai, which is more than doubtful, or confounds two opinions, applying statements as to one incorrectly to the other, ignorant that there was any difference; which, as to the character of the place of encampment, is important. Lipsius thought Serbal was Sinai, but more exact research has made it pretty clear it was not, and shewn where Israel encamped. The attempt to say, as Dr. C. says, that the wandering in the desert is not a necessary preliminary to all the history of Israel, is too barefaced—does too much violence to the common sense of every man who has read scripture—to call for an answer. Movements of whole nations in the deserts of Upper Asia have been frequent, when there was not the miraculous intervention of God to give water, which is stated in the history of Israel. Israel stayed mainly in the north of the desert on the borders of Mount Seir and the land of Canaan, where there were wells and pasture: though what is related in detail is what happened at Sinai at the beginning and at the close. When Dr. C. tells us that the scripture story says not a word about this long sojourn

near Mount Seir and the Red Sea, he makes a blunder with his usual carelessness. The Israelites got through the desert of El Tyh12 (which is not the desert of Sinai, as Dr. C. says) by a rapid and short journey to the desert of Paran and Kadesh-Barnea, close to Canaan. There they were called on to go up the mountain of the Amorites, and take possession of the land. Instead of this they sent the spies, the Lord giving His sanction to it, but at their desire. Their faith failed, and they would not go up, and were condemned to wander the forty years, till the men, save Joshua and Caleb, died.

It was on their refusal to go up that they turned and went to the Red Sea (Num. 14:25); and then it was they compassed Mount Seir (Deut. 1:40), and were on the border of countries affording supplies. In one place where they had no water, they were given it again miraculously, went down finally outside the Wady Akaba to the Red Sea, returned to Mount Hor for Aaron's death, and then at last down to the Red Sea again, going up the eastern side of the mountains of Seir to Moab and Jordan. The statement of Dr. C. is merely the result of carelessness in searching scripture. The detail of these long years we have not, but we have of a stay of a year in Sinai, where water was given miraculously, a short journey across El Tyh, Jehovah Himself leading them, their arrival at the borders of the land, and their journeying about Mount Seir and to the Red Sea, water being given them miraculously when it failed. Let me remark how beautifully, at the moment they were sent back from the land through their unbelief (Num. 14), God gives directions what to do in the land, shewing His promise and purpose as sure as His word and nature, in spite of man's folly and failure; Num. 15.

The only account we have of the stations, between their reaching the borders of the land in the second year, and their reaching Jordan, is in Numbers 33; and the localities at which they stopped during this interval of time are unknown till we come to Moseroth. Thence their journey is clear to the Red Sea, back to Hor, back to the Red Sea, and round Seir to Edom. (Compare Num. 21; Deut. 10.) But we know that from Kadesh to Zered was thirty-eight years; so that they reached Kadesh in the second year before the end of it, probably a good while before, because the wars against the Amorites and Og were after Zered and before Jordan. Now they did not leave Sinai till the end of the second month of the second year. They abode in Kadesh many days, certainly more than forty; so that we are sure that the journey from Sinai to the borders of Canaan was very short indeed. They were there on the edge of cultivated land. God turned them back, but they never left the neighbourhood of Canaan,. Seir, and the Red Sea. And He who turned them back took care of them, giving them water at Meribah miraculously when needed.

Of all this Dr. C. is ignorant, telling us scripture says nothing about it, not having examined that which he is pretending to prove unhistorical. This is true that Jehovah gives us those parts of the journey in detail which have a moral bearing, and not how the cattle were provided for. But the book is all false if it be not historical. We have the name of each place where they stopped during the whole forty years. This must be history or forgery. I have noticed elsewhere that the statement in Deuteronomy 10 seems to contradict the list in Numbers, but becomes the strongest proof of the historical character of the book when closely examined;

because we find, by careful comparison of facts and passages, that they traversed the same ground twice from Hor to the Red Sea, from the Red Sea to Hor, and then back to the Red Sea, and east of Edom. But men do not make these apparent contradictions, solved by collateral facts, and shewn to be unconsciously true, save in relating real history, which, as they know the facts, they have no need to combine and arrange.

The Numerous Israelites Compared with the Extent of Canaan

Dr. C. makes difficulties as to there being wild beasts in Canaan with so large a population. His objections are futile. What is the population of India? How dense is well known, yet tigers and wild beasts abound. Modern European populations are no rule at all, nor even Port Natal, because they settled more in Canaan in towns and villages. Counting in the Canaanites besides Israel is only another instance of Dr. C.'s carelessness, for the supposition made is their total immediate destruction. My own conviction is that the number of Israelites is greatly exaggerated. The six hundred thousand are all males, not children—all the grown men.

The Firstborn Compared with the Adults

The whole of the reasoning in the next chapter to prove the firstborn more numerous than is stated seems to me an undoubted mistake. I cannot doubt that those only, and the same in Egypt, who were still members of their fathers* families, are counted. The captive in the dungeon, and Pharaoh himself, may have been firstborn, but it is not supposed as in question that they should die; it was the house. "There was not a house where

there was not one dead." In each family which was together the firstborn was taken. I do not believe that a firstborn father and his firstborn son were both taken or numbered. The firstborn children of child-bearing mothers were counted; the firstborn of existing families at the time of the numbering. It clearly, I apprehend, did not include old men and grandfathers whose fathers were dead, or even heads of families married out, but firstborn of living mothers whose families were with them. Hence they were counted from a month old; those below were yet unclean. Remark here that the question must have presented itself to the mind of the writer. It is a proof that it is historical, that an evident difficulty is left unsolved. A forger does not put an evident difficulty in his account. Here we have an apparent and evident difficulty. The number of grown men is in the previous chapter; no explanation given. Why? Because the writer is stating facts, not inventing a story, and therefore states the fact without noticing the difficulty.

For myself, I can only say, when I never thought of a question in it, I never took the statement as to Egypt or Israel to refer to other than families at home, unmarried members of households. Indeed, in this particular case, it may be questioned whether it was not those only born after the destruction of the firstborn Egyptians to whom the ordinance here referred to was given. God says He sanctified then to Himself all the firstborn. It would perhaps suppose an unusual number in their first year of liberation, which would be nothing extraordinary. However, on this I do not insist, as those under a month must be subtracted, who in this case might be numerous. "All the males "does not refer to all of all ages, but all the males as contrasted with females.

Indeed in verse 43 it is rather implied that all were not: “and all the firstborn males by the number of names, from a month old and upwards, of those that were numbered of them, were 22, 273.” But neither do I insist on this, as the Hebrew may, I apprehend, be taken as “in their numbering “the same as “in number.”

The Sojourning in Egypt, Exodus, and then Numbers

As to the question of the increase of population during the sojourn of Israel in Egypt, it has been discussed and re-discussed a hundred times; and it must require overweening self-confidence in Dr. C. to bring it forward, as he does, as an argumentum cruets. He says the doubts he has “raised will be confirmed into a certain conviction, by its appearing plainly from the data of the Pentateuch that there could not have been any such population itself to come out of Egypt.” (Page 148.) I suppose he must be ignorant of what has been said of it; if not, such language is simply overweening impertinence to men far better versed in such inquiries than himself. If the Israelites doubled in fifteen years, they would have been 1,146,880 in two hundred and fifteen years; in two hundred and thirty years, 2,293,760. But the statement of scripture is, that “the children of Israel were fruitful and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty, and the land was filled with them”; and the new king said, “Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we “…and they persecuted them. Very probably they were all removed to Goshen, giving rise to Manetho’s story of Avaris. “But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew”;

so that their increase was not such as makes any difficulty. In England the increase in ten years was more than 23 per cent., where town and manufacturing habits largely impede; so that 35 per cent, in fifteen years is reached in the actual state of England. Thus doubling, in the circumstances of Israel, with extraordinary blessing in this respect was nothing incredible, though we have no proof of their numbers more than six hundred thousand males above twenty, and no proof that the majority of women were Egyptian or other strangers. If this fact be taken into account, the increase presents no kind of difficulty.

But the duration of the sojourn is a very obscure point; Josephus gives it both as two hundred and fifteen and as four hundred and thirty. The reader may see Fynes Clinton's investigation of the point, if he have access to it. He reckons two hundred and fifteen years, taking the shorter or Hebrew chronology. Many able chronologists doubt of this, as Hales. At first sight Galatians 3:17 seems to decide the question, but when examined it does not, I think, necessarily do so. The apostle takes the time of promise as a general fact: "To Abraham were the promises made, and to his seed." Now the confirmation to the Seed does not come in for some forty years after the promise. It is of this confirmation the apostle speaks, if we take the letter of what he says. But his object was not the date, save as shewing the law coming long after the promise. He refers to Exodus 12:40, which was sufficient for him and is ambiguous. He may refer to patriarchal times as those of promise, and take the Egyptian state as four hundred and thirty years. The length of the sojourn in Egypt is an unsettled question.

As to the Chronicles, it is, I judge, a blunder of Dr. C.'s, which I should not think much of, were not his book solely founded on affected accuracy of detail. 1 Chronicles 8:20 presents difficulties. This is always hopeful ground for infidels. What is difficult to understand they can more easily turn to their own purpose, for others have not a positive answer ready. If we follow the statement simply, however, there is no great difficulty. The Chronicles, besides giving the history of Judah, not Israel, and especially of David's family, gather up all the fragments possible of ancient history and genealogy for the return of Israel from Babylon. Take the passage thus— "The sons of Ephraim Shuthelah": his genealogy is followed down to a second Shuthelah, and there stops. Then tile passage speaks of two other sons of Ephraim, Ezer, and Elead, who made a raid against Gath, and were killed; and then follows another son of Ephraim, which is quite natural, and his genealogy is given. His daughter Sherah is simply a descendant of his. Ammihud was fifth from Ephraim.

The Danites and Levites, etc.

The objection to the numbers of the Danites and Levites (that of the former being large, though Dan had only one son, which to an unpractised eye may seem to present the greatest difficulty) is founded on want of attention to the reckonings of scripture, as if in every case those mentioned are all. The very comparison with Chronicles which Dr. C. institutes ought to have taught him it was not so, for there are persons mentioned there who are not in Exodus. The genealogies are given, as far as needed, to make out the moral history according to God's government of Israel, but no farther. Any number

may be left out, even generations may, provided what is needed is given. Next, generations are taken by Dr. C. as if they were the same then as now. They lived one hundred and thirty, or one hundred and forty, years, and their families were often proportionate, and here God interfered expressly to multiply them. Thus, if we had not Genesis 25, all scripture would have led us to suppose that Ishmael and Isaac were all the sons Abraham had. Here we see he had six sons more when he was quite an old man, of whom nations sprung. Here for other purposes it was important to notice it. In other cases it was not. Next, the assumption that Israel remained only two hundred and fifteen years in Egypt is a questionable one.

The number of the generation following the twelve patriarchs is no way decided. To begin the computation one really ought to take, at any rate, one hundred and thirty-nine, not seventy; that is, take the females in. So the children of Dinah and Serah do not appear at all. The fact of a number of children in one generation says nothing as to the result. Benjamin had many; Reuben had many: neither were large tribes. Does Dr. C. suppose that a forger would have been insensible to this if he had been inventing? It is the strongest possible proof that the account is historical, drawn from facts, for no one would have laid himself open to the objection. There was no need whatever, but that the facts were so, to lend a handle to objectors. It was unnatural, if it were not true. Dr. C. states that Moses' children were only two: I doubt it much. They were only two by Zipporah, but he had married also an Ethiopian woman. It did not concern the scripture history to say anything of children by her. We see from the genealogies that families were

reckoned all under one head, if they were not numerous, so as to make a distinct family (1 Chron. 23:10, 11); or they might come in as two, when properly the head should have been but one, as Ephraim and Manasseh. If Joseph had had a dozen sons afterwards, they would not have formed distinct families; Gen. 48:6. They would have merged in the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh.13 All these considerations, which lie at the basis of the whole system, are ignored by Dr. C. We have an instance how much the names are taken merely to represent families, and how many may be left out, in the very case Dr. C. mentions; who, in his usual careless and superficial way, does not notice or perceive it, being simply bent on his own object. “The Amramites (he tells us), numbered as Levites in the fourth (Eliezer’s) generation, were, as above, only two, namely, the two sons of Moses—the sons of Aaron being reckoned as priests. Hence the rest of the Kohathites of this generation must have been made up of the descendants of Ishar and Uzziel.” (Pages 169, 170.) This is because Ishar and Uzziel are mentioned; Exod. 6:21, 22. But this is simply that there was some special reason for mentioning them. Kohath had another son, Hebron, who may have had, for aught we know, ten times as many. In a word those are noticed in the genealogies as to whom some special motive existed, others not.

Dr. C. has not even found it out. All his calculation here is based, to say nothing of its general fallacy, upon his not noticing what was before his eyes in the text. But this fact, with a thousand other similar ones, involves a principle which makes the ground of all his calculations fundamentally false. Let the reader note this case, as it may clear his mind as to these statements of families. A

genealogical succession is given, and only two sons out of four mentioned. One, it so happens, we can supply as far as it goes, because Moses and Aaron came from that stock; the absence of the other we cannot account for. In this case we are sure of it, because he is mentioned a few verses before. Now it is just as possible— very likely indeed—that Amram may have had a host of sons, besides Moses and Aaron, who are mentioned because of their importance. The names are given more to shew from whom people are descended who are known, than to tell all the descendants. All this Dr. C. has overlooked, and simply made mathematical calculations as if all were given. His whole system is false.

Dr. C.'s computations are merely neglect of all the principles of scriptural genealogies. Besides, I repeat, the numbers given are such as prove they are not fabricated; and the paucity of Levites, and the numbers of Dan, prove that the statements are drawn from history and facts (as the whole tenor of the statements bears on the face of them), and are such as no man on earth would have invented. Dr. C. says, It is incredible the Levite should not have increased more during the sojourn in the wilderness. The fact that Eliezer did not die proves nothing as to the Levites not coming under the judgment which fell on Israel for their murmurings when the spies returned. God was pleased to keep Israel at the same level in the wilderness. As to numbers that is clear. The Levites were no exception. God may have used providential means for this, as the privations of the wilderness, which affected the Levites as well as the rest. But there is no motive for thinking they were exempt from the judgment. But the truth is, the great change in relative numbers in the tribes shews all the

reasoning as to the small increase of the Levites utterly valueless. Population may increase or decrease at such a rate, but that says nothing whatever for particular families. One increases, another becomes extinct. Thus Manasseh rose from 32,200 to 52,700. Ephraim had sunk from 40,500 to 32,500. Benjamin increased from 35,410 to 45,600. Dan was stationary, Asher had increased from 41,500 to 53,400. Judah had remained pretty stationary. Issachar largely increased. Simeon had fallen from 59,000 to 22,000. Thus the particular degree of the increase of the Levites, on which Dr. C. has bestowed so much labour, is of no import whatever. All Dr. C.'s remarks indicate a singular inattention to facts.

The Priests and their Duties

As regards the small number of priests making it impossible they could fulfil their services, unless in the case of the offering of birds, it is a mistake to think the priest had anything to do, save to receive the blood and arrange a burnt-offering on the altar. All the operations of slaying, flaying, cutting up, were done by the offerer. But let it be remembered we are speaking of history.

The doctrinal import (which is their real value) of the directions for the sacrifices is most precious, as these are known types of the sacrifice of Christ. No part of scripture is more important. This of course is lost on Dr. C.

Now as to history, we have no proof that a single offering was brought all the time they were in the wilderness. Burnt-offerings were always voluntary, and in the state of Israel, it is just as likely they never troubled their heads about it; for they sinned without compunction, and certainly had never circumcised their

children, so that really they had no right to offer any sacrifice. That they did not offer a peace-offering is certain; for they murmured for meat, complaining of the manna, and got the quails in chastisement—at any rate on the second occasion. Save Miriam, we do not hear of any one having the leprosy. There is no evidence of any historical difficulty whatever, but the contrary. Indeed Amos 5:25 complains that they did not offer sacrifice to Jehovah, but took Moloch and Chium for their gods.

History, therefore, has nothing to do with the matter; the instruction as to priests and sacrifices is doctrinal, not historic. The details of Dr. C.'s reasonings are as trifling as usual. As scripture speaks often of doves in the wilderness, he assures us the psalmist was hardly thinking of the terrible deserts of Sinai—of which he knows nothing. Was ever more egregious trifling?

The Priests and their Duties at the Passover

As regards the Passover, Dr. C. says it was impossible the priests could suffice to kill the Passover, and sprinkle the blood. If, as it is evident they naturally would, they kept it as they had in Egypt, every house killed the lamb for itself. The whole difficulty is a soap-bubble, proving only Dr. C.'s will and foolishness. If Dr. C. had given himself the trouble of reading 2 Chronicles 30, which he quotes, he would have seen that the Levites (v. 17) killed the Passover, because many of the people had not sanctified themselves, and they did so only for those who were not clean. It rather appears that it was the blood of the burnt-offering which the priests sprinkled then. At any rate this, and Josiah's Passover, when the priest did sprinkle the blood of the paschal lamb, were special exceptional cases, and there were plenty of priests and

Levites attending in their places. As far as the New Testament goes, it would seem each prepared it for himself.

It is really disgraceful for a person in Dr. C.'s position, or for any one, to make a formal attack on a book he has professed to believe in on grounds so futile, and with a carelessness which proves no honest research for himself, but that his will was father to his thought. He has, at any rate, proved himself, logarithms and all, to be an equally incompetent and pretentious man. Probably those by whom, nine years ago, he assures us, he was not thought unworthy of the position which he holds supposed that, in declaring he believed in all the canonical scriptures, he said the truth. Just think of a man taking the battle of Waterloo (and on the side of the victorious army, well knowing, as every one does, it is in pursuit most are slain) as a test of the numbers of Asiatic armies—as to which a child who has read Rollin's History of Greece or Persia knows the difference!

The War on Midian

Dr. C. complains of the destructive razzia against Midian. Midian had been the means of corrupting Israel, and leading them to idolatry, so as to lead to twenty-five thousand Israelites falling in the pestilence God sent; and that by the inexpressible wickedness of Balaam, who, when he could not curse Israel, recommended Balak to lead them into sin, and then God could not bless them. For this they were punished, and, as a settled nation there, destroyed. Dr. C. congratulates himself that he is not called on to believe it. But thus he must give up the entire Old Testament for his own notions; he must give up God's judging the world. God

sent Abraham's seed down into Egypt because the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full. The whole history is a history of the judicial extermination of these races for their wickedness. It is a question, not of history, but of the whole ways and dealings of God in judgment. He will find it in the Psalms; he will find it in the Revelation. God presents Himself as a moral governor, and in this special case used human instruments to carry out His judgments, as He did afterwards against Israel, as He had warned them by the prophets. The whole establishment of Israel was founded on the principle rejected by Dr. C.; all God's judgments are.

Dr. C. does not like to believe in judgment. Be it so. But that is no way of judging of history. As to God's revelation of Himself, it is objected that the Old Testament character of God cannot be that of the true God. He did not reveal Himself in Judaism, He gave laws and promises; but He dwelt in thick darkness—was avowedly hid behind the veil. The way into the holiest was not made manifest. He was patient in goodness and grace, but the system was one of public moral government. The sins of the fathers could be visited on their children, as we see still in providential government. There was a code of national laws of which Christ could say, "Moses for the hardness of your hearts gave you this commandment." In the national laws he did not set aside slavery. The law made nothing perfect. God took, as a people in the world, the people where they were; put checks on will; softened in many respects the manners of the age by His authority; and, what was an immense point, suffered nothing to be done without it —an immense point, because arbitrary will was arrested.

But all this was not bringing souls to God, nor revealing God as He is to souls. He is light and love. He has been revealed in Christ—a revelation Dr. C, it appears, is content to give up. He is so wise, so competent to know God and judge of what He ought to be, that he can give up all revelation of Him; and yet he is ignorant of the first principles of the revelation he is giving up, and publishes an empty book, if ever there was one, to prove it. He assumes (as his statements are conclusive) Moses and all the prophets are ignoramuses, Christ knows no better than the rabbis, but Dr. C. of course does. Christ attaches His sanction to the whole of the Old Testament, as having the authority of God. Now this does not merely affirm inspiration; it is the blessed Lord putting His seal to God's having been justly represented there as thus revealed. Dr. C. thinks differently; he would not have such a God—is relieved in thinking it is not true. Christ felt no need of such relief. What shall we think of one who holds the nominal place of bishop of the Christian church, who counts himself the moral superior of the Lord? Who else will think so? Think of the vanity and character of the man who could! Did ever a man degrade himself to the same degree? For Christ did not see anything moral to make Him call in question its being a revelation of God; Dr. C. does. Christ could see that there were national laws given, as suited to the hardness of their hearts; that Dr. C. does not see. He is as ignorant of the relationship of the gospel to the law as a national code, as he is presumptuous and ill-founded in judging the law and slighting the gospel. For every man of sense the book will do good.

But I will complete the question of detail as to the Midianites. (Num. 31; compare chap. 21:1 and chap.

28:33-40.) The objection is, that time is not allowed for the destruction and other events before Moses addressed the people; Deut. 1:3. I have, as will be seen, no objection to the result at which Dr. C. arrives; but I will shew the levity of the proofs, and then the excessive carelessness of the author. There is no proof whatever of the time employed in the destruction of Arad's cities. It is very probable the prisoners alluded to had been taken thirty-eight years before, when they would go up the mountain (Num. 14:44, 45); they may or may not. Israel, then defeated, now avenge themselves. Five days may have very easily done the work. Further, it appears to have been carried into effect during the mourning for Aaron, for they left Mount Hor afterwards; Num. 28:41. Next, we are told that there was a fortnight for the serpents and healing, and then a month of journeyings. This is the usual inattention to the facts. They moved on from one station to another, and murmured because of the way, and the serpents were sent while on the journey. They had made four encampments of this journey before the serpents were sent; this is certain by comparing Numbers 21:10 and chap. 33:41-43. Thus the three months and a half become perhaps a month and a half, or two months.

Sihon was defeated—it may have been in a day—and the country fell to Israel. They marched thence up north, and Og came out with all his people and was defeated. For all this there may have been a month, possibly more. Thus three months, at the outside, would have sufficed for what Dr. C. takes six months for. Let it be three and a half. This much is certain, that, in the point where Dr. C. is precise, the serpents and supposed subsequent journey, he is precisely wrong by not consulting the text.

Dr. C. then, for the remaining facts, gives “March forward to the plains of Moab.” March forward from where? They were in Moab; the expeditions had started thence. But they were by Arnon, the border of Moab. They made then very short stages. They might have moved their headquarters, but they were in Moab, only they moved into the plain from Mount Abarim. Balak was alarmed, and sent for Balaam. This may have taken a week. We have thus some four months gone. Here Israel fell into sin with Moab, and thereupon Israel attacks the Midianites by divine command. My statements leave two months for this. I should be quite disposed to say with Dr. C. six weeks perhaps, and probably four, was ample, so as to allow a month more for the previous marches and wars. No one can pretend to say how much each took; there was time enough for all.

But this is not even necessary, though it sufficed to shew the arbitrariness, and even error, of Dr. C.’s calculations. More was spent in some parts; in others the text contradicts him. But what is curious enough is, that Dr. Colenso has made the passages he holds to be irreconcileable, so as to prove they are unhistoric, exactly coincide by his computation, and has not found it out! Moses’s address in Deuteronomy 1:3 is after defeating Sihon. and Og, as it is expressly stated, verse 4. Dr. C. says, “Thus, then, from the first day of the fifth month, in which Aaron died, to the completion of the conquest of Og, king of Bashan, we cannot reckon less together than six months … and are thus brought down to the first day of the eleventh month, the very day on which Moses is stated to have addressed the people in the plains of Moab, Deuteronomy 1:3.” Just so,

accordingly, Deuteronomy 1:4 states that it was after he had slain Og that he made the address. Dr. C. has managed to make a blunder in his proofs, but has tumbled by mistake into proving exactly historic what he attacks, and this is to set aside the Bible by unquestionable facts!

Conclusion

On the quotations from Cicero and the Hindoo author celebrating Ram I have spoken, and add no more here. A more pretentious and futile attempt to set aside the revelation of God it never came to my lot to examine.

It may be well just to add that the quotation from "Types of Mankind," which Dr. Colenso quotes, as he says, with entire sympathy, is from one of two works by Messrs. Gliddon and Nott, to prove that there are several races of mankind, as there are of animals, and following the analogy of the forms of these last, according to a theory of Agassiz; the object being to prove that the negroes are a distinct race, and formed and destined to be fit for slavery. I can hardly think, if he was so zealous with the Zulu for the honour of the true God as to condemn the Pentateuch, because it recognized slavery in Israel, that he can have read the book. It is very superficial, is wrong according to the best authorities as to America, particularly South America, and contradicts itself as to Africa; his only argument, to which he (Mr. Gliddon) constantly recurs, being the presence of negro figures on Egyptian monuments, of which, with Lipsius and others, he exaggerates the antiquity in a way which the monuments themselves clearly prove to be false, inasmuch as kings given as successive are proved by the monuments to be contemporary—as many as eight at a

time. Mr. Gliddon was Consul-General of the United States in Egypt. I quite admit Dr. C. does not quote the book in what it says of negroes; but the argument which meets his entire sympathy is used to get rid of the "prejudice," which believes with Paul that "God has made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth," in order to justify the reducing the blacks to slavery as a distinct race.

10 The computation in the passage is not very clear. If we count in Er and Onan, we have thirty-three sons and grandsons. If we leave them out, we must count Jacob among the souls of his own sons and daughters. However, I am disposed to include Dinah and Jacob, and leave out Er and Onan, and read thus: "These be the sons of Leah which she bare unto Jacob in Padan-Aram, with his daughter Dinah, all the souls of his sons and daughters; thirty and three." As if he had said, This makes thirty and three. If not, we must count in Er and Onan, and make it mere genealogical computation of sons, and verse 26 would be general, the computation already given excluding Jacob, and Joseph and his sons.

11 Yatsa is to go forth, as Bo is to go in or to. And hence the causative is used for bringing forth; because one who does causes to go or come forth. But there is no ground at all for confining it to the personal act of the person causing it to come forth. Thus, not only in the case of an evil report, Hotze Dibba, cited in the text; Deuteronomy 16:23, bringing forth the tithe; Leviticus 24:14, bringing forth him that had cursed; Zechariah 4:7; Genesis 34:24, 25, bringing forth Tamar; Exodus 3:10, Moses is to bring forth Israel from Egypt, that is, cause them to come out. So Exodus 14:13, Hebrews 14. So in Ezra 1:8 we have, "those did Cyrus bring forth by

the hand of Mithredath," where he expressly uses another to have them brought out. In a word, there is no ground at all for Dr. C.'s remarks.

12 El Tyh is a modern name (the wandering) for the desert district lying north of Sinai.

13 As to Dan, if the absence of others of the tribe not yet formed hindered the application of the rule laid down in the case of Zelophehad's daughters, the fact that he had only one son may have been removed in a few generations. Hushim may have had as many as Jair, who had thirty sons that rode on thirty asses' colts.

Scripture: The Place It Has In This Day

2 Timothy

Allow me to say a few words to you, in which there will be nothing very new, on a subject on which simplicity and decision are of the utmost importance in these days. The Second Epistle to Timothy presents to us, as long ago observed, the ruin of the church in its earthly standing, and the heart of the apostle deeply affected by it, as would be the case, under the working of the Spirit of God, with one who had been God's instrument for founding it. It individualizes the duty of the Christian—a momentous principle in these days when the church (so-called, really the clergy) renews the pretension to govern the conscience.

This epistle does not give us the church according to the purpose of God, and its full character in heavenly places (as in the Ephesians), nor is it the order of the church on earth (as in 1 Tim.); but we have in it life and salvation, now fully revealed in Christ (chap. 1:1, 9,10), but a piety which could be found in Jews as such, and in which Paul could speak of his forefathers. The church, indeed, is not mentioned at all. Not that the fellowship of saints is not noticed; it is expressly, but of those in whom purity of heart is known to exist, the testing of which was not known in the first beginning. Then those who came were received: only the Lord took care of the purity of the assembly, and manifested His own, adding to the church daily such as should be saved. Now He knew them that were His, and the responsibility rested on every one that named the name of the Lord to depart from iniquity; and

the believer is to follow the path of peace and grace with those that call on the name of the Lord out of a pure heart.

Two points are brought before the believer here to guide his feet: his individual conduct, including his conduct as to other individuals; and his relationship to the public profession of Christianity in the world.

As to the first, he is, as I have said, to depart from iniquity. Such is the nature of Christianity, it cannot associate in walk with evil. He purges himself—for it is individual duty—from vessels to dishonour, which, in a great house, he expects to find. He seeks fellowship with those who join to a profession of Christ a pure heart, from which profession flows. On this, chapter 2 is as clear as possible. It is his individual responsibility; and it is important to take in both parts.

If the first part only is taken up (the departing from iniquity and purging from vessels to dishonour), the conscience may be upright; but a spirit of judgment and of self-righteousness will be engendered. If the latter only (to seek to walk with those pure in heart), without the former, conscience will be loose, and faithfulness to Christ, and obedience, more or less lost. The heart must be engaged in the love of God’s people and fellowship with them, and the conscience be pure and faithful, as having done with evil, when evil is all around and allowed.

As to the second great point, our relationship to the public profession of Christianity in the world, chapter 3 gives equally clear direction. The peril of the last days is found in a form of godliness, denying the power of it. The direction is as simple as it is positive: “from such

turn away." Where form without power is, we are not to go, but, in a positive way, to turn away from it. But this would not, in itself, in the perilous times, be sufficient; for in the decay of practical piety and devotedness in the evangelical professing world many, whose principles are far more false, lead individually a life of great devotedness—often, I allow, on false principles, yea, in themselves deadly principles—but it is a sad snare when devotedness is found on the side of false doctrine, and worldliness with a greater degree of substantial truth. This is not the case, if the effect be taken as a whole; far from it; but individual cases, and the fire of first impressions, produce enough to make the devotedness of individuals a snare, leading men to receive false doctrine and to fall into Satan's hands (for so it really is), when the devotedness is founded on a real denial of grace and truth of the gospel, as Paul insists on it.

Another point therefore is brought out here: the authority with which our souls are directly in communion, on which our conduct rests, the rule by which it is guided, and the application to the individual soul of that authority and rule. Is this mediate or immediate? Is it by the intervention of the church, as an authority between me and God? or is it the direct and immediate connection of my soul with God, and immediate subjection to His authority in His word? It is the latter, not the former. This is no rejection of ministry. If another knows the word better than myself—has more spiritual power, he can help me; and this is according to the mind and will of God. But he does not come between my soul and the word, but brings me more fully into acquaintance with what God says to me in it. My soul is only the more in immediate relationship with God by His

word. This only is the rule and measure of my responsibility, the expression of the authority of God over me. Another may be the means of my being more completely so; but he puts me thereby in immediate relationship to God by the word, more fully and more in detail, but does not take me out of the relationship. It remains immediate, as before, and there can be no other; it is direct with God; and God's title is absolute, and embraces the whole of my being in obedience. He exercises His authority immediately by the word. This may sanction, and does, duties towards others; but these are acknowledged by the authority of, and in obedience to, the word—to God in His word. I am to fulfil every relationship in which God has placed me, but by and according to the word. My first, immediate, and all-ruling relationship is with God by the word. It has precedence of all others, rules in all others, and claims absolute and immediate subjection. "We ought to obey "is the Christian's ensign; but "we ought to obey God rather than men "is the absolute claim of God, who has revealed Himself fully, and reveals Himself immediately to us by the word.

The church may have—has—to be judged; the individual has to take notice of it—is called on to do so, so that it cannot have authority over him as the ultimate rule for his soul. He is bound to take the word of God as the ultimate rule and norm of truth and conduct, having authority immediately from God over his soul, with nothing else between him and God. It is evident we are not here speaking of the discipline of an assembly exercised according to the word. That word which ordains it recognizes its validity, but what in religious,

and indeed, in all matters, is the ultimate rule and authority.

There is another question apparently, but which is not really one, namely, Is the soul immediately cognisant of the word, and is it responsible to God for itself according to that authority?—or can anything else come in between with authority, so that a soul is not immediately responsible to God according to that word? The only question really is—Is God's word immediately addressed to the conscience of man, so as to hold him responsible when so addressed? No one in his senses would deny that if God revealed anything to a man, he ought to give heed to it. Infidelity may contest the fact that there is a word of God—a ground which, in controversy, Roman Catholics generally take under the form of the question, "How do I know it is so?" I assume here there is a word of God. I inquire, is its authority immediate over my soul?—or is anything, now I have it, between it and my soul? Is the authority of the oracles of God absolute, immediate? Do they bring me under an obligation which allows nothing to come between them and my soul, or to limit or modify their authority? I would remark, in passing, that save three Epistles, the writings of the New Testament (and, as far as the principle goes, the Old also) were addressed, not to the clergy (if we are so to call them), but by the clergy to the people. The claim of the clergy to possess them as such is sheer folly; they were specifically addressed to the Christian people by those commissioned of God to do it. This is undeniable. In one, Paul specially charges it to be read to all the holy brethren, and they very young Christians; 1 Thess. 5:27. If professing Christians are so ignorant now that they cannot understand it, this is the

effect of centuries of the church's teaching, but is no longer the case where there is lowliness and where the grace of God is looked to. "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple." "I am wiser than all my teachers," says David, "for thy law do I love." "They shall be all taught of God "is the promise given to us. But my present object is less general than this, important as this truth may be. I speak of the instructions given by the apostle in Epistles, which were addressed to one in whom he had the greatest confidence as a servant and man of God, who had worked with him in the gospel, as a son with a father, and to whom he could reveal his inmost feelings, and could tell what was needed for the church when the evil days should come in; when the form of godliness, where the power was denied, forced on the conscience as duty the judgment of the state of the church—wherein the apostle has revealed to us Christ's judgment, and called upon us to bow to and act upon it—an epistle, in a word, which gives, not general truth and precious instruction to the Christian, but special guidance in the dangerous evils of the last days. This, with all church history before us, when subjection to the church was so long maintained, and darkness by it, and when the church (as Christ has loved, sanctifies, and will present it to Himself without spot and wrinkle) was so diligently and long confounded with the building of wood and hay and stubble, which had grown up, as they themselves admitted, into a large mixed worldly body, and that the church was as bad or worse than the world — this revelation of the judgment of the church is of all importance. Diligently was it insisted on, as by Cyprian and sundry others, that the Holy Ghost was and could be nowhere else; that all outside the external form were

lost. And so sternly was this held, that while the former confesses that the state of the church was disastrous (just what the world was, bishops and all, so that the worst persecution was only a light-needed chastisement), yet they insist that when any left it, pressed in conscience by its state, they left salvation and eternal life absolutely; there was no grace elsewhere.14 By this insisting on the privileges of an avowedly corrupt church too, souls who shrank from what was utter dishonour to Christ were left a prey to those who were really heretics or fanatics, when their consciences could no longer stand the moral state of the great outward body that held and claimed the place of the church of God. It is one of the sad parts of church history, the seeing how persons who left the public body when immorality and idolatry of the grossest kind were come in, often fell into the hands of, or were mixed up with, those whom Satan raised up to perplex and ruin the testimony of God. The primitive church never defended itself against the workings of heresy by the truth as they had it not (Irenaeus did so, perhaps a little), but by their own claims to possess all and their hereditary title to it: so even Irenaeus, Tertullian, Cyprian, and others. And those who made more allowance were themselves philosophers far from the truth, as Clemens Alexandrinus, and Origen. These did make a difference between some heretics and others; but, after that, schism or heresy were alike fatal:15 and if afterwards a difference was made, none was made in denying salvation to them, or in burning them, when that became the fashion of the church.

Now, with such a history before us, how immensely important is it to see that the individual is bound to

judge the state of the professing church! At all times they were called on to recognize Christ's judgment of the state of the church, and be guided by the word as to it. They would have learned not to confound the body of Christ with the professing body.16 But in 2 Timothy 3 we are expressly called on to turn away from such as deny the power of godliness, though maintaining the form. But, if I am individually called upon to recognize and act on—whatever that action may be—the judgment of Christ as to the state of the church, then the church has ceased to be an authority, and is judged by the word, to which I am expressly called to give heed in that judgment; its judgment as a public body cannot be an authority governing my spiritual judgment, in which I am bound to follow the word, where it is itself judged in its mind and state. Christ expressly calls us individually to hear what the Spirit says to the churches; not what the church says, but what is said to them. I am not now saying what the consequence may be—on that 2 Timothy 2 and 3 are clear—but that the individual is called on to take heed to what Christ says as to the state of the church. It is not a thing to be overlooked that this first takes place in respect of Ephesus, where such blessing and knowledge of privilege was. The vessel of the highest grace, she represents the church's departure from its first estate, and receives the threat of the removal of the candlestick. But all I say now is: the individual is called upon as such to listen to Christ, and take notice of the judgment He forms of it. The church is a judged object, not an authority. The individual is bound to receive immediately from Christ or the Spirit by the word, what He says to him independent of the church's authority, yea, about the church itself. Yea, it is the proof that he has ears to hear, to hear Christ, to hear what the

Spirit says. What, then, is the rule, when in professing Christendom there should be the form of godliness without the power, as certainly the apostle tells us would be the case in the perilous times in the last days, when Christians have to turn away from the form of godliness? We have it in a double form.

The church, it cannot be; that has brought us into perilous times, and the case occurs in which I have to turn away from the common state of things—men shall be so under the form of godliness without the power. There is no rule, no authority to retain me there. I am bound to recognize that state, and to turn away. First, the knowledge of the individual from whom I have learnt anything; secondly, the scriptures. The former is a simple, but very important rule. A tradition comes, no one can tell from whom: I am told that “the church has preserved it” is a sure ground of faith. Paul says, No; you must know from “whom you have learned it.” It is said, “according to the fathers”; or “the consent of the fathers.” But this gives me no authentic source. Timothy knew he had received it from Paul, a divinely-inspired and authorized teacher, and the thing was sure. No church-teaching, no tradition, however universal, can assure me the truth. I cannot say of whom (para tinos) I have learned it. I must have an individual of certain and inspired authority, to make me receive anything as the truth. I must know of whom I have received it. This applies to perilous times, when there is a form of godliness, when the church is in disorder—for a form of godliness without the power is itself disorder—and then a certain source of authority is of all importance. But if Paul, or Peter, or John have taught anything, I know of whom I have learned it, as Timothy did, and I am

assured of it. If fathers, or no one can say who, have taught a thing, I have no divinely-given security.

The second authority referred to, which in part is the same, is the scriptures; but this has its special character. These are holy writings. God has provided that for His saints, which, with the key of faith in Christ Jesus, is a sure and certain guide—a body of writings called by the apostle (that is, by divine authority) the holy scriptures, of which a child could be cognisant as such, guided by the piety of a mother—and to be received as inspired and having divine authority, composed of a number of distinct writings, but forming a whole of which it could be said as a known whole, “the holy scriptures,” and of each particular part, “every scripture,” recognized in this way (in the most solemn manner by the Lord Himself, as well as by His apostle) as a whole, and as the inspired work of particular authors, and that as written documents, distinctively as such, and commanding faith as inspired. “Knowing this first,” says Peter, “that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” “That it might be fulfilled,” is the constant testimony of Matthew; or, more generally, “then was fulfilled.” “The scripture cannot be broken,” says the Lord; “it is written in the prophets, They shall be all taught of God.” “If they believe not his writings, how shall they believe my words?” And in Gethsemane (Matthew 26:56), contrasting their testimony “in the temple,” but “that the scripture must be fulfilled.” So “then opened he their understandings, that they might understand the scripture,” saying, “Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer.” And in that same

journey, “Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory?” “And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.” It behoves, ought to be, since it was in the scripture. So Paul could say, “the scripture foreseeing … preached,” because the mind of God was in it. So, as often remarked, the Lord quotes the Old Testament as a recognized whole, as used among the Jews, “Moses and the prophets and the psalms.” He used the scriptures, the written testimony, to silence the adversary, and referred to them, in rebuking the Jews, as one of a series of divine testimonies, which left them without excuse.

I do not here quote the numberless texts in which the authority of the scriptures is recognized by the blessed Lord and His apostles. If these, He assures, were not believed, one would rise from the dead in vain, that men might be persuaded. No testimony from the actuality of another world would avail, if these writings were not listened to. But we find not only the authority of particular scriptures affirmed, but, what is important to remark, its being there gave it authority. It was sufficient that it was scripture to give it divine authority. The scripture cannot be broken. It is not merely that truths may be found in it (that may be the case in any sermon, or in this tract), or that the word of God is in it, but that being in the scriptures was sufficient to give to what was there authority as the word of God. It is God’s ordained method of authority, not merely of truth—any one may be a means of communicating that—but it is authority for the truth, is clothed with divine authority in what it states, and is recognized by Christ Himself as having it, as also by all the apostles. They were more

noble that searched them to see if what an apostle stated was so. The scriptures have authority, and are addressed to God's people; not as such to the clergy or ministers of the word, but, save a very small portion, as we have seen, are addressed by those ministers to the people.

From all alike we can learn. We can learn from these addressed to his trusted fellow-servants by the apostle Paul, what the church was, what it ought to be, and what it would be. Let us see then the apostle's account of the value of these books, and the place they hold, in what he says to Timothy, and that especially when the church has lost its true character, has a form of piety, and denies the power of it. After having spoken of Timothy's having learnt the truth from himself, the apostle says, "and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures." Here is the well-known book so entitled, which, as such, had authority. As a child, he had known it and learned its contents. And these scriptures, through faith in Christ Jesus (the great key to all), were able to make him wise to salvation. It is alleged that this is the Old Testament. No doubt what Timothy had known as a child was the Old Testament: but whatever has a claim to be called the holy scriptures comes under this title, and enjoys the privileges attached to that title. Paul claims this authority for what he wrote (1 Cor. 14:37), and makes the difference between his spiritual experience, however great it was, and what the Lord said, but the things he wrote were the commandments of the Lord. The end of Romans assures us that the mystery of the gospel, hidden from the prophetic and all previous ages, was made known in prophetic scriptures* to all nations. And Peter puts Paul's Epistles on a level

with the other scriptures. Scripture is a recognized title; whatever is that has authority, and by grace, enlightening power; it judges, and is not judged. This then is the divine, and divinely given resource for the Christian when the church is in an evil state—the scriptures, and the scriptures as a child has known the book: and they are capable to make the individual wise to salvation through faith in Christ. It is not a slighting of ministry. Timothy did not slight Paul assuredly; but the gifted apostle referred him to this as the sure individual guide when the church was in confusion and evil.

Not “the scriptures of the prophets”: the passage is quite clear.

But scripture can do more; it can furnish the man of God perfectly. And here we get more than the knowledge from a child, or saving wisdom through faith. The passage refers to the man of God—him who is for God in this world—a large and comprehensive expression. In a certain sense, in service, he represents God, so far as he acts under His guidance and by His power— “in all things behaving ourselves as the ministers of God.” But he stands, at least, as serving God in the world. It is an expression borrowed from the Old Testament. And here we find not the book as a whole, but every part—everything rightly called scripture is inspired, theopneustos. Evidently, it could not have the authority which the Lord and the apostles ascribe to it; we should not see the Lord (in the most solemn moments and in the most absolute way) using His divine power to enable His disciples to understand it, if it were not truly inspired. But there is more than this.

It is not all the truth that the scriptures contain the word of God, but everything that is scripture is inspired,17 and profitable for all needed to make the man of God perfect. Everyone who has to act for God in this world, to stand for Him before the world—and (though some be specially called) all have more or less to do so—finds all he wants to complete his state and competency for service, in the scripture. But it is not only this that it contains what is needed; but everything truly called scripture is inspired—has the distinct name given by God Himself to that which He willed to be received as coming from Himself. We have, a child has (as to its authority which faith alone can make effectual) writings which claim for themselves the subjection of our souls, as being God's word immediately to ourselves, so that the intervention of any is interfering with His right—His immediate right over the soul as belonging to Him. It is not that others cannot help me in apprehending what is there; but that He helps me to what is there, and none can interfere to hinder the direct claim of what is then on my soul, or he interferes with God's title, no matter whether it is an individual or the church which does so. And the higher the claim to do so, the greater the guilt.

I acknowledge the authority of all scripture as absolute and direct from God. I may surely be helped to know more of what is there to be profited by, to be enjoyed, or obeyed. I am specifically taught to go to the scriptures, to rely on them— taught to do it individually, not as judging them, but as a direct claim of God over me when the church has become a form of godliness. Always true and enjoyed by all together when the church was right, in the Epistles received from the apostles, and the Gospels which we have given us of God, it became

necessary truth—truth to this effect by the apostle, when the church was gone wrong, and perilous times would come in the last days.

Let us not forget, if the sense of the present state of things does not press upon us, that we know from scripture that those times were set in when John wrote and Paul wrote, and Peter and Jude. John could say, we know it is the last time: John could give the Lord's warning voice to the falling church in the seven churches of the Apocalypse; Peter could tell us that the time was come for judgment to begin at the house of God; Jude be forced to write to insist on the faith once delivered, because those had got into the church who will be the objects of Christ's judgment at the last day; Paul, that the mystery of iniquity already worked, and would do so till the lawless one was at last revealed after the falling away— that already all sought their own, not the things of Jesus Christ. And he (though the wise architect to lay the foundation), when his departure was at hand, had to warn his beloved disciples, as he had the elders of Ephesus, of the evils at the door, and that evil men and seducers would wax worse and worse, and the church be a form of godliness without the power.

Then the individual comes out afresh (for we learn nothing of the church in 2 Timothy except its failure and ruin), and the man of God has to hold his ground against advancing evil; and then the scriptures get the place they were meant to hold— a necessity not so felt when all flowed in the stream of divine power, receiving the care and leading of the' apostles themselves, but brought out for the days of evil and seduction with

divine authority, divine inspiration, and divine sufficiency to instruct.

It is evident that “knowing from whom thou hast learned them “now resolves itself also into the scriptures. The word of God, as the blessed Lord Himself, comes out from God, and is adapted to man. In this, with the living Word, it stands alone and is perfected in it.

Let me here engage my reader to realize in his own mind, and, if occasion call for it, insist with others on, the passage which connects itself closely with what we have considered— I mean the passage in I John 2:24, “Let that therefore abide in you which ye have heard from the beginning: if that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son and in the Father.” Nothing has secure authority for the believer but that which was from the beginning. This alone secures our continuing in the Father and the Son. There may be much respectable, much “reverend antiquity”; and the spirit of reverence, where the object is true, is a very important quality in the believer, but an amazing means of seduction when it is not. But, as a ground of faith, the Christian must have “what was from the beginning”; the authority for believing must be “that which existed from the beginning”—must have been heard from the beginning. In the scriptures I have that certainty; I have the thing itself: nowhere else. Many may preach the truth and I profit by it; but by the word, specially here by the New Testament, I have the certainty of what was from the beginning, and I have it nowhere else. No agreement of Christians can give me this. If Rome and Greece and England were all one, their agreement would not give me what was from the beginning as a fact; the scriptures certainly do.

I may be told that it is very presumptuous for me to set my judgment against such authority. I have no judgment of mine to set; I believe in what Paul and John and Peter and the blessed Lord said: there is no presumption in that. I do as they bid me, I receive and hold fast to what "was in the beginning." If, indeed, any say that "it is not easy to understand," I ask, "Are they?" This is presumption—to say they can teach the truth better than the apostles and the Lord, who spoke to the multitudes. At any rate I must have, not what the primitive church held, but "what was from the beginning." Hence the same apostle says, "He that is of God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us: hereby know we the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error."

14 It is somewhat strange that he whom Cyprian always called his master did so leave it. It is one of the riddles of theologians now, to distinguish the writings of this church-father before and after his leaving the great outward body.

15 It is a curious fact in church history, that what made Cyprian such a stickler for church unity, and no grace elsewhere, was finally given up and condemned by the church at large—the mere validity of schismatical and heretical baptism. Cyprian certainly was never consistent.

16 This Augustine did, but equally insisted that all were lost who were separated from the latter, and made the day of judgment the time of separation and a kind of purgatory.

17 I have no doubt that this is the right translation: but it does not alter the matter I am now upon. For every

divinely-inspired writing equally and specifically ascribes inspiration to everything that has a title to that name, and then adds other characteristics.

What Do I Learn From Scripture?

Preface

The following paper was drawn up, on the request being made to the writer to give a statement of his faith.

It was replied that the writer would not sign a confession of faith which he had drawn up himself; that all human statement of truth was so inferior to scripture, even when drawn from it [the written word], that he could not do it; and the drawing up of this has only the more convinced him of it.

In the first place, there might be important points left out, or that put in which had better not be there. And supposing everything right that was there, it was like a made tree instead of a growing tree. The word gives truth in its living operations. It is giving in connection with God, in connection with man, with conscience, with divine life, and is thus a totally different thing. To use another image, it is not the growing tree, but supposing all there, sticks laid up in bundles. The writer had, however, no objection personally to say what he believed, to give an answer when asked the question. What follows is given with a deeper conviction than ever of the imperfection of a human assemblage of truth; the writer adding that there are many things more which he should teach. But he could say, “I believe this”; I have learnt this from scripture.

I learn from the scriptures that there is one living God, 18 fully revealed to us in Christ,19 and known through Him as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,20 in the unity of the Godhead,21 but revealed as distinctively willing,22

acting,23 sending, sent,24 coming,25 distributing,26 and other actings; or, as habitually expressed amongst Christians, three persons in one God, or Trinity in Unity. God is the Creator of all things; but the act of creating is personally attributed to the Word and the Son, and the operation of the Spirit of God.27 I learn that the Word, who was with God and was God, was made flesh, and dwelt among us,28 the Father sending the Son to be the Saviour of the world.29 That He, as the Christ, was born of a woman,30 by the power of the Holy Spirit coming on the Virgin Mary,31 true man,32 without sin,33 in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily,34 the promised seed of David according to the flesh,35 the Son of man,36 and Son of God,37 determined to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead,38 one blessed Person, God and man,39 the man Christ Jesus,40 the anointed man,41, Jehovah the Saviour.42 I learn that He died for our sins according to the scriptures,43 having appeared once in the consummation of ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself;44 that He has borne our sins in His own body on the tree, suffering for sins the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God;45 and that He is our righteousness before God.46 I learn that He is risen from the dead,47 raised by God, by Himself, by the glory of the Father,48 and ascended up on high, 49 having by Himself purged our sins, and sits at the right hand of God.50 I learn that after Christ’s ascension the Holy Ghost has been sent down to dwell in His people individually and collectively, so that in both ways they are the temple of God.51 We are sealed52 and anointed with this Spirit,53 the love of God being shed abroad in our hearts;54 we are led by Him,55 and He is the earnest of our inheritance;56 we cry, Abba, Father,

knowing we are sons.57 I learn that Christ will come again to receive us to Himself,58 raising those that are His, or changing them if living, fashioning their bodies like His glorious body, according to the power by which He is able to subdue all things to Himself,59 and that those of them who die meanwhile will depart and be with Him.60 I learn that God has appointed a day in which He will judge this habitable world in righteousness by that man whom He has ordained, whereof He has given assurance unto all men, in that He has raised Him from the dead,61 and that at the end He will sit on the great white throne, and judge the dead, small and great.62 I learn that every one of us shall give an account of himself to God,63 and receive the things done in the body, whether they be good or evil;64 and as the righteous inherit eternal life,65 so the wicked shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, will go into everlasting punishment, be cast into the lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels; and that whosoever is not found in the book of life will be cast into the lake of fire.66 I learn that this blessed one, the Lord Jesus Christ, died for all, has given Himself a ransom for all, testified in due time, 67 that He has made propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the whole world.

I learn that He has thereby obtained an eternal redemption,68 and that by one offering of Himself once for all the sins of all that believe on Him are purged,69 and that by faith in Him their consciences are also purged,70 and God remembers their sins and iniquities no more;71 that being called of God, they receive the promise of an eternal inheritance,72 being perfected for ever, so that we have boldness to enter into the holiest

by His blood, by the new and living way He has consecrated for us.73 I learn that to enter into the kingdom of God we must be born of water and the Spirit, born again,74, being naturally dead in sins, and by nature children of wrath.75 That which God employs in order to our being born again is His word.76 Hence it is by faith that we become His children.77 I learn that God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him shall have everlasting life,78 but that to this end, God being a righteous and holy God, the Son of man had to be lifted up upon the cross;79 that there He bore our sins in His own body on the tree,80 and was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.81 I learn that He loved the church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.82 I learn that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we might be holy and without blame before Him in love.83 I learn that those that believe are sealed with the Holy Spirit, who is the earnest of our inheritance till the redemption of the purchased possession;84 that by Him the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts,85 that we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father;86 that they who have received this Spirit not only cry, Abba, Father, but know that they are in Christ, and Christ in them; that thus not only He appears in the presence of God for them, but they are in Him who is sitting at the right hand of God, expecting till His enemies be made His footstool;87 that they are dead to sin in God’s sight, and

to reckon themselves so; having put off the old man, and put on the new; alive to God through Jesus Christ (Christ is their new life); crucified to the world, and dead to the law.88 I learn thus that if they are in Christ, Christ is in them and they are called upon to manifest the life of Jesus in their mortal flesh,89 and to walk as He walked, 90 God having set them in the world as the epistles of Christ,91 whose grace is sufficient for them, and whose strength is made perfect in their weakness.92 I learn that they are converted to wait for God's Son from heaven,93 and taught to do so; and that they have the promise that they shall never perish, nor shall any man pluck them out of Christ's hand,94 but that God will confirm them to the end, that they may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.95 I learn that they have part in these privileges through faith in Christ Jesus, in virtue of which righteousness is imputed to them;96 that Christ, who has obeyed even unto death, and wrought a perfect work upon the cross for them,97 is now their righteousness, made such of God to them,98 and that we are made the righteousness of God in Him; 99 that as His precious blood cleanses us from all sin, so we are personally accepted in the beloved,100 that as by one man's disobedience many were constituted sinners, so by the obedience of One many shall be constituted righteous.101 I learn that we are sanctified, or set apart to God, by God the Father, through the offering of Jesus Christ once for all, and by the operation and power of the Holy Ghost through the truth, so that all Christians are saints,102 and that in our practical state we have to follow after holiness,103 and grow up to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, being changed into His image, to whom we are to be perfectly conformed in glory.104 I learn that the Lord has left two rites, or

ordinances, both significative of His death; one initiatory, the other of continual observance in the church of God—baptism and the Lord's supper.105 I learn that, when Christ ascended up on high, He received gifts for men, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; and that from Christ the whole body, fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, maketh increase of the body, to the edifying of itself in love.106 I learn that, as the grace and sovereign love of God is the source and origin of all the blessing, 107 so continual and diligent dependence on that grace is that by which we can walk after Him and to His glory, who has left us an example that we should follow His steps.108 I learn from the example and authority of the Lord and His apostles that the scriptures of the Old and New Testament are inspired of God, and are to be received as the word of God, having His authority attached to it, and which works effectually in those that believe;109 and that the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple, discerning the thoughts and intents of the heart, being understood, not by the wisdom of man, but by the teaching of God, being spiritually discerned, they are revealed, communicated, and discerned by the Spirit.110 I learn that, while God alone is immortal in and by Himself,111 the angels are not subject to death,112 and that the death of a man does not affect the life of his soul, be he wicked or renewed, but that all live still as to God, though dead, 113 and that the wicked will be raised again as well as the just.114 I learn that every assembly of God is bound by the exercise of discipline, according to the word, to keep itself pure in doctrine and godly walk.115 18 1 Tim. 2:5; ch. 4:10, et passim.

19 John 1:18.

20 Matt. 3:16, 17; ch. 28:19; Eph. 2:18.

21 John 5:19; 1 Cor. 12:6.

22 John 6:38-40; ch. 5:21; 1 Cor. 12:11.

23 John 5:17; 1 Cor. 12:11.

24 John 14:26; ch. 15:26; ch. 5:24, 37; 1 Pet. 1:12; 1 John 4:14.

25 John 15:26; ch. 16:7, 8, 13.

26 1 Cor. 12:11.

27 Gen. 1:1, 2; Job 26:13; John 1:1, 3; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2.

28 John 1:1, 2, 14.

29 1 John 4:14.

30 Gal. 4:4.

31 Luke 1:35.

32 Phil. 2:7; Heb. 2:14, 17; 1 John 4:2; 2 John 7.

33 Luke 1:35; 1 John 3:5.

34 Col. 2:9.

35 Rom. 1:3; Acts 2:30; ch. 13:23; 2 Tim. 2:8.

36 Matt. 16:13, et passim.

37 John 1:18, 34, et passim,

38 Rom. 1:4.

39 Phil. 2:6-10; 2 Cor. 5:19-21; Heb. 1 and 2; 1 John 2:23 to ch. 3:3; ch. 5:20; Rev. 22:12, 13; John 1:1, 14; ch. 8:58, and many others.

40 1 Tim. 2:5.

41 Acts 10:38.

42 Matt. 1:21. The word Christ or Messiah means anointed, and Jesus or Joshua, Jehovah or Jah the Saviour.

43 1 Cor. 15:3.

44 Heb. 9:26.

45 1 Pet. 2:24; ch. 3:18.

46 1 Cor. 1:30; Heb. 9:24.

47 1 Cor. 15:20; Matt. 28:6, and many others.

48 Acts 3:15; John 2:19; Rom. 6:4; Eph. 1:20.

49 Mark 16:19; Luke 24:51; Eph. 4:8-10, and others.

50 Heb. 1:3; ch. 10:12; Eph. 1:20, 21, and others.

51 John 16:7; ch. 7:39; Rom. 8:9; the Father sends, John 14:26; Christ sends from the Father, John 14:16,17, 26; Rom. 8:11 j 1 Cor. 6:19; ch. 3:16; Eph. 2:22; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 5:30; ch. 1:23. etc.

52 Eph. 1:13; 2 Cor. 1:22.

53 2 Cor. 1:21; 1 John 2:20, 27.

54 Rom. 5:5.

55 Rom. 8:14.

56 Eph. 1:14; 2 Cor. 1:22; ch. 5:5.

57 Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6.

58 John 14:3.

59 1 Thess. 4:16, 17; 1 Cor. 15:23, 51, 52; Phil. 3:20, 21.

60 2 Cor. 5:8; Luke 23:43; Acts 7:59.

61 Acts 17:31.

62 Rev. 20: 11, 12.

63 Rom. 14:12.

64 2 Cor. 5:10.

65 Rom. 6:22, 23; Matt. 25:46.

66 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Matt. 25:46; Rev. 20:15.

67 2 Cor. 5:14; 1 Tim. 2:6; 1 John 2:2.

68 Heb. 9:12.

69 Heb. 1:3; ch. 9:22; ch. 10:2.

70 Heb. 9:14; ch. 10:2.

71 Heb. 10:17.

72 Heb. 9:15.

73 Heb. 10:14, 19, 20.

74 John 3:3, 5.

75 Eph. 2:1, 3; 2 Cor. 5:14.

76 James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23.

77 Gal. 3:26.

78 John 3:16.

79 John 3:14, 15.

80 1 Pet. 1:24.

81 2 Cor. 5:21.

82 Eph. 5:25-27.

83 Eph. 1:4.

84 Eph. 1:13, 14; 2 Cor. 1:22.

85 Rom. 5:5.

86 Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6; John 14:20.

87 Eph. 2:6; Heb. 9:24; ch. 10:12,13.

88 Col. 3:3, 4, 9, 10; Rom. 6:6, 11; Gal. 2:20; ch. 6:14.

89 John 14:20; Rom. 8:10; 2 Cor. 4:10.

90 1 John 2:6.

91 2 Cor. 3:3.

92 2 Cor. 12:9.

93 1 Thess. 1:10; Titus 2:12, 13; Luke 12:35-37.

94 John 10:29.

95 1 Cor. 1:7-9.

96 Rom. 5:1, 2; Gal. 3:24-26; ch. 3:11, 14; Rom. 4:16; Eph. 2:8; 2 Cor. 5:7; Gal. 2:20; Heb. 11:4; Acts 13:39; Gal. 3:9, 6; Rom. 4:24, 25, and many others.

97 Phil. 2:8; John 17:4; Heb. 7:27; ch. 9:25-28; ch. 10:12, 18.

98 1 Cor. 1:30.

99 2 Cor. 5:21.

100 Eph. 1:6.

101 Rom. 5:19.

102 Jude 1; Heb. 10:10; 2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Cor. 6:11; John 17:17, 19; 1 Pet. 1:22; Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2; Eph. 1:1, et passim.

103 Heb. 12:14; 2 Pet. 3:14.

104 Eph. 4:13, 15; 2 Cor. 3:18; 1 John 3:2, 3; Eph. 4:1; Col. 1:10; 1 Thess. 2:12; ch. 5:23.

105 Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; ch. 8:12,16,36; ch. 9:18; Eph. 4:5; 1 Cor. 1:17; 1 Pet. 3:21; Rom, 6:3; Col. 2:12; Matt. 26:26-28; Mark 14:22,23; Luke 22:19,20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26; ch. 10:3, 4.

106 Eph. 4:6-13; Arts 2:33; 1 Cor. 12:28; Rom. 12:6; 1 Pet. 4:10, 11; Matt. 25:14; Luke 19:13.

107 John 3:16, 27 j 1 Cor. 2:12; ch. 4:7; Eph. 2:7-10; Titus 2:11.

108 John 15:5; Phil. 2:12, 13; 1 Thess. 5:17; Rom. 12:12; Luke 18:1; 2 Pet. 1:5-10, and many others. John 8:12; ch. 10:4; ch. 12:26; ch. 17:10; 2 Cor. 5:15; 1 Cor. 6:19, 20; Rom. 14:7, 8; 1 Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17; 1 John 2:6; 1 Pet. 2:2.

109 Matt. 4:4, 7, 10; Luke 24:25-27, 44-46; John 5:39; ch. 10:35; Matt. 5:17, 18; John 20:9; Matt. 1:23; and a multitude of passages. Matt. 26:54; 2 Pet. 1:20, 21; Gal. 3:8; 2 Tim. 3:14-17; 1 Thess. 2:13; 1 Cor. 15:2, 3; ch. 2:13; ch. 14:36, 37; Rom. 16:26, where it is not “the scriptures of the prophets,” that is, at any rate scriptures, but New Testament, not Old; 2 Pet. 3:16.

110 Psa. 19:7; Heb. 4:12, 13; Luke 24:45; 1 Cor. 2:10; 1 John 2:20, 27; John 6:45; 1 Cor. 2:12-14.

111 1 Tim. 6:16.

112 Luke 20:36.

113 Luke 12:4, 5; Matt. 10:28; Luke 16:23; ch. 20:38.

114 John 5:28, 29; Acts 24:15.

115 Heb. 12:15-17; 1 Tim. 3:15; Titus 3:10, 11; 1 Cor. 5:7, 13.

Either In Adam Or In Christ?

I have thought, on weighing the request of some as to a paper on the great principles of our being dead and risen with Christ, that a review of the progressive character of the blessing connected in scripture with it might be profitable for all. I have not the expectation of satisfying myself in what I shall present; but, as my purpose is to follow scripture, I may be able perhaps in the Lord's goodness to help others.

There are three great points to consider as regards sin (and I speak and purpose speaking entirely in a practical way): sins actually committed, involving us in guilt as regards deeds done in the body; the principle of sin as a law in our members, sin in the flesh; and separation from God. But in this last respect there are two aspects, separation of heart, and judicial separation. Both must be remedied.

The root of all sin is not in the lusts in which it is so hatefully shewn, but in having a will of our own, the departure of the will from God, the will to be independent, free to do our own will— "who is Lord over us?" When we do thus separate from God, we must have something, we cannot suffice to ourselves, and we sink into lusts, lusts in which our will works.

There is indeed another element which seems to me to have preceded both lust and will in man's fall, namely, distrust of God, which left him to the working of both.

Happy and confiding in God, he had no need to seek happiness in any other way; but Satan suggested to him that God had kept the forbidden fruit back from him,

because if he ate it he would be as Elohim. Lust by this got entrance.

All this has to be remedied, and remedied according to the glory of God. Is that remedy a return to the old estate of man, a restoration or re-establishment of his original paradisaical state? is it that which is new—new, that is, as regards man? The answer is simple: it is wholly new. It is blessing in a second Adam, who is the Lord from heaven. Man remains man, and the individual remains the individual; all their responsibility in their previous state recognized, and the glory of God provided for and vindicated as to it; but the state and blessing into which they are brought, as brought to God, is a wholly new one. It is God's way of doing this, and what He has done, which we are now to inquire into, according to the true and blessed word of God, who only can reveal these things.

It may be well first to turn to the responsibility of man as such, though the thoughts and purposes of God preceded it all. But the revelation of them came after it, as we shall notice, with the Lord's help, farther on.

Responsibility attaches to every creature who is placed in intelligent relationship with God. Wherever there is consciousness of such relationship, there is obligation to God in it. It may be in a holy nature, and obedience delighted in; in an innocent one, and little else but thankfulness known, save so far as we know it was in Adam, as obedience may be tested by commandment; or it may be in a state of sin, which does not alter the fact of relationship in which the fallen being stands, but his whole state is in such relative place. The first is the condition of the elect angels preserved by God, so that

they have not left their first estate. The second was Adam's state before his fall. We may stay a moment to contemplate a state which passed away as if it were one intended only to give a lovely picture, that men might learn what it was, but incapable of lasting, the bright but peaceful freshness of morn for one who rises early to a busy and wearying day. Little is said of it, nothing of its joys. It was the true and real but transitory ushering in of that in which all moral truth has been brought out —of a scene which results for faith in a head anointed with oil, and a cup running over, favour that is better than life, and dwelling in the house of the Lord for ever, our Father's house, but not in itself the green pastures and waters of quietness which are the natural effect of the hand and guidance of the Good Shepherd.

The knowledge of good and evil was not there. The enjoyment of a good conscience was not there in the exercises which keep it without offence; there could not be a bad one. The peaceful natural enjoyment of goodness was there, and no thought of evil disturbed it. God could be thanked and praised, His gifts enjoyed. Evil, sin, sorrow, conflict, passions were unknown. It was a peaceful scene and a happy scene, occupation in what gave natural pleasure, innocent pleasure. They were set to dress the garden and keep it, and all was pleasant there; no want was there, nor would suggest itself. One only moral point bore another character, and tested willing subjection to God, namely, the ready acceptance of the divine will by a confiding soul. If man was to be a moral being at all, he must have obligation and responsibility somewhere: not in any object which supposed evil lusts—for he had none. It was obedience that was required, and simply obedience. What was

forbidden would have been no sin, had it not been forbidden. It did not suppose sin in man: confidence in God would have made it easy and a delight. A dutiful child assumes the goodness as well as the Tightness of a command, and both as well as the duty to obey. In fact up to the temptation all went on in peace.

This was the difference of man's and Satan's sin. He abode not in the truth, for there was no truth in him. Man was tempted into the knowledge of good and evil. The destruction of confidence, as we have said, lets in will and lust. It was dreadful to belie God's goodness in the midst of blessing, and trust one who could call it in question. All was really over then; for man was away from God, had ceased to believe what He said, had ceased to believe Him good—alas! no uncommon case since. But will and lust brought in this transgression at once, when the heart was away from God, and trusted itself and Satan—the history of our hearts ever since. Man had departed from God, sin had come in, transgression, and (by the fall) conscience, or the knowledge of good and evil. Up to this, righteousness and holiness were unknown to man; they require the knowledge of good and evil. But thus the normal relationship of man with God had closed; his responsibility could not, for he was a creature, and God his creator: nor was that all. He had himself the knowledge of good and evil, or (to make it intelligible) of right and wrong. His responsibility had taken the form of conscience, and relationship to a God forsaken indeed, but known, so far better as conscience makes us know Him, as a judge.

Into God's rest, Hebrews 4 teaches us, man in creation never entered. Such natural peacefulness without

combat, as he may then have had for a moment, cannot be on earth now. There remaineth a rest for the people of God, where nature, then a new and divine one, will have it in fulness of blessing in God's own presence, where all will be according to the nature we have, without a disturbing element, yea, according to God's own nature, where we enter into God's rest.

But on the fall sin and responsibility ran on together in the place into which man, who had fled from God, was drawn out by God; and the world as such began. But man was separated from God, though He overruled all things. That which God has wrought for us as regards this state, and the accomplishment of His own counsels in grace towards us, is this:—perfectly meeting, according to His own righteous requirements, our state of sin connected with man's responsibility; closing, as to our standing before Him, our whole Adam life; laying a foundation, according to His own glory, for our being with Himself in that glory, in a new state altogether; giving us the life in which we can enjoy it; giving us the energy, revelations, and power of the Holy Ghost, by which, in this scene of combat and ruin, we may (through what He has given and done) be in relationship with Him according to the place He has set us in, and look forward to the glory; and finally, introducing us into the rest with and like Him, who being our title, is also our forerunner in glory—all in and through the second Man, the last Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ.

As to responsibility and its effects, I may be brief. The place in which man was set according to God, the only place he had according to Him, he has wholly lost. He had turned away from God in heart, had fled from Him, through his newly acquired conscience, and has been

driven out—that life and sin might not go on, for ever, together in the world. Return was precluded. This state and standing was in itself that of one wholly lost. Man was away from God. Mercies might and surely did remain, but place and relationship were wholly gone. In the judgment on the author of the calamity a promise was given, not to Adam, but on which faith might rest, that another should arise, and through His once suffering, totally destroy the power of him who had brought in the ruin. The Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. This was simple promise and grace in another than Adam.

The two great principles of responsibility and life-giving had been set up in the garden. Man had failed in the first; and, having failed, was debarred in that state from perpetuating evil by the second. He could not be innocent and die. He could not be a sinner, and allowed to live for ever in the place of responsibility in wickedness. It would have been a horror. Return to innocence is in the nature of things impossible when good and evil are known.

But man was to be tested, having the knowledge of good and evil, and the pretension with it to be good and righteous. The result, though of all importance, I state rapidly, because it is surely familiar to most of your readers; I only, as necessary, recall it here.

Man has been tried, left to himself, though not without ample testimony and ground for faith. The earth was corrupt before God and filled with violence; and the judgment of God, in the deluge, closed a scene which had become intolerable in every way.

But the world, yet again, would not retain God in its knowledge, and, in its various national divisions, worshipped devils; for man must have some god.

God then began the distinct history of grace.

Promises were given to one called out, who became the spiritual, and to some, even natural, head of a race set apart to God: Abraham became the heir of the world. The great spring of hope being thus established, as the apostle reasons in the Galatians, the question of responsibility on the footing of revelation and special relationship was renewed: first, on the ground of requirement, man's obligations according to the true and perfect rule of them; secondly, on the ground of promise and grace.

The law was given by Moses. Israel, God's called and redeemed people, undertook to inherit the blessing, on the footing of doing all that Jehovah said to them; and a just rule of outward relative conduct to God and their neighbour, and that reaching to desire or coveting, was given to them. We know the result. The golden calf began, the Babylonish captivity closed, their path.

The second trial was on the ground of promise and grace, when Christ came and presented Himself in forgiving mercy and healing to Israel. It resulted in His rejection by His people; and they were finally cast off, to be restored only by sovereign grace, the grace of One faithful, at any rate, to His own promises. Isaiah 40-48 treats one; chaps. 49-57 the other of these trials.

But this last proof of man's state went farther. It was really a trial of man as man. As regards the law, the blessed Lord brought out a deeper essence than the ten words—loving God with all our hearts, and our

neighbour as ourselves; and, as regards grace, He was the goodness of God manifest in the flesh, the light of men. It was not promise, it was the love of God—God present in love. But man's sin was thus fully brought out. For His love He had hatred. As God is love, He was hated, instead of loved with all the heart; as man, in gracious goodness and righteousness, they were His murderers instead of loving Him as themselves; they hated Him without a cause. This was too in full grace, Gentile wickedness being full, law-breaking in Israel already accomplished. But, though in the way to the judge, they would not be reconciled; and man's heart was fully tested by God's goodness.

The cross was the distinct witness of Israel's and man's sin. The mind of the flesh, of what man was in himself, was enmity against God. It had been fully tried and tested, and that by goodness. Its evil and will were only more and more brought out. It was manifested in its will (pure evil in the presence of pure good), not only by sins, though these abounded, but by the principle of sin and hatred of God. Amiable creature qualities there might be; but enmity against God, and self, was its root.

Was the flesh to be restored, or a new life and blessing to be brought in by Christianity? Is it the restoration of the first Adam, or salvation in and by the Second? Where is the place, the scene, in which the blessing is to have its result? To what does the life it is enjoyed in belong? To answer these questions we must look to the positive revelation of God, however that may be made good in the conscience when known.

I say, we must look to the purpose of God as revealed, to know fully what His mind as to this is. But we must look

to the responsibility of man too; to the guilt under which he was lying as child of the first fallen Adam. For God's glory is affected by it.

I shall first call the attention of your readers to the purpose of God Himself as revealed in scripture. Ephesians 3 (as other passages) speaks of a mystery hidden from ages and generations, hid in God. But it adds, that now the manifold wisdom of God is known by the church, "according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." There was then a plan, before ever responsibility began, of glorifying God by the church in and with Jesus our Lord. This precedes responsibility, which begins with creature relationship, and was dependent on it. Creation was the sphere of responsibility. Purpose belonged to God.

Nor is this all. Paul's apostleship (Titus 1:2) was "in hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie promised before the world began." So 2 Timothy 1:9, God "hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling according to his own purpose and grace, which was given to us, in Christ Jesus, before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ." The life which we have as Christians, new in us, is in origin before the worlds. "God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son; he that hath the Son hath life" —that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us. This present world and time is but the scene where all this is developed and brought to light. Thus in Ephesians 3, "to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God." So in Titus, "but hath in due times manifested his word by preaching." So in 2 Timothy 1:10, "but is now made

manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death and brought life and incorruptibility to light by the gospel."

It is not, remark here, that there is a predestination of individuals, important as this may be in its place, but that the church—eternal life—the promise of that life—our present saving and calling, had their place before the world existed. The life itself had, in the Person of the blessed Son of God. And though from Adam individuals may have been, and were, quickened, they differed nothing from servants in their revealed standing. Life, the church, incorruptibility, our salvation and calling, have been brought to light and revealed, yea, as to the church, begin to exist since Christ came. But we must now inquire into the application of these truths, and how they are brought to bear on the child of Adam; how he has a part in the blessings contemplated in this purpose.

"The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." The blessed Son of God became Son of man, the last Adam, the second Man. He came as man before God, born of a woman, as under the law; Gal. 4:4. In both He perfectly glorified God; walked as the obedient man, in the midst of temptation; and, as the law in the highest sense required, loved God with all His heart, and His neighbour as Himself. Victorious over Satan, as the first Adam had succumbed to him, He humbled Himself in obedience instead of seeking to exalt Himself by disobeying. In this God was perfectly glorified by man in Christ's Person. Responsibility, even in the most adverse circumstances, and every way put to the proof, was fully met, so that as man God had nothing to claim and found His delight. This was perfect as between Him and God, but redeemed no one. He abode alone, only so much the

more perfect because He was, but still alone in it. As to His own perfectness, He could have had twelve legions of angels, but He did not come for that. Still this was an immense truth as to man and God and His glory. God had been perfectly glorified by a Man there in the scene where He had been dishonoured.

This in itself was of immense moment and to the glory of our blessed Lord. Not that this could be tested without His death, for the question was till then (not for faith but for fact), Will He be faithful in spite of everything? He was. His death threw back the light of absolute unmingled obedience on all His life from His birth on. He came to do God's will; His will was the spring of all He did; and if He had to learn what obedience was in this world of sin, where it had to be made good, He was, in spite of all suffering, obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. He was the blessed, gracious, perfect man, but the obedient man, as Adam had been the disobedient one—the obedient one in the midst of all suffering and trial, as Adam was disobedient in the midst of blessings.

In this, God had been glorified in man; but He was thinking too of all of us, of His glory in grace and purpose. He was going to bring many sons to glory. But these sons were found in sin, guilty too in fact in every way. All that the first Adam produced hateful to God was thus to be removed; and where grace and God Himself had been revealed in Christ, it only, as we have seen, drew out hatred in man. Other questions arose, though questions connected with sin in one way or another; death which stood out against man; and as regards the Jews, there was the breach of the law and positive transgression; and in rejecting Christ, not only man's

common sin, but the rejection and the loss of the promises in Messiah, the promised Seed. Messiah was cut off and (surely the only true translation) had nothing.

But we may now see what, in the substance and purpose of it, was the import of the cross. As regards the previous Adam state and its fruits, and (I may add) any special transgressions of Jews against law, it was by the deep and blessed work of atonement, the total putting away of all guilt for the believer, all the fruits of the old nature were blotted out and effaced— gone out of God's sight; so it proved the righteousness of God as passing over in forbearance the sins of Old Testament saints (Rom. 3), and sets the believer now, Jew or Gentile, righteously clear in God's sight before Him in peace— this as regards the sins of the old Adam, or, if a Jew, transgressions also under law. They are gone. The work as to this had a double character. The blood sprinkled on the mercy-seat so that it should be presented to all, it was the righteousness of God towards all; and as the sins of His whole people were confessed and borne, so that there were none to impute.

This met responsibility as to the old man. As children of Adam we were under guilt in this place and condition. All is perfectly cleared; and we are before God white as snow, righteously owned as clear. But there was the tree as well as the fruit, the evil will, the lawlessness of nature Jew or Gentile, by nature the children of wrath. But Christ has died a sacrifice for sin. "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin [a sacrifice for sin, peri amartias] condemned sin in the flesh." Sin in the flesh, the principle of evil

working and producing sin in us, is condemned. I do not say sins are, but sin; but it is condemned when a sacrifice was made for it, when it was put away by Christ's sacrifice of Himself. It is not forgiven: we doubtless are, as to it. An evil principle cannot properly be forgiven; it is condemned, but put away judicially by atonement in the sight of God by Christ's sacrifice. All that constituted the old man in God's sight is put away wholly in Christ's death, and that judicially by a work which has glorified God as to it; it was what became Him.

Thus far God has been glorified by Christ's perfect personal obedience as man, and by His work in atonement for sin. This work indeed for sin goes much farther. The whole new estate of the universe is founded on it. As remarked elsewhere, all God's dealings with this world are now on the ground that sin is there—must be, because it is there. But Christ has wrought a work in virtue of which God's relationship with the world, the new heavens and the new earth, when all is accomplished, will be on the ground neither of innocence nor of sin, but of righteousness. He is the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin (not the sins—this He does not do, as falsely cited) of the world. But as to this object of Christ's death, that is, as to man as a sinful child of Adam and sin in the flesh, this is not all. Christ not only died in the consummation of ages (that is, when man's probation was fully gone through, as we have seen) to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, but He died to sin. He, the sinless One, closed all His connection with the whole fallen Adamic scene and Adamic state by death. He, ever sinless in it, had come into this scene in grace, walked up and down in it, had

been tempted in all points, and carried obedience on to death, and had thus done with the whole scene, and with the sin which He had to say to as long as He was here, though it had only proved at the end, as a result, that He knew no sin, that He lived as a man out of it and above it. Had He stopped short of death, that could not have been said, though now we can say so; we know He died to it.

Thus Christ was no longer connected with man in the state in which life in man was sin, though in Him sinless but tempted, and by temptation even to death proved sinless. Satan had tried to introduce sin into it in Him, but in vain; and now He died to it, ceased to be associated with man in that way absolutely by death. The estate of life in which He had thus to say to man ceased. He destroyed the power of death then, and annulled his power who had it, by undergoing the full extent of it, and rose into another condition of human life, in which man had never yet been at all, the firstfruits of those that slept. But the resurrection of Christ was not only divine power in life, and that in Christ Himself, who had power to lay down life and power to take it again; there was another truth in it. Divine righteousness was shewn in it. He could not be holden by it, but all the Father's glory was involved in this resurrection. His Person made it impossible He could be holden of it. His Father's glory, all that the Son was to Him, was concerned in His resurrection; but, He having perfectly glorified God in dying and finished His Father's work, divine righteousness was involved in His resurrection. And He was raised and righteousness identified with a new state into which man in Him was brought, and more than that indeed, for more was justly

due to Him—He was set in glory as man at the right hand of God.

But for this another thing was needed. Not only did the blessed Lord meet for us who believe all our sin as children of Adam, by His death, so as to clear us according to the glory of God from it all in His sight, but He perfectly glorified God Himself in so doing. “Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.” So John 17:4, 5. Hence, as stated in both these passages, Man in the Person of Christ entered into the glory of God. But it was wrought for us; our sin was put away by it. Christ, as having thus glorified all God is, is our righteousness. We are thus the righteousness of God in Him. We have a positive title to enter into that glory as regards righteousness, though owning it all to be grace (grace reigns through righteousness), and rejoice in hope of the glory of God, by the work and worth of Christ. “As he is, so are we in this world.” But this took place in Him as entering into, beginning in His Person a new place of human existence, a risen man entered into glory. The power of eternal life was in it. Dead to the old scene and all that state of being and place and ground of relationship to God, He lives, in that He lives, to God. Christ has thus His perfect place of acceptance as Man with God, and we in Him. He is gone in the power of divine life, save according to divine righteousness, into divine glory.

A further truth connects itself with this. Christ risen and ascended has sent down the Holy Ghost which unites us to Him, so that we are in Him, members of His body, sitting in Him in heavenly places. Moreover, the Holy

Ghost dwells in us. I will, with the Lord's help, take up this farther on. I only notice here, in connection with our present subject, that the Holy Spirit makes us clearly know the efficacy of Christ's work and our redemption; so that we are at liberty, knowing on the one hand that our sins are put away, on the other that we are in Christ. He is the earnest of the glory, the Spirit of adoption, and sheds the love of God, who has done all this, abroad in our hearts. We know that we are in Christ, and Christ in us. Yea, we dwell in God, and God in us; and we know it. His presence is more than this, but I reserve this part for a moment to consider our place in Christ.

The double effect of the work of our Lord Jesus Christ will be noticed here. There was, we have seen, responsibility to God on one side as born of Adam in the world, and God's purpose on the other, to bring us to glory and privilege in the second Adam. Christ has perfectly met one for us, and entered Himself, consequent on the work of redemption, into the other. He has glorified God as to the first Adam's state, but has died to it; not that He was ever in any of the sin of it, save as bearing it, but as with us here below as men, in like manner taking part of flesh and blood with the children in the likeness of sinful flesh, and made sin for us on the cross, when fully manifested as in that state knowing no sin. Now He is entered into the glory, the glory He had with the Father before the world was, as second Adam according to the purpose of God as to man, and according to righteousness; John 16, 17.

Our state, our salvation, hangs on this: and we may add, the whole condition of the Jews or the fulfilment of promises on the earth. The sure mercies of David are

based on and identified with the resurrection of the Lord, as surely as He died for that nation also.

The cross is for God's glory, our salvation, and our state before God; it is the turning point of everything.

First: our sins, and sin, are put away. All is clean gone in God's sight according to God's glory.

But as alive and having our place in Christ, we see and are in Him as having died to that whole estate and condition, suffering as Son of man. The cross, as it shewed man's rejection of Him as come into the world in grace, so it breaks in an absolute way (nothing so absolute as death to close our connection with what we lived in, and the rather as He was rejected in will by man), with all He was in as alive down here. Our guilt as responsible men has been perfectly met for God, but we have done too in Him as to our life and standing before God with all down here by the cross. We are baptized to His death. It is the point we come to, we are crucified with Christ, nevertheless we live, but not we, but Christ fives in us. "We are dead and our life is hid with Christ in God"; we are to reckon ourselves dead. Hence we say with the apostle, "when we were in the flesh"; we are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of Christ dwell in us; if not, we are none of His. If we are Christians, our only true standing is in Him, as having died and risen from the dead.

I can well understand a Christian knowing only that, as a sinner, as guilty, Christ has died for him, and so seeing what he can rely on before God as a judge; and he is blessedly right; but his true standing, his place with God, is in Christ risen. "If Christ be not risen, ye are yet in your sins"; and in this is for the Christian, as

quickened, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which makes him free. The standing and life of the Christian, as such, rests in this; for he is risen with Christ, in this place before God, not in Adam state or nature: Christ has died the just for the unjust, so that he is not for faith in that at all, but alive from the dead through Jesus Christ our Lord.

But, further, Christ has gone up on high, as man, into glory, and as His work was for us, righteousness must put us there. All beyond the cross is not thus meeting our responsibility, but bringing in God's purpose. The good pleasure of His will was to give us sonship with Christ, adoption and glory with Him. Yet this according to God must be in righteousness and holiness too. It is righteous, for God has been perfectly glorified in His whole being and nature by Christ on the cross. And we know the firstfruits of this in His being glorified (John 13, 17); but thus it becomes according to sovereign grace and purpose indeed, but righteous, that we should be in the glory with Him. It was free purpose, but now according to what God is, righteous, and according to His holiness too, for Christ is our life withal—not our sinful Adam one—a nature which cannot sin, for we are born of God. Thus the flesh is judged as entirely evil and we are of God; and, through grace, according to righteousness, our standing is in Christ before Him.

The Holy Ghost the Comforter is therefore given us as soon as Christ went up on high; and thus we know not only that we are risen with Him, but that we are in Him and He in us. This sets our standing, and consciously so, through the Holy Ghost in Christ; sitting in heavenly places in Him, accepted in the Beloved:—a blessed place; but this in purpose. Responsibility was there. It

has been met according to God's full requirements. His resurrection is the witness of that, and so insisted on in Romans, not ascension there; so 1 Corinthians 15:17. We are justified through His blood. But there was a value in Christ's work for God's own glory, His righteousness, majesty, love, truth, all He is and according to purpose. This done for us (good and evil being known) and in the way of redemption, gives us a righteous and blessed place in perfect love in the presence of God and our Father, according to a life and nature, and in a place, which Adam innocent had not at all. Our place in heaven is founded on the glorifying of God. Ephesians 1 brings this fully out.

I may add collaterally that, through far inferior and national, yet divinely given, joys and promises, this is true of Israel— true, I mean, that the death of Christ has broken all relationship with God founded on flesh, or connected with their standing as heirs of promise as to it, though to secure them on a surer basis. He who was heir of the promises came, as a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers. But if Israel in the flesh was naturally heir to them, Jews by nature, He laboured in vain, and spent His strength for nought and in vain. His people would have none of Him. The bill of their divorcement ran thus: "Wherefore, when I came, was there no man? when I called, was there none to answer?" Often would He, the Jehovah of Israel, have gathered Jerusalem's children, and they would not. If they had but even now known, in the day of their visitation, the things that belonged to their peace! but now they were hid from their eyes. Not only was Israel thus shut out according to their title to the promise, but

the Messiah must give up, as thus come in the flesh, all that belonged to Him as so come in the flesh, though His work was perfect and with His God. He was cut off, and had nothing: so only it can really be translated. But this, by the depth of the riches of the wisdom of God, brought Israel, like the Gentiles, under pure mercy, as the apostle teaches us in Romans n; and God, ever faithful to His promises, His gifts and calling, without repentance on His part, accomplishes them, but in pure grace, and yet in righteousness, through Christ's dying for that nation, and the mercies of David are assured in His resurrection from the dead. They indeed will enjoy the blessings of the new covenant and all their promises down here, but through Christ's death, and based on His resurrection. But, as in a deeper and more absolute work in us, their blessings are given with the complete setting aside of all their old standing under the old covenant in flesh, and founded anew on the cross and the resurrection of Christ. But this by the bye.

I may add that what came on man by sin, death, as well as an awaiting judgment, Christ has truly gone down into, and broken its power for the quickened soul for ever; resurrection has told its tale, and the power of death as the dread of judgment is gone for the believer for ever.

But this is not all. The Holy Ghost has been given to dwell in us, for we are cleansed. And as Christ has done that work which is the foundation of the eternal blessing of heaven and earth, so the Holy Ghost has been given to us to unite us with Him and dwell in us, so as to set us, as in Him and He in us, in the centre of the whole scene of His glory. This will be perfectly so in the ages to come. But even now, not only are we one with Him,

according to Ephesians 1, but the Holy Ghost is in us, and the apostle looks to our being strengthened with might by It in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith, that we may be rooted and grounded in love, and able to comprehend all the glory on every side, length and breadth and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, filled even to all the fulness of God. Thus it is we are a testimony. Thus it is that glory is to God in the church throughout all ages. Thus the way Christ the blessed Lord has perfectly glorified God Himself on the cross, in His death, brings us into that glory according to divine purpose in and with Him, and fills us with the Spirit, that we may be able to comprehend all the glory of which Christ is the centre, and know the love which has made the glorious One bring us so into the centre of all with Himself to whom all glory belongs (all things that the Father has are His, and we, children, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Him)—not only bring us with Him there, but, better yet, give us Himself, and with Him a place with Him in the Father's love.

The result is this: the whole standing, condition, estate in life of the believer is changed, not outwardly as to the body yet, as is evident, but in relation to God, and that really by a new life. He is as completely out of the old as a man is out of the life of his former state when he has died, and now he looks to live with Christ who is risen; yea in spirit as having partaken of life from Him when risen, he can say he is risen with Him. His place before God is in Christ risen, not in Adam in the flesh. But as he is there by the death and resurrection of Christ, he is there according to the value of what He has there wrought: that is, all his sins, all he was in the first Adam,

atoned for and put away totally and wholly out of God's sight. He is fit, according to God's own work and nature, for God's sight and presence. Morally he is justified before God; and, as regards God's nature and presence, he must be fitted for it to be in it. And Christ has perfectly glorified God Himself.

Harmless, holy, in love we must be to be there. Hence in Ephesians 1:4 it is not said according to the good pleasure of His will. We must be that according to God's nature. But here, as we have seen, we cannot leave out God's purpose, if we would know His mind about us. His good pleasure was to predestinate us to the adoption of children, and bring us in glory as such into His presence. Such was the worth of Christ's death; so did He therein glorify God, that this purpose is righteously accomplished, and He becomes our life as risen, that we may have this place, and He, in unspeakable goodness, be the firstborn among many brethren.

But there is yet more. He in an especial way loved the church, and gave Himself for it, and thus it has a place with Himself as His body and His bride, and He nourishes and cherishes it, as a man would his own flesh. By the Holy Ghost, consequently given to us, we know our place thus given to us, sonship in present consciousness, the bride's relationship in divinely given knowledge. For the former [sonship] is individual, the latter clearly not. So far we learn what closely connects itself with it, that individually we know we are in Christ and Christ in us. But we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. We are consciously in Him in the presence of God, holy and without blame before Him in love, and the Father's children by Him: "as he is so are we in this world." This, according to God's purpose, is

justly founded on His perfectly glorifying God in His offering of Himself. This is our place with and before God, a perfect one as and in Christ. Ephesians 1 brings it most richly before us.

This is privilege, not testimony, save as all privilege rightly so acts as to produce testimony. But, besides, Christ is in us; the Holy Ghost dwells in us individually and in the assembly. And here present joy, responsibility, and testimony come in. We have fellowship (the blessed Lord being our life) with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ, that our joy may be full; we abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost; the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given to us. Yea, “we know that we dwell in God, and God in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.”

Our responsibility depends on this too. It is often thought that responsibility is connected with uncertainty. It is a mistake. Responsibility is founded on the relationship we are in. If we are always in it, we are responsible to act rightly in it. My child is my child, and cannot be otherwise. Hence he is always bound to act and feel as my child. Were he not in the relation, he would not; and so of others. We are not to grieve the Holy Spirit of promise by which we are sealed to the day of redemption. Our bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost; we are not to use them for sin. We are to walk worthy of the calling wherewith we are called, in the unity of the Spirit.

Hence, when the apostle has shewn the church in that unity as the dwelling-place of God and us all heirs of glory in our position in Christ, he prays according to the riches of that glory, that we may be strengthened with

might by His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith. And thus God was to be glorified in the church by Christ Jesus—this by a power that works in us. This becomes thus testimony. So the church is a testimony to principalities and powers in heavenly places. So are we called on to mortify our members on earth; to apply the cross to all the workings of flesh in us and every movement of our will; to mortify by the Spirit the deeds of the body. And the result, as in Paul, of bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus is that the life of Jesus might be manifested in our mortal body.

Thus our being in Christ is the highest possible place as to standing, and perfect. But God's dwelling in us, our being individually and collectively His habitation and temple, Christ's dwelling in our hearts by faith—here is the power of fellowship grounded on our standing; here our responsibility, our state tested, as compared with our standing, not to put this to doubt but to use it; here the character, means, and way of our testimony.

We then are to reckon ourselves dead; we are not in the flesh at all, but in the Spirit; in Christ who has died, and justified us as to all we were in Adam, before God; alive to God through Him, and in Him members of His body. We are not to know ourselves as alive in the flesh, but as having died and risen again; not to know even Him after the flesh (that is, as down here connected with man and with Israel, as in the world) but as passed through death to all here, and by resurrection into glory and a new state, to begin and be the Head of a new creation, of which we are the firstfruits.

I do not pursue the consequences of this as to law, conflict, and other collateral subjects. My object was to lay the great basis of truth as to it, as scripture states it. We must look at the atonement in all its truth to know it thoroughly. No compassionate remembrance of weakness was there, no patience with poor dust and ashes as we are. God had no need—it was not the time—to consider weakness, as if the spirits should fail before Him, and the souls which He had made. One was there who could drink the cup, made sin before Him; and all the outgoings of the divine nature against sin were let loose against sin, as such, on One able to sustain it, that sin might be put away out of God's sight, according to His nature, that eternal blessing might be in righteousness before Him. Our special place must then be sought in His purpose. The foundation in righteousness is according to His nature; not merely the putting away of the old thing, needed for God's glory as it was, rebellion, and disobedience, and sin; but Christ by glorifying God entering as man into (yea, beginning) the new thing, the fulness of which will be in eternity, and in that the First-begotten from the dead, the Head of the body, the church, and withal the Firstborn among many brethren conformed to the image of God's Son in glory.

The Lord make us to know how truly it is all new. If permitted, I may enter more specifically into the prayer of Ephesians 3, and compare it with that of the first. For the present I confine myself to a skeleton of the whole subject. The reader will find the question of righteousness, and the essential character of the new thing through death and resurrection, treated of in the Epistle to the Romans; the purpose of God, our place in

His presence in Christ, and His dwelling in us to fill us with blessing, in Ephesians. Hence, as to doctrine, Romans does not go beyond resurrection; Ephesians goes to ascension and union.

Evangelical Protestantism And The Biblical Studies Of M. Godet

The following pages were hastily penned at the request of a person who was keenly affected by the teaching which M. Godet's books presented in a popular form to the Christian public. Others having read the manuscript requested that it might be printed on account of the extreme gravity of the false doctrines it exposes. It was not without some reluctance that the author yielded to this request, the evidence of which will appear in the opening lines of this little work.

Besides mentioning the imperfections attached to a work undertaken whilst travelling, and in the midst of the innumerable fatigues accompanying the ministry of the word, the author considered, that in order to form a correct idea of his system as a whole, it would have been needful for him to make himself acquainted with all M. Godet's works. He has therefore merely limited himself to noting three essential points, which will suffice in his opinion to warn the people of the Lord against a teaching that assails His word, His Person, and His work.

M. Godet has many times answered the objections of rationalists, and this I acknowledge gladly. Had not the writings now before me falsified the very gospel itself, I should never have taken the pen in hand. I shall, in these writings, examine but three fundamental points relating to the gospel: the authority of the word, and inspiration: the Person of Christ: and, lastly, His work. I have during my life had too much of controversy to seek

for it. In one's old age moral repose, Christ Himself, is that which the heart seeks beyond all else.

It is somewhat difficult, to one whose thoughts have been derived from the word itself, to answer such a book as that of M. Godet, in which the author, while availing himself of expressions used by that word, attaches to them some peculiar signification of his own. Thus the scriptures speak of redemption as the work of the Saviour, and that according to the common acceptation of the word, although the means used to work out that redemption are not in accordance with the world's thoughts. The scriptures speak of redemption as of a deliverance effected by a ransom, and subsequently by a power producing a full result in behalf of those for whom that ransom has been paid. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of offences," Eph. 1:9. "Awaiting adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body," Rom. 8:23.

Redemption, according to M. Godet, is but a positive interposition of God in the history of mankind—a work of education which has put on the character of a redemption. This work appears in the election of one family, and it is seen in development as that family gradually becomes transformed into a people. The manner in which M. Godet seeks to justify this definition of redemption is somewhat peculiar. He thus quotes 1 Corinthians 1:21: "Since by wisdom the world has not known God in his wisdom, it has pleased God to save by the foolishness of preaching those who believe." I confess that by no efforts of reflection have I succeded in comprehending how this passage shews redemption to be a work of education. The quotation moreover is false. It is written, "since in the wisdom of God the world

by wisdom hath not known God, God hath been pleased, by the foolishness of the preaching, to save those that believe." One of the unpleasant things that occur in such of M. Godet's writings as I have examined is, that at least half the passages he uses are inaccurately quoted.

According to the author, promised salvation is by Christ's advent consummated in His Person; the people, having rejected Him, perishes; and then salvation is proclaimed to the world by the elect of the nation. "And by this double result of Israel's history the religion of redemption with all its antecedents becomes divinely sealed." Is this the redemption of which the Bible speaks?

But let us proceed. "To this primary fact, a second is necessarily attached. The work of redemption, which we have just sketched out, has been accompanied by a work of revelation." "How has God accomplished this great work?" —that is, that of redemption—" He has made use of human agents for this work. And to effect this, it was needful for Him to attract, to win, and to attach them to Himself. Consequently it was necessary to make known to them His projected work—to unfold the scheme, at least according to the measure in which they were to participate in the execution of it. He must also make them contemplate prospectively its glorious goal, in order that they might be enabled to interest themselves by acquaintance with the purpose, and be labourers with Him in it, in a manner worthy of the work and of God Himself, with conscience and liberty." "The phases of revelation also keep pace with those of redemption." "At the period when God called Abraham to found with Himself the work of redemption, He revealed Himself to him."

There are many things I might take up in the pages whence I make these quotations, but I abstain from so doing, my aim being to expose the basis of M. Godet's system. I shall, I trust, abstain from expressing my own sentiments with regard to all stated by the author. At this time I shall occupy myself less with his manner of presenting revelation than with the views he presents in another work upon the Lord Jesus Christ. Possibly I may be wrong; but I fear offending that Saviour by using expressions which might give occasion to believe that I knew not by what spirit I was actuated. Therefore I shall confine myself to placing the views contained in these books in contrast with what is found in the word.

My reader might suppose that, in speaking of revelation and the work of the prophets, M. Godet occupied himself with the Bible. Not so. The Bible, as such, is to him no revelation, and this he formally avows. At page 10 he says, "The Bible therefore, notice it well, is not revelation itself; it is, properly speaking, the narrative given of revelation." "The statement" of those truths is "the authentic document of the redemption of the human race, as well as of the revelation by which that work has been accompanied." What then is revelation? It is "a fact which has its place between God and His agent; the place of holy scripture is between that agent and the rest of humanity" (ibid). With regard to the first part of the last phrase, I should have no difficulty in accepting it, were not the definition of the word revelation in question. Whether it be applied to the immediate communication God makes to the instrument He deigns to employ, or whether it be solely applied to the fact that that instrument through the Spirit

announces to others what has been revealed to him, it is equally “a revelation from God.”

But if one limits oneself to consider the communication made to the instrument employed, then in that which concerns us (us, “the remainder of mankind”), what have we got, we who are not the recipients of that immediate communication? We have a given statement—but given by whom? Is that given statement a correct one? “An authentic document” is too vague a term to throw a true light on this point; moreover this is all extremely superficial. It is, in fact, to us no question of whether the document be authentic, but whether its entire contents be absolutely true and given by God. The expression itself is very inaccurate. It is no given statement.

A very large part of the Bible, even on M. Godet’s confession, professes to give the words of the Lord. “All the writings and some part of the prophetic scriptures, have these words for title: ‘Thus saith the Lord.’”(p. 42.) Is it true or not? If that is true, there is no distinction between revelation and the Bible. The Bible is revelation itself set down in writing. M. Godet says, “The veracious document of the word of salvation.” (p. 46). If it is veracious, we have, in all that it contains, revelation itself; and that does not only apply to prophecy but to law. It tells us there, “And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.” Is it true or not? The history of the creation, that of Abraham, etc., are they a collection of Elohistic or Jehovistic legends; or is it a written revelation? Man should live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. Where find these words if the account rendered and revelation are not identical—if the Bible

does not give us words from the mouth of God, that is, say, the revelation?

At the time of the temptation in the desert, all depended upon the fact that the Saviour yielded not in that moment. The first Adam had yielded; thank God, the Second could not fail, while all depended upon His standing firm to conquer the strong man. How did He obtain the victory? By citing that which is written. The scripture was sufficient for the Son of God as divine authority. He referred to words which proceeded from the mouth of God. Scripture cited, one single passage sufficed for Satan, reducing him to silence, the absolute testimony of his defeat. The Saviour made use only of scripture, although Satan quoted it also—falsely if you will, but in order cunningly to avail himself of the written word of God. The Saviour maintained His standing within that divine enclosure of safety, “It is written again.” By those words that proceeded from the mouth of God, the victory on which our salvation depended was won. To the Saviour they possessed a divine and absolute authority—and to Satan also— and that in such a sort that he dared not reply. Had he done so, he would openly have betrayed himself as the adversary; and to man—to one Man at least—to Christ. Blessed are all they who follow Him!

But I anticipate somewhat. Let us bear in mind that the question concerns the communication from God to man; this we all recognize. In speaking of revelation, M. Godet says (p. 14), “They who receive it receive it not solely for themselves. The work of which it unveils the meaning has the world for its object.” It is clear that revelation was not given to be the property solely of him who received it. It might so happen, and has so

happened: but, as a general proposition, revelation is received by an agent to be communicated to others. Revelation was not for the channel to which it was confided, but for the people of God, for the church, and for the sinful world.

We will now return to M. Godet's theory, that also of all who deny the inspiration of the scriptures, who deny it in the full, entire, ordinary, and common acceptation of that word. The Bible IS the word of God. God has revealed to certain chosen instruments His thoughts and His purpose according as it seemed good to Him so to do, and, in thus doing, to use M. Godet's own expression, God has the world as His object. This communication was made from God Himself to the prophets. The communication is divine—partial it may be, but perfect. The communication is from God Himself, the prophet receiving it as given by God. But, although the world be His object—not the prophet—the world receives but a given statement of that revelation! The prophet, to the best of his ability, communicates to others what he has received. Thus the world, which is the object God had in view, receives revelation only as transmitted with all the imperfections which pertain to the exercise of the human mind, and to human faculties in connection with divine things—to the memory, for instance—in fact to all the weaknesses pertaining to our poor nature. The world possesses but a transmitted statement of the complete, perfect, and divine revelation, supplied by the men who received it; nevertheless revelation was made and communicated, as having the world and its well-being for its object!

Is this a theory that bears the impress of common sense? and what is it as concerns divine goodness? God desired

to communicate to the world the mighty efficacy of the truth. He revealed that truth to chosen instruments; but the world, for whom He destined it, and His beloved church, could and can only receive it spoiled and marred by the weaknesses of the channels of communication, for whom personally it was not designed! And this is called rational! Nor is this all. The question becomes yet more serious, when the New Testament and more especially the Gospels are concerned, those given statements of events in which redemption was at least consummated, even though redemption be but the goal of the education of man. Manifestly this is of more importance than all besides. M. Godet speaks of it thus (p. 43): “The contradictions between the Gospel recitals. But our Gospels, as we have seen, are not revelation. Revelation is the fact related—it is Jesus, His work, His word. Our evangelists describe that fact to the best of their ability; one or two among them qualified from having been eye-witnesses, the others from such information as they were able to obtain.”

But then, as regards the most important point, as regards redemption, there has been no revelation at all, because “revelation is a fact placed between God and His agent” (p. 16), whilst our evangelists speak merely from their title of being eye-witnesses, or from such information as they were able to obtain. It is a matter of personal memory, and even of second-hand communication, since M. Godet relies on the legends of the primitive church, to which he often refers. Mark, for instance, according to M. Godet, has, at the request of the Roman Christians, given his own reminiscences of the remembrances of Peter. Matthew has “edited the discourses,” but another has added the facts that link

these discourses together as well as it could be done. Luke, having made use of documents already published, probably made some expeditions into Galilee during Paul's imprisonment at Caesarea, in order to collect together all the possible recollections which the memories of the Galileans could retain; and then from these materials Luke composed a history in the Grecian style, the only one which merited that name. (See "The origin of our four Gospels." Biblical Studies: second series.)

M. Godet also says (of "M. Colani," p. 38), "I agree to it without any difficulty. Many of M. Colani's objections appear to me weighty, and some decisive, against a certain manner of considering the Bible, which might confound it with revelation." Thus we are left without any revelation, for we have but the Bible; and that, with such contradictions in its most important portion as to falsify the given statement, as to render it not from God but to base it upon the memories of Peter, of Mark or of the Galileans, and thus raise positive obstacles and hindrances to one's considering that which we have in the New Testament to be a revelation from God! And here we fall lower than ever. The greater part of the Old Testament was based upon communications from God to agents. Those communications were revelations. In the New Testament Jesus and His word are the fact, that is, revelation; and all that we get is only a matter of memory, bringing contradictions into the narrations! Our evangelists describe the fact to the best of their ability. The Christ is a revelation, but, according to M. Godet, we have no revelation of the Christ!

It is important that I should here point out a certain method of presenting inspiration (a method common to

M. Godet and to all who oppose inspiration, but which serves to lead the simple astray). He speaks thus (Biblical Studies, p. 48): “To require a Bible dictated word for word from heaven would be requiring a book that would supplant human thought instead of fertilizing it; a book making a passive instrument of man, instead of calling his intelligent and free co-operation into request… Would that be more divine?” We must not expect M. Godet to agree with himself. At page 44 we read: “When it is granted to a man to confer directly with Jehovah, two things simultaneously take place in him. Every creature, himself included, disappears into nothingness. God remains before him as the Being who alone is great, alone real.” This has certainly some appearance of “supplanting human thought”—has it not? Now, not being inspired myself, I do not intend to define inspiration; were I so, I do not imagine it would be possible for me to explain it to one who was not. What I seek is God’s thought; I neither seek to “supplant” nor to “fertilize human thought.” But to define inspiration as being “word for word dictated from heaven,” is but a human idea of the subject. When it has been written, “Thus saith Jehovah,” or “Jehovah said unto Moses,” either He has said it, or words have been put into the mouth of Jehovah, words which are not His own. God Himself makes a distinction in the form, but not in the authority of revelation; Num. 12:6-8. Tongues were spoken which the person who used them could not understand. This was truly “supplanting human thoughts”; but Paul preferred to speak with his understanding. God could fill his heart with glorious and holy thoughts, and so keep him filled with them that nothing should be there, and consequently nothing be expressed, but that which God had placed there. These

were the thoughts of God, but through the power of the Spirit became the thoughts, the joy, of a man, creating in him an intelligence, moulding his heart and divinely enlightening his conscience. God could in such sort possess Himself of the intelligence, the heart, and the conscience, that nothing could either enter in or flow out but what He had put there. This is also the highest character of inspiration, because all that is revealed belongs to us; whereas the prophets, in searching into their own prophecies, found it was not for themselves they ministered those things. Be it as it may, is it not wretched in the extreme to put "a Bible dictated word for word from heaven" in contrast with human thought, instead of discerning the operation of the Spirit of God, and man's mind formed by the communication of purely divine thoughts, they being adapted to man, and also received by him through the work of the Spirit of God?

Let us now examine how the word presents itself to us: for its absolute perfection as a whole, and its intrinsic power, cannot be known but by those in whom it operates. In the law it is, as we have seen, "Jehovah spake unto Moses." Is this true or not? If it be true, we have the word of God, and not merely a revelation made to Moses, but the word of God such as Moses received it. Pass on to the Psalms of David. "The Spirit of Jehovah spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said," 2 Sam. 23:2, 3. If the given statement be true, the Psalms of David are the word of God itself; if it be false, there is even no piety in them, for it is not piety but fanaticism to say, "The word of God was upon my tongue," if it had not been there. Now the Lord Jesus has on many occasions put His seal to the whole Book of Psalms; the prophets in their turn declare, "Thus saith

Jehovah." The word of Jehovah was with Jeremiah. This is Zechariah's appeal to the conscience of the residue of the people who returned from Babylon (Zech. 1:4-6): "Be ye not as your fathers, unto whom the former prophets have cried, saying, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, Turn ye now from your evil ways, and from your evil doings: but they did not hear nor hearken unto me, saith Jehovah; your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever? But my words and my statutes which I commanded my servants, the prophets, did they not take hold of your fathers?" These were the words of Jehovah, and they were proved to be such. Jehovah also, and the apostles, have formally put the seal to that which the prophets have spoken, and mark it well, to that which they had spoken as we have it in the scriptures, and there alone.

And mark also this important point—it is not the word in the scriptures, in the Bible, but it is the scriptures themselves as such. It is not simply such and such a passage acting effectually upon me (though this may be the case), but it is the authority of Him who speaks by that means. It is not my mind judging the word, it is the word, God by His word, acting upon me; it is His authority established over my heart. The Samaritan woman did not say, "What thou sayest is true," but "I perceive that thou art a prophet." Thus all that He had said had authority itself as coming from God. It is the operation of the Spirit of God that imparts spiritual intelligence by the conscience, by faith—faith with regard to Him who speaks. God is known as being in it; it is divine intelligence. I do not reason to prove that the sun shines; I do not light a candle to know it: the light acts upon me and lightens me. I not only see the object

on which my sight is directed, but I know that the light shines.

Let us now see what the New Testament teaches. What was it caused the Sadducees to err? They knew not the scriptures. What did the Lord quote to enlighten the two disciples of Emmaus? Moses and all the prophets. And what did He quote to the twelve? The law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms, that is, the entire scriptures of the Old Testament, according to the Jewish division of them, as we possess them now. To the Lord these were authority. He founds His teaching upon them. Then He opened their understanding that they might understand the scriptures (Luke 24), which would have been perfectly incredible and unintelligent had the scriptures not been the word of God. Would God give by divine power a special understanding to understand a human-given statement, which was as correct as its author co possibly render it from such information as he had been able to obtain? or is there a divine revelation for the Jew, and no divine revelation for the Christian in respect of the accomplishment of the truth as it is in Christ? Peter said (Acts 3:18),” God hath thus fulfilled what he had announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets.” The Lord declared (John 10), “The scripture cannot be broken.” These, we are told, were Jewish prejudices. Did the Lord then confirm them in their Jewish prejudices in order to deceive them?

It is impossible to deny that the Lord and His apostles quote, contemplate, and in every manner encourage us to contemplate the scriptures as being altogether the word of God, and invested with His authority. They may present us the history and the words of wicked men, even of Satan himself; but it is God who gives us them,

so that we know that which is according to God. So much is this the case that Paul fears not to say, “The scripture, seeing that God would justify the nations on the principle of faith, announced beforehand the glad tidings to Abraham.” The scripture to him is so thoroughly the word of God, that he personifies it, as though God Himself spoke; such in fact it was by His Spirit. It is specially and expressly not a question of what has been revealed to the prophet, but of that which has been revealed by the prophet.116 The scriptures are in question. There may have been many communications we do not possess, as having been given only for some special occasions. That which concerns the people of God for every age is contained in the scriptures, forming a whole. “No prophecy [says Peter] of scripture is had from its own particular interpretation; for prophecy was not ever uttered by [the] will of man, but holy men of God spake under the influence of [the] Holy Ghost.” When the professing church bears the practical character of paganism, “having a form of piety, but denying the power of it,” to what does the apostle refer us? To the holy scriptures, saying, “Every scripture is divinely inspired … that the man of God may be complete.” Divine inspiration characterized that which has the right to be called “scripture “in its ordinary sense. That which Timothy was acquainted with was doubtless the Old Testament. If I call the New Testament “scripture,” the New is inspired; if not, it has no title to the name of “scripture.” Peter also, speaking of Paul’s epistles, says that “the untaught and ill-established wrest [them] as also the other scriptures” Paul, speaking in general of the writings addressed by the apostles to the Gentiles, calls them “prophetic scriptures,” for such is the true sense of Romans 16:27.

I know not if M. Godet would exclude the most precious portion (if one may venture to make a distinction in a whole, every detail of which is perfect in its place) of all the divine history, of the life, sufferings, and death of Him who loved us and gave Himself for us, of Him whom no human mind could portray, of Him of whom an infidel has said that it would have been as difficult to have invented as to have been Him. God has taken care, I venture to say, that He who was to reveal Him upon the earth for man's welfare and His own glory should not be falsely described, and thus could not be falsely represented before the world. He has taken care that, where alone it can be learnt what God is, there should be no room for that which could have been unworthy of Him. He has taken care that that which was divinely lovely, His own Son, should be divinely and perfectly presented as He was. And who was able for this but God Himself? He was man, and, blessed be His name, He made use of man for it. He was God, and God formed men that they might present God manifest in a man who was the perfect Man before God. He who is taught of God will discern God in every detail of the blessed walk of the Lord and of His expiatory death in this world.

M. Godet relates several legends on this subject, especially those of Papias, an infirm old man according to Eusebius who was a great lover of such histories. He quotes other Fathers of the church who themselves relate the legends that were current in the world one hundred or one hundred and fifty years after Christ. He quotes men who said that the church of Rome was founded by the labours of Peter and of Paul, for which M. Godet finds excuses, but which we know to be false. He who has chiefly preserved the most ancient of these

legends tells us that the church of Corinth was also founded by the two apostles. I notice this to shew how little dependence can be placed on these men. I attach no importance to their legends: they may be true, or they may be false; one of them certainly is false—that which tells us that Luke edited his Gospel from what Paul had told him, for Paul did not know the Lord down here. The legends also state that Mark edited his Gospel without order, whilst in the recital of the Lord's labours in Galilee Mark presents them in order, which is also the case in Luke's Gospel. Matthew relates the whole in a single verse; then he edits his Gospel according to the subjects, not merely the discourses, but by grasping the chief points of the manifestation of Emmanuel, of the nature of the kingdom of heaven, and of that which, historically, was to replace on earth the rejected Lord.

It is of the utmost importance to notice that, in the rationalistic system which seeks to render an account of all by the circumstances of the writer, God and the Operation of His Spirit are wholly excluded. The facts may be important if they be correct; but the revelation of God upon earth in the Son of His love is left to such an appreciation as we may have of the uncertain rumours which were current in Galilee, or to the feebleness of the memories of fallible men. One need but read the Gospels to discern the divine traits that abound in them; but if we study them, we shall discover unity of purpose in each, and in all combined a fulness as to the Lord's Person, presenting of Him a complete idea and a perfect unity, thus affording an irrefragable testimony to the unity of the source whence all has flowed.

Thus, in the four narratives of His death, we possess in each Gospel that which corresponds with its own special

character, whilst all concur in presenting the Lord complete in the perfect unity of His Person—all. As a divine Person in John, we have no sufferings in Gethsemane, nor on the cross. As Son of man in Luke, we have more of the agonies in Gethsemane, none upon the cross, but the triumph of His faith in His Father. As victim in Matthew, we see Him forsaken of God upon the cross, and find neither compassion nor anything except misery and malice in man, but Him perfect in all. Mark too much resembles Matthew for me to enter into further details now; but certainly he who is taught of God discerns in them all the divine description of the Son of God and Son of man, the Word made flesh—Emmanuel—Jesus, in His life and death described by One only—by Him who is the Spirit of God, that God might be perfectly glorified.

Do the Gospels teach us that all had to depend on the memory of Peter, of Mark, or on the information which Luke might have obtained in Galilee? “The Comforter [says the Lord], the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and will bring to your remembrance all the things which I have said to you,” John 14:26. He was also to bear witness to Jesus concerning heavenly things. The disciples likewise were to bear witness to Jesus, as eye-witnesses doubtless; but the Holy Spirit which had been given them held in His hand the testimony both earthly and heavenly. He was to lead them into all truth; and what Jesus had been upon the earth— “God in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself” —was not the least part of that truth.

It is monstrous to give me the legends of Papias, or the imaginations of Irenasus, instead of the promise of the

gift of the Spirit, and of His testimony to the Lord's glory, to His life, and to His sufferings; it is still more monstrous, forasmuch as the Lord had expressly spoken of that gift for that purpose.

This is Paul's remarkable declaration concerning the new truths which the Holy Spirit come down from heaven has communicated to us; it cannot be more explicit: "God hath revealed to us by (his) Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, even the depths of God… We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things which are freely given to us of God: which also we speak, not in words [or discourses] taught by human wisdom but in those taught by the Spirit… But the natural man doth not receive the things of the Spirit of God… because they are spiritually discerned." Revelation was by the Spirit; the communication took place by means of words taught by the Spirit; and, finally, the intelligence of him who received these words was given by the Spirit. Revelation, inspiration in the communication of revealed things, in fine, intelligence or comprehension—all was "by the Spirit."

In 1 Thessalonians 2:13 it is again said, "For this cause we also give thanks to God unceasingly, that, having received the word of the Spirit of God by us, ye received not man's word, but, even as it is truly, God's word, which also worketh in you who believe." Doubtless this has been proclaimed by word of mouth, but that which the Thessalonians had received was "the word of God." It was not merely to Paul it was such, but it was such as communicated through him [par emon] to the Thessalonians.

This decides the nature of the communication. It was not a more or less faithfully given statement of the word of God. The assertion, that what he wrote to them that it might remain with them, so as to permanently establish them in the truth— the assertion, that what was to subsist for the whole church in all ages was not the word of God—is a matter that I leave to the appreciation of the piety and common sense of each reader.

M. Godet's system, as regards revelation, is false according to the, apostle. That which he had communicated to them was so thoroughly "the word of God," that it worked effectually in those who believed— it carried the power of God with it. It was, as Paul elsewhere states, a savour of death unto death where it was not a savour of life unto life. If his gospel were veiled, it was veiled in those that are lost, whose unbelieving minds Satan had blinded. The light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ shined not only into the heart of Paul, but before the hearts of men; that light was veiled only to those who perish; for the God who, by His word, had caused the light to shine out of darkness, had shone into the heart of the apostle, for the shining forth [pros photismon] of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The weakness of the vessel was so far from hindering its being the word of God for others, that that word was committed to feeble vessels, in order that the excellency of the power which worked through their means in others might manifestly be of God, and not of men. In fact, everywhere, and on every point, the apostle affirms precisely the reverse of what M. Godet states.

There is then a redemption, but it is "by his blood" — there is a work accomplished once and for all—there is a

revelation by the Spirit of God—there is a communication made in discourses [or words, logois] received [through the efficacious grace of the Holy Spirit] in him who hears. Divine things were revealed, communicated, and received by the operation of the Holy Spirit. The same apostle also says, “If any one think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him recognize the things that I write unto you, that it is the commandment of the Lord,” 1 Cor. 14:37. So far is he indeed from confounding revelation and inspiration with the thoughts which a high degree of spirituality might produce even in him, that he carefully distinguishes the one from the other; 1 Cor. 7:6, 10, 40.

Before proceeding farther, it is important to notice the manner in which M. Godet uses scripture. I shall neither produce all the passages quoted by M. Godet, nor all the errors consequent upon them. This would be tedious. Just a few examples suffice to shew that the reader must accept nothing without examination. Some are but of small importance, but (the habit once contracted) one must be on one’s guard. Thus, at page 6 of “Biblical Studies,” second series, he adds, “in it”; “that… we report to you, that ye also may have fellowship with us in it”; thus entirely altering the meaning of the passage. At page 36: “Thou art Peter, and on this stone” is false; petra is not a stone. At page 49, “after having informed myself exactly “is a false translation of which 1 Timothy 4:6, and 2 Timothy 3:10, are proofs.

At page 49 it is not a quotation, but a false statement of what Luke says. The latter never says that his history was derived from what the first witnesses had stated. That was not the source whence he derived his history; but he says that he communicated the facts of the gospel

as they were most surely believed, and as they had been delivered by the first witnesses, having himself had a perfect knowledge of these things from the beginning, which is a very different thing from M. Godet's assertion. "It is evident that he possessed more than one of those works, and that he used them to compose his own" (p. 53). Now all this is mere supposition, without the slightest foundation. Origen (if my memory does not deceive me), at all events, one of the Fathers, remarks that the expression, "Many have undertaken," shewed them to be human essays, none of which was satisfactory, but that it was otherwise with Luke. I quote the sense, and from memory. At all events, there is no trace whatever in Luke of what M. Godet speaks. What Luke does say is, that others having undertaken to give a relation of those things, he desired to make known to Theophilus the truth of it all, having himself had a perfect acquaintance with it from the beginning. He writes his relation because others did not present the same certainty. It is the reverse of what M. Godet says. Now all his system respecting the Gospels is here in question; this is my motive in bringing forward these carelessnesses, whilst re-establishing the facts and the passages. He seeks to replace inspiration by patristic legends, and by human means of conviction. He uses this mistake at page 54.

What he says at page 52 is pure supposition, and a very serious matter to nullify divine history by such inventions. (See also page 66.) At page 105 he makes Jesus confess [the sins of others], because others did so —a complete invention. John would not baptize Him, and only did so on the ground of the fulfilment of righteousness. "Thus it becometh us." This is that which,

according to M. Godet, enabled John to discern the holy virtue in Jesus. It is altogether an invention! Moreover, Jesus did not go down into the waters of Jordan with prayer, page 106. This was after His baptism, after He had in baptism publicly taken His place amongst the faithful remnant of the Jews—a difference not lacking in importance as regards the relations of man—a matter of infinite value to us. At page 106 we have also “a shining sign,” “prefiguring the communication of the Spirit”; then three perceptible facts for the inward senses of John and of Jesus. All this is pure invention, contradicting the simple narrative of the Gospel, which is to us of infinite importance. I altogether reject the explanations which follow; but I must avoid entering upon controversy on the meanings of scripture, and simply declare that M. Godet does not relate scripture facts, but that he makes a romance respecting the Lord —a romance which is founded upon his own ideas. I might take up false thoughts and false doctrines at every page, but this is not here my object. Further on I will speak of his views concerning the Person of the Lord. All that is stated at page 123 is a complete invention. I shall return to that later, also to what he says at page 129 concerning His tears; I shall also notice page 131. At page 149, Exodus 3 is quoted to shew that God can change, and be what He will, translating it thus— “I shall be what I shall be.” In his reply to M. Colani, he translates it, “I am,” making use of it then to prove He is the only real existence— Existence itself. All this is inconceivable levity in solemn things. At page 151, “being found in all things as a man “is an entirely false quotation upon a capital point, in order to serve as a basis to the author’s doctrine. At page 169 he says that “St. Paul speaks of a salvation which will result from the

life of Christ realized in man." M. Godet has full liberty to interpret the passage as he understands it, but none to state that Paul says so. He says nothing of the sort. For my part, in reading the passage, it is evident to me that this is not in the least degree its sense. All this suffices to expose the carelessness with which M. Godet quotes passages upon important questions, and how he presents to us as facts that of which there is not a trace in the Gospels—facts that are fiction. Now all his reasonings generally depend on those false quotations and fictitious facts.

The first thing then that I take up as an essential point in M. Godet's system is that, to please rationalists, he formally denies the Bible to be a revelation; then, in the history of Jesus, he replaces inspiration by the legends of the fathers, which, as regards the historical circumstances, may be true, or may be false, but which present no divine certainty concerning the facts which should reveal God, and form the basis of Christianity and salvation. He robs the Gospels of all divine authority. In the place of a divinely revealed redemption, he gives me interesting reminiscences of John or of Peter, and that at the expense of the explicit promises of the Lord. It is true he admits a revelation, but he admits it according to a wise and rational system, thus explained: Revelation has reached agents or channels in a divine manner; these were to communicate it to the objects God had in view when He gave it (be it to the world, the church, individuals, etc., etc.). But that communication has never reached them at all. The objects God had in view had of it but a given statement, which is no revelation at all; they who were the channels of it having corrected and contradicted each other!

Now, concerning the revelations which complete the history of Jesus, Paul declares to us that he has communicated them to us in words taught by the Holy Spirit.

In common with rationalists, M. Godet denies all that. They require man, but they do not require that God should reveal Himself—at least not to us. It is a revelation which does not go beyond the agents to whom it was committed, even if those agents understood it well. I pity these rationalists for having lost it!

II

The other subjects I desire to treat are the Person and the work of the Lord Jesus. M. Godet is opposed to the doctrine commonly called grace. He will have free-will amongst men. I have no thought of engaging in these theological controversies, nor should I have touched on his “Biblical Studies,” had not Christianity disappeared beneath his pen. Inasmuch as the author bears the reputation of orthodoxy, this becomes an imminent peril to simple souls. M. Godet truly believes that Jesus is the Eternal Son; he recognizes His divinity, though in a vague and confused manner. According to his fashion, he recognizes His humanity, but it truly is according to his fashion; he also recognizes His work of expiation in his own manner. Had M. Godet been a candid rationalist (that is, an unbeliever), I might have spared myself the task of examining his method of seeing things. All the world knows that rationalism is latent infidelity, and presents itself as being the only intelligent Christianity. However it may be, and notwithstanding the pretensions of the author to orthodoxy, Christianity has no existence in his book. It is replaced by a system which only exists

in the thoughts of M. Godet—by a thorough romance, of which the hero is Christ, but not the true Christ, the Christ of the word, “the Christ of God.”

According to the word of God, “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself”; also, “him who knew not sin he has made sin for us, that we might become God’s righteousness in him.” According to M. Godet’s book, Jesus is a man who, though moved by a filial sentiment toward God from the age of twelve years, had forgotten that He was Son of God, but recovered that truth by revelation at the age of thirty. He was always capable of sinning, though He never did so. Then, as man, born miraculously, and as innocent as Adam had been, He raised Himself from innocence to holiness, and in His Person elevated humanity. This work was completed at the period of the transfiguration. He might have resumed His divine estate, which He had renounced; but in conversing with Moses and Elias, He communicated to them His intention not to resume it then, but to descend, in order to suffer. This He did. God’s right having been recognized by Him (the right to put all mankind to death), and that right having been made good in the death of Christ alone, other men, profiting by that which He had done, and by this means placed in a position of liberty, can, if they will, attain the same divine condition into which Jesus has entered.

I ask, Is this Christianity? Is it not an infinitely solemn and serious matter to falsify truth on the subject of salvation, just where the glory of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ are in question? But is such truly M. Godet’s system? I have merely put together the prominent points of this system. In examining it, we shall see whether that which I have now presented as

such be not verified by quotations from his book. Other things also appear in it. My object in the preceding summing-up is simply to shew that by this system he sets Christianity aside, and replaces it by inventions and human doctrines. “God was in Christ, reconciling the world,” disappears. We get simply a man who sanctifies Himself during His life, in order that others may do the same, and attain the same divine condition. Moreover, after a repeated and most careful examination, I do not find from M. Godet’s book that the penalty of sin is anything else than death—bodily death, or death in its physical sense. This is all that sinful man owes to God’s righteousness, and Christ did not suffer beyond that in man’s stead, and for man. I do not say that M. Godet believes in the restitution of all mankind, nor that he believes that the wicked shall perish utterly. That which is certain is, that, to him, the wages of sin is simply bodily death, and this was all that Christ suffered.

We will now examine the system in detail.

The first of the two pillars of this system is (p. 149), that God can become what He will. “I will be,” says He, according to M. Godet, “what I will be.” This is what he calls “God’s absolute liberty” The Father, remaining in the simple but infinite perfection of the divine nature, the Word, which was God, was made man. Such are the aspects of that truth which this system places in complete darkness. God will be “each moment that which it will please Him to be! “The second pillar is what he calls “the absolute perfectness of man.” There is no limit to it; absolute goodness is his aim. That God was really man, and a true man, is as important as it is precious; but this is how M. Godet presents it—there is no question of God revealing Himself in grace: all is

subjective. “Jesus has been reinstated by His miraculous birth in the position of primitive purity and innocence in which the first man was before the fall, and that, in order to be enabled successfully to begin anew that walk of innocence on to holiness, which was the career opened to man, but at the first step of which Adam fell.”

M. Godet also professes to be able to reveal to us God’s intentions relating to the first man. It is, of course, altogether a fable, invented by himself. The object of God’s decreed purpose was the second Man. All God’s revealed counsels relate to Christ. Moreover, what M. Godet says about this is in contradiction to the revelation we possess. The first man was innocent. Now for holiness is needful a knowledge of good and evil, which Adam certainly had not, inasmuch as he acquired that knowledge by his fall. “The man,” says God, “is become as one of us, to know good and evil,” but man became at the same time ruined, a sinner, and lost. The Lord, we are positively told, was born holy, “that holy thing that shall be born of thee.” M. Godet’s theory damages and contradicts revelation, as much in respect of Adam as of Christ.

M. Godet also says, page 101, “History until Him [Christ] was comprised in one word, ‘that which is born of the flesh is flesh.’ Since His appearing, the true meaning of history is expressed by ‘that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.’” This is all false. That which is born of the flesh is always flesh, since Christ came as well as before. There had been quickened souls before His coming, as there have been since. I do not say that life and incorruptibility were brought to light in the same way, for it was not so.

M. Godet adds, “For the character of the Spirit in the Biblical sense of the word, is holiness, and where is holiness to be found but in Jesus, and what proceeds from Him? “Nowhere else, doubtless. But did nothing proceed from Him before the incarnation? Did the Son not act before His incarnation? M. Godet has no other idea of Christ than a subjective idea of man, and of a man who was simply man, though without having committed sin. God is really excluded from his system in all relating to His grace and truth. The innocent man must push on his way in order to reach God. Jesus was even delivered from sinning. “His peculiar birth … imparted solely to Jesus that ability not to sin which man possessed before the fall, and which we have lost” (p. 102).

As regards the development of Jesus, “What an admirable sight” (says M. Godet, p. 103, in expressions deeply painful to him who believes that God was in Christ, that Christ was the Lord of glory)— “What an admirable sight, that of that child, of that youth, accomplishing that normal development!” Afterwards he gives a narrative of His baptism, where all, as I have previously remarked, is fabrication—pure inventions—and where the doctrine rests on no scripture basis whatever. Not one trace of that which M. Godet says is found in the word. The result of it all to M. Godet is (p. 109) that “the difference between Jesus and ourselves in this respect (the descent of the Holy Spirit) is simply this, that He is charged with the general task of the salvation of mankind, whilst each of us never receives more than a small portion of it to accomplish with Him.” Think of such language in speaking of the Saviour and His purchased ones! Christ, it is true, has acquired for

us the same place in the glory as He possesses as man, and the relationship in which we stand by redemption is shewn in that which was His after His baptism; but therein to discern a large portion for Him, and a small one for ourselves, in the work of salvation, is indeed a startling error. Again, whilst M. Godet says (p. 105), "Christ made the sin of His whole race His own, in the aspect of association," the word tells us the reverse. "Except the grain of wheat falling into the ground die, it abideth alone." There is no such association there. Both He that sanctifies and those sanctified [are] all of one. True it is that He was truly man, made like unto His brethren, but in the incarnation there was no union. Christ has historically associated Himself with the godly remnant in their first steps according to God: never has He associated Himself with the unbelieving race of Jews.

Equally false is the explanation of the temptation. Christ, led by the Holy Spirit, has conquered Satan for us. Adam fell at the temptation or trial.

I cannot notice all. M. Godet has no other idea of Christ than that of a man who needed to take thought for Himself, as being capable of sinning. Of Him who in grace has bound the strong man in our behalf—of a Saviour, he has not a notion. "But," says M. Godet, "God can be what He will be." The word tells us He changes not. "I, Jehovah, change not." It is not something granted to His liberty, as M. Godet profanely expresses it—it is the perfection of His immutable existence. "Thou art the same" (su de o autos ei). Now this was said of the Messiah, when in Psalm 102 His humiliation and death are prophetically spoken of. The Spirit also shews how, after having seen His days cut short down here, He could be there for ultimate blessing. All this is in direct

opposition to M. Godet's doctrine. The scriptures declare that He was the same—a word taken by many learned Jews for one of the names of God Himself—a word, at all events, quoted in Hebrews 1 to demonstrate that He was always the same. Thus, it is said of the Messiah, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and to the ages [to come]."

But M. Godet intrudes, or desires to intrude, with profane steps on that ground where the word has solemnly declared that the Father stands alone. "No one knoweth the Son but the Father." M. Godet assumes to know Him, and to define all. That Christ, as regards His humanity, increased in wisdom and stature, this the word is careful to tell us, and to us it is one of the most precious truths. His delights were with the sons of men, and He became truly man. This was the anthem of the angels when the manger received Him. That His acts as man were done in the power of the Spirit is also revealed to us. "If I," says He, "by the Spirit of God cast out demons." But the fulness of the Godhead was there: He was the Son assuredly; but, says He, "the Father who abideth in me, He doeth the works," and "I and my Father are one." In the fear also that we might believe that He had returned to the relationship of Son, or had recovered it at His baptism by John, the scriptures lift a corner of the veil which enveloped the thirty years of His life passed in obscurity at Nazareth, and present Him, at the age of twelve years, in the full consciousness of Sonship.

Scripture is opposed to M. Godet (p. 152): "This consciousness of Sonship, which was His light, He suffered to become extinguished within Him, in order to preserve only His inalienable personality, His

individuality, endowed with liberty and intelligence like every human individuality … He was, by virtue of this humiliation, enabled to enter into a human development similar to our own." Can we—we at the age of twelve years, and that without having received a divine and entirely new life—say, "I ought to be [occupied] in my Father's business?" M. Godet is not even satisfied with that, but goes yet farther. Being unable to deny that He said, "My Father "at the age of twelve years, he takes pains to testify to us that this "in no wise involved a precise dogma in the thoughts of the child; a moral relationship was all that was in question" (p. 144). "At the hour of His baptism" it is "a revelation which He received from the Father," or (p. 145) it is "here again, a fact of intimate life, by which Jesus is rendered conscious of the relationship of love, which united Him to Him who spake to Him thus." Also, in speaking of Jesus entering into glory, M. Godet says, page 132, "Here then is human nature elevated in its normal representative to the possession of divine life." Is this then He of whom John spoke? when he said, "The Word of God … In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness apprehended it not." The Christ presented to us by M. Godet is another Christ than that of the Word, whom they alone received who were born not of the will of man, but of God. Also, when M. Godet (p. 151) quotes the beautiful passage of Philippians 2:6-8, he entirely falsifies it, and then, at the close, adds, "being found in all things as a man." Notice well that the Christ of M. Godet's system is a man who begins with His exaltation in order to advance on to the glory. In the passage quoted from the word, the Christ descends lower and lower, till God exalts Him, and places Him in the glory.

It is important to notice the bearing of some other remarks of M. Godet in this matter. Page 101: “Before Christ’s advent, it could be said, ‘that which is born of the flesh is flesh’: since His appearing, the true meaning of history is expressed by, ‘that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.’” This is thorough nonsense. I have another object than shewing it to be such, in now quoting it. I desire to ask, Are we really born of God?

At page 150 we get Christ who made Himself of no reputation, rendering Himself poor, and living in indigence, just as a king would who became a simple citizen. This comparison has no sense whatever. Christ has ever remained King. We read, page 153, “that the very moment of His abasement was for Jesus the starting-point of the lifting up again. In proportion to His development as a child, a relationship of the most intimate and tender nature was formed between Himself and God … it terminated in the spontaneous utterance of that expression, ‘My Father.’” Then, at page 160, “Christ having been the first to supply the glorious career [of from innocence on to glory], invests us with His power to supply it after Him.” At pages 112, 113, “the sanctification of human life, which He accomplished in His Person, He, in fact, purposed to reproduce later in all those who were linked to Him by faith.” At page 94, “He makes Himself worker together with every man in the realization of his supreme destiny.” At page 98, “His life is the realization of the normal development to which every human being is called in principle.” At page 101, “The normal development of humanity, interrupted by sin,” has recommenced. The thought of the new birth is excluded from M. Godet’s system. “That which is born of the Spirit is spirit” is but the history of that which has

taken place since Jesus came. That “the Son quickens whom he will” has no place in this system. There is “a moral obligation,” and in that domain (p. 94) Christ is the “genie” which becomes the mainstay to the work of all others. He groups around His person all those worthy of that name. It is man as he is—a sinner—aided by Christ, who can attain this absolute perfection. Man’s natural condition is presented in a manner totally contrary to the word, as well as to the glorious Person of the Saviour. That there is none who seeks after God—that we must be born again—that thenceforth Christ becomes our life—that it is no longer we who live but Christ who lives in us—that in us, that is to say, in our flesh, no good dwells—that the flesh lusts against the Spirit—that to be without law is to be without restraint to such a degree as to have required that God should send the deluge to cleanse the defiled world—that the flesh, the nature of fallen man, does not submit itself to the law of God, even when that law is given to it—that that which has crucified the Lord of glory, when He came in grace, cannot be subject to it—that it lusts against the Spirit in the Christian—that it seeks to puff up with vanity a man who had been in the third heaven—that no fresh grace delivers it from its pride and its egotism—that even to an apostle a thorn is needed, a messenger of Satan, to buffet it;—all these teachings of the word are utterly set aside.

Christ, says M. Godet, recommences the development of the innocent man (p. 191). “On the one hand, He [Christ] has perfected the development of humanity which had remained unfinished by the sin of the first man; on the other, He has re-established fallen humanity, and reinstated it on the path where it can

henceforth reach its destiny." He had (p. 192) to "re-knot the thread of the normal development of humanity at its point of severance, recommence the moral work which was to conduct man from innocence to holiness, accomplish that series of acts of obedience, each of which was a sacrifice of natural life, and attain that elevated sphere of existence which scripture calls spiritual life." Christ then had no spiritual existence till He had attained it. "This is what Jesus has done" (ibid.).

"Now," adds M. Godet (p. 193), "Christ has not only perfected a humanity which had been arrested in its development, but has re-established a fallen humanity." This is the second part of the work He has accomplished for us. "Then (p. 159), taking possession of the condition to which it [human life] was destined [holiness], He, from the heights of heaven, works towards His own, through a daily Pentecost, the miracle of sanctification, which He has perfected in Himself, and thus prepares their elevation to the position He Himself occupies in the glory." "God all in one, and by Him one day, all in all; this is the means, this the aim." Will you know more of this? Read page 160: "He desires nothing less than to make each of us another self, a representative of this supreme type, the man-God." Compare page 159: "Why should not human nature, created in the image of God, have been destined from the first to become the free organ of the life of God, the agent of His omnipotence?" "The man-God would in that case have been nothing but true man, that is to say, that which God had eternally conceived and intended him to be." And immediately the author presents these imaginations as the expression of Romans 8:29, from whence it would result that we are all men-God.

We shall be all like Jesus, all conformed to the image of God's Son. I must leave to the appreciation of each Christian a teaching which states that the union of the divinity and humanity, such as they exist in Jesus, is a purpose of God which ought to be realized in every Christian. Now this is systematically the author's plan. Thus, at page 204, "After having, during His sojourn down here, completely appropriated the divine Spirit, and made it His own personal life, as God Himself, He has become the sovereign dispenser of it towards His brethren." Then, at page 160, "What matters it if our life be a pathway of suffering, passing by Gethsemane and Golgotha, provided it terminate at the Mount of Olives and the ascension?" Not that M. Godet thinks the flesh does not exist, or that it improves. At page 208 we read, "Christ being born, and growing in us to such a degree as to fill our heart, and to gradually banish our natural selves—our old man which never improves, and has nothing else to do but to perish." At page 191, it is "the result of a series of completely voluntary decisions in the sense of goodness." Then, page 205, "This work [that of realizing perfect holiness in a flesh like ours] once accomplished in Jesus, His spirit emanates from His glorified Person, like a quickening power, gaining in us the same victory that Jesus gained in His Person, and which realizes in our life, as Jesus did in His, the righteousness demanded by the law…" The thought of being born anew completely and systematically fails throughout. It is progress in sanctification by the power of the Spirit, in gaining the victories Jesus gained in His Person. At page 208 we have, "a free and moral process." "The process in Jesus and ourselves is identical" (p. 209). Is this then a work perfectly resembling that accomphshed in the sinner, to change

innocence into holiness? In order to make these two so very different things meet, M. Godet says that Jesus has conquered sin in His Person, and that He reserved it to Himself to conquer it in humanity. But in fallen humanity sin dwells in the will. To Christ sin exists outside Himself. How, then, can there be room for a work perfectly similar in Him and in us?

Then (pp. 176, 178, 179) “What God required was not the satisfaction of His rights by shedding torrents of blood; it was the revelation of that right to human conscience which ignored it; it was the acquiescence granted to that right by that very conscience.” “God demonstrated that great principle, that whosoever rebelled against God is worthy of death.” Then “the very fact of redemption proves that what God sought has been, not the most, but, on the contrary, the least, shedding of blood, provided the same moral effect be produced. One man sufficed Him, in the bloody death of whom He has ostensibly manifested that which in reality had been merited by all; of one victim, at the sight of whom all others could say, that is the treatment which I had acquired for myself.” It was also, “first, the revelation of God’s right on guilty humanity; secondly, the recognition of that right by that humanity itself.” Then (p. 182), “There a reparation, without default, has been offered. The most bitter death has been accepted as the just chastisement of sin, the right which God possesses to inflict such a punishment on man has been acknowledged without reserve. ‘Righteous Father,’ exclaimed the dying Son, in the last prayer He uttered with His own.” Also (p. 192), “It was not a compensation for injustice, but a revelation presented to all of what all would have deserved to suffer, and what all they will

truly suffer whom the spectacle of that expiation will not bring back repentant and believing to God." And again (p. 182), "The demonstration of righteousness which God desired to give the world has then in this case attained the character of absolute perfection. To the adequate nature of the inflicted punishment has been added the full acquiescence of Him who consented to endure it." After that (p. 185) our faith gives also our acquiescence, in acknowledging that it is we who deserve the chastisement. "It is by faith that this association of individuals, in the reparation wrought by Christ, takes place."

There are many other things to notice; but first, if bodily death be the punishment, and God be satisfied with that which Jesus has done, why should we die? Then, if bodily death be all, then all pay already down here the penalty of their sin, be they penitents or not. That death, says M. Godet, was the adequate nature of the inflicted punishment. The demonstration of righteousness has attained the character of an absolute perfection.

Why then must I myself, if the Saviour does not come in time to spare me this bodily death, undergo the full consequences of my sin, that same thing which God has already done? Such are the results of human wisdom.

Then, if I myself die, acknowledging that I have merited it, why needed it that Christ should have died? It will be said, Christ could adequately recognize it. But if it be but the death common to all, which is the wages of sin, and if I recognize that I have merited death, I recognize it adequately; then, morally in sight of the cross, I am no more advanced as regards this than otherwise. I only recognize it in proportion to my own faith, even if Christ

died for me. And why, if some one had fulfilled the career of holiness, would he not also make expiation? Nothing prevents it according to M. Godet's system. That is not all by any means. That death is the wages of sin is quite true, but it is quite another thing to understand it, as though it signified that bodily death (natural, if you will) is all the wages of sin. This is so far from being true, that the full effect of judgment overtakes sinners after their resurrection, when death will no longer exist. "It is reserved unto men once to die, and after that the judgment." They must rise again for that judgment; I speak of the wicked. And when the well-beloved Saviour said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" this was not death. When that took place, He peacefully resigned His spirit into the Father's hands.

That which M. Godet tells us of the propitiation is equally false (p. 184, lines 17 to 19), that faith is needed to render a victim propitiatory. The word in Greek is not propitiation, nor propitiatory victim. M. Godet adds "victim." Christ, in Romans 3:24, is a "mercy-seat" (the place where God is accessible) "through faith in his blood." But He is the propitiation for our sins, and not only for ours, but also for the whole world; 1 John 2:2. The righteousness of God is now manifested to the world, in that Christ has gone to His Father, and the world sees Him no more; John 16.

We read again (p. 185), "Nor has He accomplished this expiatory act, in which the treatment which the sinful world deserved was manifested, with the object of dispensing, as from offering to God, the reparation which we owed Him." What is the reparation we owe Him for sin? From beginning to end it is M. Godet's

gospel, not that of the word of God— “which is not another.”

I shall not occupy myself with M. Godet’s other interpretations; I do not accept them, neither his two justifications, nor the subsequent loss of those who have been once justified; for the apostle says, “whom he justified them he also glorified.” I might have taken up a mass of things which I believe to be antiscriptural, a crowd of entirely false interpretations. But I will not mix these things with the foundation of the truth, of the gospel of God. The gospel, and revelation of God in Christ, that of the Father in the Son, have disappeared, as well as the cup which an infinitely precious Saviour had to drink for us. It is this that makes me speak. M. Godet tells us that the Saviour comes ever since He went up. My pen, but for that, might remain dormant. But if another Christ than the true one is presented to souls, and another expiation than the true one as revealed to us by the word, and if this be done under the banner of orthodoxy, this concerns all the world.

M. Godet’s system is the re-establishment of the first man, not the introduction of the second Man. The first man is not only a sinner, but he is lost and condemned. God has for our instruction used every means in His power to try if man could be restored. Left without law, the world had to be destroyed. The law having been given, man could not keep it; his flesh cannot submit to it. God sends the prophets: man persecutes and kills them. God then says, “I have yet my Son.” He comes, and binds the strong man; He manifests a power sufficing to remove all the consequences of sin. But God’s presence having been then and thus manifested, man would not have it. Sin, enmity against God there in

goodness, manifest themselves to the utmost degree; man crucifies the Son of God; they had seen and hated both Him and His Father. From that time the history of man in the flesh was closed: “Now is the judgment of this world,” says the Saviour. The fig-tree, man under God’s special care, is condemned, never again to bear fruit. Stephen sums up his history in Acts 7; the law violated; the prophets persecuted and killed; the Just One betrayed and put to death; the resistance of the Holy Ghost. Such is man in the flesh. Nevertheless man’s sin only brought about the accomplishment of God’s counsels. Christ was made sin for us; there He glorified God, and faith can say, “He bore our sins in his own body on the tree.” “He hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling.”

Born of the Spirit, Christ being our life, we count that we are dead to sin. Our bodies being the temples of the Holy Spirit, we five from the life of the risen Christ, whilst waiting till He comes to take us to Himself in the glory (not to be man-God, like Himself, but) to be in the same glory, so near Him as to adore Him with the knowledge of what He is, and what He has done; not “restored,” but saved and glorified, not merely by the death of a holy man, as though that were all, but saved from the second death, from eternal torments, by Him who, upon the cross, ere He died, was forsaken by God that we might be brought to and ever with Him. He was far from being “the object of the displeasure and reprobation of God” (p. 190). Never was His obedience so pleasing. “On this account the Father loved me, because I lay down my life that I may take it again.” But this does not prevent that He drank the cup given by His

Father, and that He bore in His soul the consequence of our sin.

I have finished. I will only direct the attention of him who reads these pages to the uncertainty and the ambiguity of M. Godet's expressions. I will quote but two examples. "The true meaning of history since Christ's appearing is expressed by 'that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.'" The history of what? And again: "Christ has re-established fallen humanity" What is re-established? Has man ceased to be a sinner? Is he reconciled to God?

116 See the expression in Matthew i:22; ch. 2:15, which the Lord had said by that prophet. It is upo tou kuriou and dia tou prophetou.

On The Putting Away Of Sin

The question having been raised as to verse 26 of Hebrews 9 and the putting away of sin, I send you a few lines on this subject.

In the first place I have frequently insisted on sin being put away by the sacrifice of Christ, in the sense that the believer stands before God perfectly justified and accepted, the Lord imputing no sin; he is perfectly clear before God. And this, thank God, I believe as I ever did. It is our blessed privilege in Christ. May every quickened soul enjoy it! God forbid that any nicety of expression should enfeeble it. But when expressions, not actually the word of God, are used, and conclusions are drawn from them, as if they were scriptural statements, we are forced to be more accurate. And this has been the case in the statement that sin has been put away by the sacrifice of Christ. This scripture does not state. He appeared once, in the consummation of ages, for the putting away of sin (eis athetesin) by the sacrifice of Himself.

I had long ago noticed that the expression, “the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world,” would have its perfect completion only in the new heaven and the new earth, though the work on which that state was based was finished by God’s Lamb once for all on the cross; but the force of Hebrews 9:26 had not been so especially noted. Yet it is essentially the same truth. Sin, that hated thing, must be put out of that world which God created for His own glory.

We must not confound clearing our conscience and redeeming us, and putting away sin out of God’s world

as that which is offensive to Him. Verse 28 speaks of Christ's bearing the sins of many. Thus they are perfectly cleared.

But sin remains in the flesh and in the world, and it must be set aside, all things in heaven and earth reconciled to God; and this will take place. The work on which it is based, in virtue of which it will be accomplished by power, the work in which God is morally glorified perfectly and for ever, is accomplished, and Christ sits at the right hand of God in virtue of it. But the sins of the many who come under grace have been borne by Him, and the believer has been washed from all. Nor is this all as to him. Not only has Christ borne all his sins, but for faith he has died with Christ, and as dead he is justified from sin; the old man has been crucified with Christ. Sin in the flesh was condemned on the cross, and there is no condemnation for him.

It is in this general sense of our standing before God that it has been said that sin was put away, and, thank God, it is so. But the real thought was all guilt and imputation in our standing before God. But the putting away sin has a wider application in scripture; all things in heaven and earth are to be reconciled to God. Righteousness is to dwell in the new heaven and the new earth, and in a modified sense this will be the case even in the reign of Christ. Then it will be effected by power. But the work by which morally that is done in righteousness and for God's glory, in which it is really done in the moral sense, is accomplished, all that God is having been glorified on the cross where Christ was made sin; and faith lays hold on this.

Alas! very few Christians even make the difference of sins or guilt, and sin. Our sins are all forgiven, we are perfectly washed from them; and, besides this, as dead with Christ, the old man is for faith put off; its condemnation was in Christ's death. We are not in the flesh, though actually the flesh is in us. But the putting away of sin goes far wider, the putting it away out of God's sight in the world. And this, as a result, is not accomplished, though the work be perfectly accomplished on which that result is founded, and that work is in one sense more important than the fact, because God has been perfectly glorified there, in virtue of which it will be accomplished; and faith knows this work is done, and rejoices that there is no condemnation for the believer before God, the conscience being purged from sins, and sin in the flesh being condemned in the cross. So that there is no imputation and no condemnation. But sin exists. The effect of the work, as in God's purpose, is not as yet made good. Even as to the believer, he cannot say, I have no sin. "He that is dead is justified from sin "(not sins) here; but I have this title to reckon myself dead, Christ having died to sin.

If I say sin is put away, I weaken the force of "putting away," for sin is still there. It is not the world in which righteousness dwells. The sins of God's people have been borne, and the blood of propitiation is on the mercy-seat; so that we can go to the world and beseech sinners to come, as though God did beseech by us, in our little measure. That work is all done and accepted which enables me to do it. I can say to the believer that he is all clear, white as snow before God. But the putting away of sin is a wider thing. John I itself shews this—the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (not

has taken away, nor sins). It is the removal of sin in God's sight in the world, a result not yet accomplished. This passage refers specifically to the result, Hebrews 9:26 to the purpose and means of its being done, as verse 28 does to the other question of our actual guilt.

Incorrect expressions I should not make a fuss about; God graciously bears with them, if the heart is earnest and right. I do not stand in the gate to make a man an offender for a word. Here I inquire merely what is correct when the question is raised. Conclusions from what is not in scripture I do not allow.

Review Of R. Pearsall Smith On “Holiness Through Faith”

My dear Brother,—

I do not question the sincerity or devotedness of the writer of the book which has been before us; but it has only led me to reject wholly its statements as incorrect, and I must add mischievous, and the rather because it is a perversion of what I believe to be one of the most imperious necessities of the church of God—“the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.” You know that I reject the thought (I have done so for five and forty years) of the experience of Romans 7 being a Christian state. It is the state of a regenerate soul under law, under the “first husband “of the chapter; not the delivered soul under the second husband, that is, Christ risen. But this is confounded by the writer with a state of purity on, I judge, a low scale compared with the statements of scripture: and there is consequently such vagueness, want of knowledge of scriptural truth, and contradiction in the book, that it is hard to deal with.

I confess, too, the effort does not attract me. That a man must realise this liberty, must possess it, before he can press its blessedness on others, is quite true; but it is not therefore necessary that one should always speak of such realisation in one’s self. It makes a subtle self dominant, which lowers the spiritual state. I never saw any one make his experience the object of his mind, or that with which his mind was occupied, that it did not make self a great object to self. Whether the experience was ordinary evangelical experience, Romans 7, Galatians 5:17, or that of the perfectionist, self holds a

large place in the mind's eye; and it cannot be otherwise. And I think this book is a clear example of it. The blessedness and beauty of Christ Himself nowhere appear in it. He tells us that this doctrine makes more of Christ, and ourselves humble; but if you examine it, it is what Christ effects and produces in us, not what Christ is. And this makes all the difference. What distinguishes, according to John, "the fathers in Christ" is "ye have known Him that is from the beginning." It is all John has to say of them, but it is much and blessed.

I believe in deliverance. I believe in the unclouded enjoyment of that favour which is better than life, living in the consciousness that we are loved as Jesus was loved, knowing the love of Christ which passeth knowledge. I would insist on it. It is a chief grief for me as regards the church of God that they are as persons outside, at best hoping; not inside, entered through the rent veil, abiding in the light of God's countenance and looking at Christ and His cross in its own divine perfectness with the eye that the Holy Ghost gives. This I repeat is my daily (might I not say hourly?) grief.

But I say that, where the soul is thus in free and blessed fellowship with the Father's love and Jesus, it is occupied with them—with the unsearchable fulness of Christ; and that, when it has to be occupied with itself, it has to judge itself. That happens, though there be no excuse for it. But this will be self-judgment, not a reflective sense of one's own perfectness; that is never right. But this is the contents of, and what is urged in, Holiness through Faith.

Christ is the power to make us perfect and holy: not the all-blessing object of a holy soul that does not think of

itself but of Himself. And the difference is very real and all-important, and scripture is quite clear on the subject. No attained state can possibly have the perfectness which is in Christ, nor even any perfecting influence, as thinking of Him has. I am thinking of self. It is because it falsifies and perverts the truth of deliverance that I object to this book, not because there is not the deliverance revealed to us in the scriptures. Hence I do not the least deny, nor do I desire to deny, the instances he gives of deliverance; but I wholly deny his interpretation and spiritual estimate of them; and (though surely deliverance is by faith, as every good thing is, and souls may have been delivered; and though experiences may vary according to the state of the soul, the wisdom of God who deigns to think of each particular case, and the knowledge of grace and truth), yet none ever get out of Romans 7 who had not been in it. There must be self-knowledge, which is what is found in Romans 7, and is always really found under law, and, as Mr. Smith admits, deliverance is found when a man despairs of self. But this is experience.

Divine grace sets us free when we know we are bound and have no power. But we do not know liberty when we have not found this out. Deliverance there is, which many deny, but deliverance from what is experimentally known and felt as bondage to be delivered from. And if Mr. Smith were to speak of this holy state of deliverance from sin to a man who had gone through this lesson, he would speak to the wind or delude the one he spoke to. In the instances given, those at least which are not too vague to build on, this lesson had been learnt, and I dare say the deliverance was very real. But Mr. Smith’s conclusions from them are false. He confounds

deliverance and purity and holiness as one thing, and, though not nominally on Wesleyan grounds and admitting the existence of flesh or sin in us,117 yet he makes confusion of the whole subject by not taking scriptural statements as to it, or by misrepresenting scripture, which he largely does; and, by not looking at a glorified Christ as that on which the eye of faith is fixed, he lowers the whole Christian condition. This last point probes the whole statement, and shews not that deliverance is false, but that his view of it and confusion of it with purity as the same thought is false. There are after all a great many remains of Wesleyan error.

Another thing that has misled Mr. Smith is that he has made the common experience of undelivered souls his only standard of comparison, so as to set up the state he pleads for— not scripture and Christ as his standard of comparison and judgment. This leaves all really in the dark. He can easily shew that the state of most Christians is not all that scripture gives; but another question arises: Is his state, and what he pleads for, what scripture gives? I affirm it is not; and his book, however well intended, is mischievous, because it puts what is greatly to be desired on false and unscriptural ground.

My part, then, is to compare his views with scripture. On deliverance from Romans 7 I should insist earnestly. I turn to the examination of his book. He begins by an appeal to the experience of those not set free, and asks if their expectations at conversion have been practically realised. My answer is: Infinitely and beyond all comparison more than realised. But, it may be remarked, nothing is spoken of but our own estimate of our own state; and moreover the appeal is to shame as

to it before others, not the sense of sin. He then presses that the man loves sin still. Now this is not even Romans 7. There the person hated evil; his grief was that, though he really hated it, it still got power over him. Mr. Smith's way of putting it is false altogether; nor are flesh and the new man distinguished. This is seen really all through the book. "His affections shew the central powers of his being." Now this is totally false, and contradicts Romans 7, the idea of being born of God, and all the teaching of scripture.

One born of God surely hates sin at the bottom of his heart, however he may lack power or deliverance. It is because he hates sin that it makes him miserable; and justly too. "Sweet water and bitter" is a false use of James, who is speaking of what comes out of the person as "cursing man and blessing God," and denounces it, but has nothing to do with the inward experience of a soul. The man in James may be a fully delivered soul if he has got careless.

As regards what is said in page 3, no doubt victory over sin is desired; but what does this mean? It is very difficult to know in this book what the writer means—he so contradicts himself and neglects scripture. Is it sin which is there over which victory is sought, or is it deliverance from it so that it is not there? Indeed on pages 71, 72 this is all carefully thrown into confusion, to the hiding of scriptural truth in a way to deceive souls sadly. But the passage itself (p. 3) gives the wishes and motives of a tried soul as the measure of what we are to have, not scripture. It is trying, too, how (as p. 9) he continually quotes Peter— "dead to sins"; and once, perhaps, refers to being "dead to sin," which is the real question. Nor is "dead "the same word in the original, in

the two cases. In Peter it is apogenomenoi, a very different word from that in Romans 6, as indeed the whole thought is. But Romans 6 is the doctrine of deliverance from Romans 7. Now it is just on this point, though differing from them as to flesh and a new nature, he gets on to Wesleyan ground; that is, while the definition of sin is left vague (pp. 71-72), that sins and sin in the flesh may be huddled into one thought; that is, Wesley's definition of sin—a voluntary, or, according to R.P.S., a conscious transgression of a known law—and the evil nature which gives birth to lust, of which Paul speaks. Now the confounding of these mitigates the idea of sin, and the real point of the teachings in Romans 6-8 is wholly lost, and a great deal more with it. Paul will have death to sin, not merely being done with sins, however completely. Nor is deliverance otherwise taught. Such a system leaves the evil unreached, as we shall see it does the result and object too.

Next I find on page 12: "That we might be holy and pure, and conformed to the image of Jesus Christ." Now, first of all, we see here the importance of the confusion between victory and purity, and the vagueness of Mr. Smith's statement. Had Christ to gain victory or be victorious over sin in the flesh? The thought were blasphemy! Victory, and holy and pure, are different things. "Holy and pure "means that there is no sin to have victory over, and that was Christ's state: victory over sin was not His portion. We are never called to be what Christ was consequently; for there was no sin in Him. We are to walk as He walked; for if sin be in me, if the flesh be still there, there is no reason why I should walk after it; no, nor think after it. This I fully hold. It

never should be the source of a thought in me. I should walk in the Spirit.

In the Philippians, where Christian experience is found as exhibited in the apostle, the word sin does not occur. Yet Paul had a thorn in the flesh to buffet him, and needed it. Did Christ? The thorn hindered the action of Paul's flesh, a great and sovereign mercy. The existence of sin in the flesh does not give a bad conscience; the allowance of it does, and consequently hinders the fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ; for then coming into the light makes conscience active to judge—thank God it does—instead of filling the heart with joy because we are with God. A person who prayed to be conformed to Jesus Christ (not if he prayed to walk as He walked, and even have His mind), that is, to be what He was, would prove his ignorance of himself as to the flesh, and of Christ too.

But, further, the passage alluded to is wholly misapplied. Conformity to the image of God's Son is in glory, and there is for the Christian no perfection at all but that. The view then scripture gives of conformity to Christ is far different from that which this book so carelessly gives. We are to bear the image of the heavenly as we have borne the image of the earthly. The standard of conformity to Christ is quite different from that of this book, and this is evidently of all importance on the subject we are upon, and the consequences will be immediately seen. "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is; and he that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself as He is pure."

It is not leaping by an act of faith into a positive purity and supposed conformity to Christ as He was here; but a perception of what He is, knowledge that we shall be conformed to Him when He appears, and hence purifying ourselves according to this standard. So in 2 Corinthians: “Beholding with unveiled face the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory as by the Spirit of the Lord.” Hence Paul’s desire was to win Christ, and he counted not himself to have attained, but pressed forward towards the mark of his calling above in Christ Jesus. This is unattainable here, while it acts continually on us here. But we purify ourselves, and do not speak of a positive purity and holiness. The whole scheme of scripture is different from that of Mr. Smith; not that he denies progress, nor indeed do the Wesleyans; but it is (p. 84) “a blessed positive attainment or gift.” Now purifying ourselves as Christ is pure, knowing that we shall be like Him, is quite another thing from this, and from what follows in the part I am discussing (p. 13), “Awake to righteousness, and sin not,” speaks of actually sinning where saints had been going on badly at Corinth.

“Perfecting holiness in the fear of God “is not a leaping at once into a positive gift attained by faith, like justification. It does not become our author to talk of “intellectual tricks,” but to compare his own statements more carefully with scripture before he sets about to teach others by “professing “his own attainments and to make his own experience the rule for others. When in Romans 6, of which I will speak more fully, the apostle speaks of being dead, he refers to living in sin, he speaks of walking in newness of life. He says: “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body that ye should

obey it in the lusts thereof; for sin shall not have dominion over you." That is, he speaks of the law or power of sin, not of its absence, of having fruit unto holiness. He speaks in a totally different manner from the writer.

I add that Mr. Smith's whole doctrine on this point is false. He says (p. 15), "When destroyed? Plainly previously to our not serving sin. When was the old man crucified with Christ? Evidently previously to the destruction of the body of sin." Now this is made a sort of distinct act in me. There are three such, one after another. The apostle is teaching what the Christian state and condition is as figures in baptism itself, what his Christian profession is contrasted with continuing in sin, because One Man's obedience, not our own, made us righteous. We enter into Christ's death to have this righteousness: how then live in sin if we have died? But the time we were crucified was the cross. We were crucified with Christ to destroy the body of sin, so that we should not serve it. How this is realised I will speak of; but making it a threefold distinct process in us is destroying the whole force of the apostle's argument. Whoever has been baptized to Christ is, by his very profession, dead to sin; for he has been baptized to His death, and was to reckon himself dead, as crucified with Him.

The doctrine of the apostle is that every Christian has been crucified with Christ, and is to reckon himself dead; dead to sin, not sins. How this is realised, and what hinders, we will see hereafter. But if the Spirit of God dwells in a man, he is not in the flesh: if he has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. If Christ be in him, the body is dead. All important it is to realise this. How

it is done chapter 7 shews. I will speak of it at the close. It is too important to notice merely in passing. But they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts thereof.

How "temptation comes more fiercely than ever "the writer does not explain. It is just as true that the Christian, as such, keeps himself, and that wicked one touches him not, as that, as such, he cannot sin. Temptation is used in two senses in scripture. We are tempted when we are drawn away of our own lusts and enticed, and we are tempted from without by the enemy. The latter the Lord underwent, the former of course never. All this is confounded by Mr. S. He says temptation is not sin. In the sense used by James, it is sin. In the other sense of testing or trying, it is not. It is rather now "from without than from his own heart" (pp. 19, 20). All this is mischievously vague, betrays the consciousness that his own heart after all has something to say to it, yet excuses it as the Lord was tempted. Mr. Smith could not say of and in himself, "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me "; Christ could. If we held ourselves always absolutely dead, Satan would not touch us; he has nothing for the new man. But all this is vague and mischievous, as confounding inward temptation and lust with outward, and tending to the abominable doctrine that lust is not sin if we do not listen to it. Does it come from the life and Spirit of Christ in us?

But Mr. S., in a passage already referred to, seeks to swamp the existence of flesh in consciousness; and so making self-judgment and self-purifying by grace lose its place. Thus (p. 21) we receive by faith inward purity of soul. Where is that in scripture? Where do you find in

scripture, “receiving redemption from all iniquity “? It is never said to be received, nor received now. And be assured scripture speaks more surely, more wisely, more exactly and truly, than we do. Besides, if it means that the flesh does not exist or that it ceases to exist, it is false. Mr. S. loses all this, which is expressly in scripture, loving to deal with consciousness. He cannot say whether the body of sin is destroyed, if so, it may be revived. It depends on the “definition of sin” (p. 71). “It is not in the range of consciousness to determine.” What a setting aside of scripture is here!

Now entire liberty from the power of sin, fellowship with God, and joy unclouded in His favour without anything on the conscience as the only normal Christian state, I do not merely admit but would press. But the setting aside conformity to Christ in glory as the only result before the Christian because he has that Christ already as his life, and the existence of sin in the flesh which in its nature lusts against the Spirit and required a thorn, a messenger of Satan to hinder it in Paul, destroys (and it is Mr. Smith’s system) the true character of self-judgment and purifying, and lowers grievously the Christian standard, and blinds to Christian truth, so as to interest the soul with itself, instead of, in the ungrieved power of the Spirit, fixing it on Christ. Mr. S.’s book is the strongest possible proof of this. There is the painful proof to the reader of being in the “range of his consciousness,” and the absence of Christ as the object of the soul. That he is delivered I do not call in question, nor that he rightly judges the existing state of Christendom. It is because this is needed—and I am satisfied that he does it wrongly—that I notice his book. His system is a kind of mixture of views held by so-called

Plymouth Brethren and Wesleyans, which the latter would not own, though he is not aware of it.

I only draw the attention of the reader (p. 26) to the way in which the low state of Christians is the measure he compares with. “If sinning be the inevitable constant condition of the Christian,” then indeed are we in a poor case; but many would not accept this, and the question is, Is Mr. Smith’s the scriptural way out of it? for he has a way, and seeks to point it out. Only I note that overcoming is not purity. Overcoming can have no place in another state of existence; purity will. In a certain sense overcoming denies positive purity given. It is this vagueness and immaturity, this contradiction morally, from not having weighed scripture and so known himself, but comparing himself with the language of other Christians, which makes his book disagreeable to read.

On page 28 I find more formally, “that through Christ’s death on the cross and His resurrection life in the soul, God has provided a power capable of conforming the children of the kingdom to the image of its head, few will venture to deny.” Now I venture to deny it altogether. In glory we shall be conformed to the image of the heavenly, of God’s Son. In this world He was absolutely without sin; if I say I am, I deceive myself. It is never said the love of God is perfected in our souls; 118and the latter words just give a false idea of the matter—that it is our love, not God’s. That comes in when it is said “we love Him because He first loved us.” But “herein is love, not that we loved Him.” All this is very mischievous, and conformity to Christ denies our state or Christ’s. Here again (p. 30) I find mere victory over sin identified with conformity to Christ.

I add, that the shewing that Christ met a felt need when there was guilt leaves the question untouched. Is the felt need one that scripture recognises? If it is sin not having dominion over us, clearly it is. But that is the question. What Mr. S. calls the need of the soul is not one produced by the Holy Ghost. He tells us (p. 31) that "whatever the Holy Spirit makes us yearn for, Christ came to give." Then if he means here (and this is what he does mean), I must never yearn for heaven, never yearn for seeing Christ as He is, never for His coming, never for the redemption of the body, nor think of being saved in hope, and, hoping for that I see not, wait for it with patience. A heavenly-minded Christian is unknown to, set aside by, our writer. Paul's desire to win Christ, to obtain "the resurrection from among the dead," the "one thing" he was doing, was all a mistake!

And this is my objection to Mr. Smith's system. His hopes and yearnings are too low. All he has to teach from is a comparison "of the current of our inward life "with his present state, comparing himself with himself, which is not wise. It is the range of his own consciousness, neither of which I accept as a rule or measure of what I am to expect from Christ.

It seems to me unhappy to be constantly using scripture for his own purpose in a sense it does not mean (p. 34). "Laying aside every weight" is for race, and not for what Mr. S. quotes it. "Frustrating the grace of God" has nothing to do with it either, and scripture never tells us to "know Christ formed in us"; quite the contrary, it presses our looking out to where He is perfect, and that we may live by faith and be changed into His image. Faith never looks at itself or at its effect in us, but at Christ in Himself. We are freed from the law of sin that

the righteousness of the law may be fulfilled in us. Mr. S. says it is strange that we should have ever doubted that love to God is included in this. Is it not rather strange in that case that, when the apostle speaks of this point, which he does more than once, he never speaks of the first table? Not only so, he declares that the whole law is fulfilled in loving one's neighbour as one's self. See Romans 13:8, 9; Galatians 5:14. That is, when the precise point is before him, he carefully avoids what Mr. S. insists on, and in fact contradicts him, calling the whole law love to our neighbour. We may be assured that scripture is wiser than we are. I think I could say I love God with all my heart, I should not dare to say with all my mind and all my strength. But this is only the imperfect estimate we make of our own state.

Again I find (p. 42) that it is constantly held that sinning is the inevitable condition of God's own saved saints. And note, "sinning" not "sin in us." I do not say more on this, but only here mark how uniformly this is the standard of comparison. Next I find "he, the Christian who puts on the Lord Jesus Christ, simply is placed where he by faith receives from God the power to act day by day up to the given measure of light upon his duty." Few, I apprehend, would deny this, though they might say, with James, as to the fact, "In many things we all offend," never we must.

But further, "It is the power of overcoming all discerned evil that is bestowed." Now I do soberly and seriously ask, Is this conformity to Christ? Is the discerned evil Mr. Smith speaks of not there? What is overcome? That a holy soul will judge evil in the root before God so that he does not dishonour Christ before men, that he learns evil, humble in himself with God, and not careless with

Satan, is most true; but evil is there, and this is not purity or conformity to Christ. All this looseness of statement misleads instead of teaching; it hinders souls from bowing to the doctrine of the deliverance to which they ought to submit. Overcoming evil is not purity and holiness. The common use of “whatsoever is not of faith is sin” is a mere abuse of the text. The apostle is shewing that, if a person eats of what would be clean for stronger faith, it is sin to him who has not this faith, his conscience is defiled.

I then come to a doctrine (p. 47) common among the Wesleyans, which is utterly false: “God’s Spirit is the Spirit of holiness; it cannot dwell with sin, or even with the love of this world.” Then it leaves us on every evil thought, and must, if at all, come again; and I have no power to overcome, I do not know I am a child. I cannot grieve the Holy Ghost by which I am sealed to the day of redemption, if it cannot be where sin is! Did the Holy Ghost leave Peter when he was guilty of dissimulation, and come back again to make him anew an apostle? It is, in every sense, an unscriptural doctrine. We grieve the Spirit which does dwell in us, and by which we are sealed for the day of redemption. All the rest of the chapter is false doctrine. “The Spirit must fill the soul that is emptied of self.” What has emptied it? How am I emptied of all else in order to receive the Spirit? Humbled by powerlessness, yes; but I must be filled with Christ to be emptied of self, though not to have learned its evil and be cast on Christ. There is never such a vacuum in the soul. If the Spirit does not fill it, the flesh lusts. It is really the false principle of the honest monk. I have tried it; I doubt if Mr. S. has. At any rate, it is mere delusion that the soul is emptied of self so as to be a

vacuum in order to receive the Spirit. I will, the Lord helping, say a word on this before I close.

The review of the chapter which treats of the atonement is, I confess, painful. It lowers so dreadfully the Christian normal state, so muddles vital truths, so really allows of evil in Christians, that it grieves one's spirit. The washing by water is ignored, the existence of evil affirmed and denied, and the real efficacy of the atonement set aside, while the Epistle to the Hebrews is completely travestied. I do not speak with any bitterness of feeling. I do not doubt for a moment that the author is a child of God. But he must forgive me for saying he has gone beyond his depth, and has given ample proof of the evil of his views, and of the confusion into which they throw the sincere. The chapter is so full of confusion, one hardly knows where to begin.

Though we are told to follow after holiness, neither the inward sanctification of the Spirit nor the operation of the Spirit is spoken of in the Hebrews. "Sanctified" is by the will of God through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. It is a sanctification of the people by blood, by Christ's suffering outside the gate, as the bodies of the beasts in the chief offerings for sin were burned without the camp. The point of the Hebrews is access to God in the holiest, where Christ is gone. The inward state of the individual is not its subject, but a rent veil, an offering once made by which the believer is perfected for ever—has no more conscience of sins— so that, if he leaves it, there is no more offering. So that Christ must have suffered often if cleansing was not perfected for ever; for without shedding of blood was no remission. It is not sprinkling, no recurrence to it is thought of, repetition of it impossible: it was Jewish. This

is the essence of the argument. When He had by Himself purged our sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens; not standing as the Jewish priests did, because their work is never done. He is expecting till His enemies are made His footstool; for, as to them who are sanctified, He has by one offering perfected them for ever. It is impossible to conceive reasoning more precisely opposed to Mr. S.'s statements than those of the apostle. That the epistle desires that the Jewish Christian should be perfect in every good work to do His will is all quite true, but has nothing to do with the matter. It is blood that sanctifies the people here. Departure from it is fatal perdition, and finally so.

But I turn to details. "Now cleanseth" is not in scripture. And adding to God's word is a dangerous thing. I have not a moment's doubt that it is used abstractedly; as I say, that medicine cures the ague. The Christian has the three parts of his true standing—walking in the light as God is in it (it is not said Jesus); mutual fellowship one with another (to apply met allelon to us and God is as irreverent as I am satisfied it is false); and thirdly, the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin. It is its efficacy to make us fit for the light as God is in it. But, I beg leave to add, there is no repetition of sprinkling of blood in scripture. It never loses its value in God's sight. It is an efficacious sealing of the covenant, efficacious cleansing of the leper, and consecration of the priest once for all. Washing of the feet there is, but this is with water; sprinkling with the ashes of the red heifer, but this is with running water, the blood having been sprinkled seven times at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. It is the washing with water Mr. S. ignores. This is what scripture applies to any daily

failure, not re-sprinkling with blood. A man is converted, bathed in the water of the word ("Ye are clean through the word spoken unto you"); this is never repeated; but, if we do pick up evil on our feet in our walk, through Christ's advocacy (1 John 2), of which the righteousness and the propitiation are the abiding ground, our feet are washed, and communion is restored. Imputation of guilt never recurred, for Christ had borne the sin on the cross. So the value of the great day of atonement remained, the blood sprinkled seven times remained in all its efficacy, the sin had been consumed in Christ's death, and the Spirit brings back the remembrance of that, and communion is restored. But there is no re-sprinkling with blood no fresh recurrence to it, if we sin.

But what is "stumbling in the way of holiness, not out of it?" What does stumbling mean? If anything, it means failing in walk, sinning. Do Christians sin in the way of holiness? That they do not lose the consciousness of their place and relationship, or come under law again, I admit. But stumbling in the way of holiness, I fear, tends to make light of sin. And it is owned to be a sad event, a transgression; yet does the believing heart not doubt even then its sanctification. What does this mean if inward purity and holiness is the sanctification? If it means a setting apart of the person by blood once and for ever, I should understand it, though I fear such a use of it would make a believer easy when he had failed, and harden his conscience.

But what means "hearing the command, What God hath cleansed, that call thou not common"? That we have not thereby ceased to be His, I believe; but defiling, by the vile sin which made Christ suffer, what God has cleansed, is a dreadful thing; and this is the meaning of

putting the heifer's ashes in the running water. The passage in the Acts has nothing to do with the matter. It refers to not holding the Gentiles for unclean. But that is a little matter here. If this passage means anything, it means that I am to take the defiling God's temple very easy. I have not lost my sanctification. Yet in another place we are told that the Spirit of God cannot dwell where sin is, so that I am no longer a temple, nor is the sanctification of the Spirit there. The passage is so strange, that the only way I can account for it is, that conscience told Mr. S. that he did transgress, and yet he did not like the idea that he had thereby got out of the place he supposed he had got into. And it is one of the evils of fancied perfection that the person's pride does not like admitting that he has lost it; his conscience becomes dull too, or makes light of transgression.

I can have no word to say against being dead to sins, nor, as I will soon shew, reckoning ourselves dead to sin, nor being redeemed from all iniquity; but I object wholly to adding "inwardly" to cleansing from sin: the scripture does not.

When the apostle speaks of "cleansing from all unrighteousness," he is speaking of confessing sins; when he speaks of iniquity (anomia) as equivalent to sin, he is speaking of practising it. Anomia or iniquity, as that from which we are redeemed, is not sin in the flesh here; "for if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us"; and we shall see that Mr. Smith admits this, though he has a remedy of which scripture knows nothing, and which really leaves us where we were. Cleansing is cleansing from stains when we confess our sins: so at least the apostle says. It is not merely cancelling a record, but making us white

as snow; but that is when sins were as scarlet. Scripture never speaks of cleansing the fountain, the very source of evil thoughts. It speaks of purifying the Gentile hearts by faith, in a practical sense, putting no difference between Jews and others; but never of cleansing the very source, as Mr. Smith does. The flesh lusts against the Spirit. A messenger of Satan had to keep Paul's flesh down. There is no such thought as cleansing the source of evil in us, nor applying blood to it. All this is false.

To reckon ourselves dead, dead with Christ, and the flesh crucified with Him, because it is always bad—of this scripture always speaks, as the way of power, that only Christ's life may be shewn, but never of applying blood to cleanse the flesh, or source of evil. We do not come to "Jesus the light," nor walk in Jesus. All these thoughts are foreign to scripture.

But mark further the unintelligible contradictions we find here. We are "to receive the blood as cleansing the fountain— the very source of evil thoughts" (p. 55); "to wash inwardly the sin itself away, not merely the stains, but the sin itself" (p. 58); "that remedy is applied in the very source of the spring itself" (it was poisoned in its very source, he says); "it makes the waters pure and sweet, the waters that flow out therefrom" (from the source, p. 56). As the remedy is applied not only to the waters, but to the very source of the spring, one would have supposed that the source had become pure. Far from it. "If he then walks in the light, or in Jesus, it shines through and through him, revealing hourly the things that are contrary to God and to holiness." What kind of purity and holiness and cleansing the very source of the spring is that? Only as they are revealed by the light they are cleansed by the blood! The source

of the spring then is not purified at all. “The moment that remedy is stayed, that very moment the poisonous waters flow out as foul as ever” (p. 59). From what purified source did they come?

My answer moreover is this, iniquity (anomia) is not used in scripture for the source and spring of evil, the flesh; and scripture never speaks of applying the blood to the source to cleanse it. Cleansing from all sin does not mean any change in the spring or source of evil; for the flesh is not changed, nor does scripture ever speak of its being changed or cleansed. What scripture does speak of is far clearer and more effectual. First, as to conscience, it is perfected: the worshippers once purged have no more conscience of sins. Christ is in the presence of God, as is all the value of His precious blood; and by one offering He has perfected for ever them that are sanctified through the offering of His body once for all. If I look up to God, Christ and His blood are there before God, and imputation of sin is impossible. As regards the flesh, it is for ever condemned. There is no application of blood to it; but God declares me dead because Christ has died who is now my life, and I reckon myself dead and am called to bear about the dying of Christ, that nothing but His life should be manifested in me. If through carelessness (which I never can excuse, for sin has no longer dominion over me), I have defiled even my thoughts or my feet, Christ’s advocacy comes in, and my feet through grace are washed. But, if walking in the power of the Spirit, sin does not arise in my mind, Christ dwells there by faith, and I constantly know, and consciously, that I am loved as Jesus was loved; I have fellowship (that is, common joys, thoughts, feelings) with the Father and the Son; for, whatever a

poor feeble vessel I may be, the Holy Ghost cannot give different ones. Here, of course, there may be degrees and progress.

But to speak of conformity to Jesus, and then tell us that the light shines through us, revealing hourly the things that are contrary to God and holiness, is really mocking us with vain words. And to tell me that the very source of the spring is cleansed, but that the very moment the remedy is not actually applied to what would come from it (or things contrary to God and holiness hourly there), the poisonous waters flow as before— from the cleansed spring—is to bewilder, not to teach.119 How is it, I ask, if things are hourly brought to light contrary to God and holiness, that (p. 66) he is not ever conscious of inward impurity? must he not ever find within him an active fountain? The truth is, the deliverance urged by Mr. S. is a very imperfect one—far short of what scripture gives; it is a constant application of the blood to what is welling up, like repeated Jewish sacrifices, not the sentence of death by faith upon the nature, or the old man. He asks, as Wesleyans do, “Is death alone to be my deliverer?” I answer, Clearly so. He that is dead is freed (justified) from sin. But the believer who has understood the truth reckons himself dead, has the sentence of death in himself. This is a remedy applied to the source. It is only by faith, of course, till actual death come. But death by faith, or actually, is the only scriptural remedy for sin in us. It is not applied over and over again, of which scripture knows nothing, and which leaves the poisoned source there; but it is death for faith or in fact. “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” “In that he died, he died unto sin once, but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God: so

likewise reckon ye also yourselves dead unto sin and alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

It is not a constant re-application and cleansing of what is never cleansed, but the constant normal state of the Christian. He has been crucified with Christ; he has died, and his life is hid with Christ in God; and even as to details, he mortifies —puts to death—the evil. It is power by the Holy Ghost. Scripture never speaks of cleansing the old man: the Christian, if he knows his standing, has put it off. What is the meaning of "Christ reigning in resurrection-life over sin"? (p. 67). Christ reigning over sin supposes it there, and is an ugly expression. Christ dwells in my heart by faith, and the body is dead because I reckon myself dead. Death, and death only, is deliverance. But I repeat, by faith we reckon ourselves dead. But death to sin is the only cleansing recognized in scripture, where the question is of inward cleanness and the flesh. The water, as the blood, came out of the side of a dead Christ. The water Mr. S. ignores; the blood he applies continually as if it was never finished. The blood must be shed, and Christ suffer, for that part of the work; and sin in the flesh was condemned when Christ was on the cross, and I died with Him. But of this more hereafter (p. 69). There was no cleansing, but condemnation and death in a sacrifice. Atonement (p. 69) is never the expression of the Father's love. Love was expressed in the Father sending the Son to do it; but the propitiation met God's righteous requirement. Drinking the cup was not the Father's love. Nor did Christ seek if possible to learn His Father's love. The real import of the atonement is lost sight of here. It is a mistake to say that the relationships of the Christian

are entered into at conversion (p. 70); but this will come in when I treat of the scriptural view.

I have already spoken of pages 71, 72; but it is a striking example how there is no inquiry after scriptural truth. We have different definitions of sins and holiness. Does God give them? Does the word? Sin in the flesh is not looked at, sin and sins confounded, and “the truth” —the truth of God— not looked after, but all left vague in different definitions, and consciousness which cannot be trusted. This is very sad. And we are told the scripture plan is not to analyse, which is wholly false. It is fully and divinely analysed in Romans 7 and 8. The case put (pp. 74, 75) says absolutely nothing. There is no doubt that faith overcomes the world.

I have not much more to note. Scarce one passage, if one, is used as the Holy Spirit uses it in scripture: sin and sins mixed up as one thing; the existence of the flesh not fairly looked in the face; and the heavenly calling wholly ignored. In these points it is on Wesleyan ground. But other things are held which cannot be reconciled with this, as the reception of a new life in Christ. All is inextricable confusion.

I beg my reader to remember that I am not denying deliverance from the power of sin, but Mr. Smith’s explanation of it, which I believe to be unscriptural and mischievous. He tells us that he does not give us the soul’s secret to be discussed, but a life to be enjoyed. My answer is, his book is a discussion on the false principles of what is no secret to many. He says he believes we are humbly and devoutly waiting to open our heart and understanding to it; that is, we have received his teaching as true, and are only waiting to receive it into

our hearts. But there is a preliminary question. Is his teaching true? This I am to take for granted, and only to hope to realise it. But I oppose, not deliverance, but his teaching about it as not true. A Christ only leading me to think of my own state is not a result which I desire, and that is the result of his book. “Paul,” we are told, “confessed a Christ living in him, and triumphed.” That he knew Christ was in him, and was his life, is true; but that was not his triumph, nor the character of his life.

I shall now state what scripture does set forth as to deliverance. Every one can judge how far scripture does state it as I am about to do. The Holy Ghost alone can give us the power of it. The first great truth as regards the believer’s relationship to God is that on the one hand the Lord imputes no sin, and on the other he who is sanctified to God by the precious work of Christ is perfected for ever, has no more consciousness of sins, and boldness to enter into the holiest, by the blood of Christ, by the new and living way He has consecrated for him. The apostle enlarges on this (Heb. 9 and 10), insists on its being done once for all, as an eternal redemption; that if this fitness for God, as to sins and acceptance, was not complete and eternal by Christ’s one offering, Christ must have suffered often. There is no veil between us and God—it is rent; no remembrance of sins, no more conscience of sins; we are perfected eis to dienekes, not merely eternally, but without any interruption or break in it, as Christ is therefore sitting because all is done for us, expecting till His enemies be made His footstool. There is no repetition of the offering, no more conscience of sins. Christ appears in the presence of God for us, the uninterrupted testimony that there is no sin on us. And this, remark, looks at the

believer as on earth, as all the epistle to the Hebrews does, and Christ in heaven for us;

If we look at our higher privileges, then, I say, by the Holy Ghost I know I am in Christ, and He in me; I am sitting in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. If any man be in Christ, it is a new creation. But Romans enters into it more fully, and analyses every point of a sinner's standing with God through forgiveness and deliverance; and the apostle in no way confounds the two. God's righteousness is revealed, because the wrath of God is revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness. Every mouth is stopped, and all the world is guilty. All have sinned; and Christ's blood (chap. 3) and Christ's resurrection, as sealing His work on God's part (chap. 4), is the answer of grace; so that peace and present favour are enjoyed, and the glory of God in hope. The Holy Spirit being given, we glory in tribulations, and lastly in God Himself, through Christ, by whom we have received the reconciliation with God. This goes down to Romans 5:11. From the 12th verse quite another subject is taken up; not our sins which we do, but our sin—what we are in the flesh. Here it is by one man's disobedience the many connected with him are made sinners. By one Man's obedience many shall be made righteous. It is our alienation from God, and the principle of sin in us. The remedy also is different, though still Christ's death; not that He was delivered for our offences, but that we have died in and with Him. We are not called to die, but to understand that we have died. So scripture uniformly speaks. "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me," Gal. 2:20. "Knowing

this, that our old man is crucified with him," Rom. 6:6. "Ye are dead," Col. 3:3.

We are never called to die; our Christian profession by baptism was to His death. The Christian not only knows that Christ has died and is risen, and that he is redeemed out of flesh into a standing in Christ, but that he also has died as a child of Adam. What God pronounces in Colossians 3 faith is taught to take up in Romans 6. Reckon yourselves dead as a child of Adam, but alive to God in Christ. "Lie not one to another, seeing ye have put off the old man with his deeds." Now this is the scriptural way of deliverance, a subject treated quite apart from sins, propitiation, and blood-shedding.

Further, this is directly connected with experience, and legal experience in a renewed man. The main truth is that we are dead to sin, according to God, if Christ be in us. But the law has power over a man as long as he lives. But I am delivered from the law, having died in that in which I was held. We are become dead to the law by the body of Christ that we should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead. But this deliverance is a distinct thing, as I have said, from forgiveness. If Christ has borne my sins, and I, through grace, have been brought to believe in the efficacy of His death, I find forgiveness and peace. In itself this is a question of simple facts, if I believe in the efficacy of Christ's work and God's word concerning it to me. The work is entirely outside, accomplished on the cross, accepted of God when He raised Christ from the dead, and believing in it through grace, I have peace. Grace makes me a believer; but what I believe in is a thing wholly outside me, and perfectly accomplished once for

all. This is not attainment of something I am which my experience may contradict, but outside myself a simple object of faith perfectly accomplished. But when told I am dead, dead to sin, it is about myself, and my experience contradicts it; I find sin working in me, and I say I am not dead to sin: my experience contradicts what is told me.

I am told I am forgiven; it is only a question whether I believe what is said. I quite admit it is God's Spirit and grace which makes me believe it; but I have to go out of all experience and believe in a work done for me and outside of me. But if the word says you are dead, my experience says I am not. Well, I am to reckon myself dead: how is this arrived at? Not but by another kind of experience—hopelessness as to the power of sin in myself; and this is really experience under law, requirement from me of what I ought to or would be. And hence the apostle treats it rather on the ground of pure law, and describes the state of a renewed soul under the first husband; law, requiring righteousness, which, weak through the flesh, it cannot succeed in having; for the flesh is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. But the renewed and quickened man is (as to his ground of standing with God) in the flesh, while under the law; it is still for him the question what he ought to be for God. The question here, then, is not how to be forgiven, but how to get out of the flesh, how to be dead as regards its power. Now God does not take us out of it till He has made us feel what it is to be in it. The work which delivers us is done; but we always hope to do better, and are all but despairing till we have learned ourselves, and, knowing we cannot get on, are hopeless as to ourselves, till we know what the flesh is

as a distinct thing in us till we look to a Deliverer (not to victory as we are), and then learn that the cross has settled it for ever.

I first learn that in me, that is, in my flesh, there is no good thing; next, as I now hate the evil, though I do it, it is not I (for I hate it), but sin that dwells in me. These are all-important lessons; still humbling and needed self-knowledge is not complete. I find that the sin I hate is too strong for the “I” that hates it. There is no possibility of my mending my case. I need a Deliverer (not pardon), another to do it. But God’s work is now wrought. I have got to know what flesh is, what I, as in flesh, am—the lesson God would experimentally teach me; and then find it was all done when Christ died, and I thank God and reckon myself dead. Faith applies itself to what was done on the cross. It is its reference to what was done there that gives liberty.

The soul has gone experimentally through the process of its discovering its own incapacity to set itself free, and, being entirely humbled and at the end of itself, finds that, what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, that is, a sacrifice for sin (peri amartias), condemned sin in the flesh. But where sin in the flesh was condemned, death was perfected; and I, crucified with Christ, know that He took the condemnation and that I am dead to sin. It has nothing to do with forgiveness. Sin in the flesh is condemned, not forgiven; but condemned in Christ made sin and in death which delivers me from it. Nor does a soul pass into this liberty by faith without the knowledge of self (it is not God’s intention it should), nor does he attain it by victory; but, when he finds he cannot, he

gets deliverance through the knowledge of its condemnation in the cross, and that we have died there to it. Hence the uniform statements of scripture, that the Christian has died, has been crucified, never that he has to die. Christ has died; and he has to reckon himself dead and alive to God, not in Adam, but in Christ.

I have no doubt, when a soul has been exercised and humbled according to what is described in Romans 7, Mr. Smith's being able to say there is deliverance, as there surely is, may be blest to a soul; but his teaching on it is all wrong. It is in vain to say we are not to analyse it. We are to take scriptural teaching on it; and, in fact, scripture does analyse it, and very exactly, and shews that, while the deliverance is by faith in what was done on the cross, where we have been crucified with Christ, it is preceded, and the desire of deliverance is produced, by a deep experimental process, in which what the flesh is, and law is, is learned as described in Romans 7; while the doctrine as to what faith receives is in chapter 6; what the law is, even when Christ is known, is in chapter 7; and the deliverance is fully analysed in chapter 8, or even to the resurrection of the body. Mr. Smith would substitute for God's teachings on it the range of his consciousness. I prefer the word of God.

I do not think that talking of the Spirit rushing in when there is a vacuum is worthy of the exercises of a soul before God, nor of the ways of God in grace, of the seriousness that befits the question of the salvation of a sinful soul; but I should have taken no notice of it, had it not been an unsound thought. Neither is there any vacuum, nor anything to form it, nor any rushing in of the Spirit. The work of the Spirit in leading to

deliverance is the opposite of a vacuum. It fills the soul with the honest and upright, but deep and bitter, sense of the power of sin in us, and our incapacity for gaining the victory over it. The law—and in this case we are practically under law—gives no life, no power, no object. It requires very rightly that lust should not be there; and lust is there and leads me captive, and I find I cannot get rid of it.

The soul is full of sin, though hating it, and of bitterness as it never was before, and is broken down in the sense of its wretchedness; but this in itself is not power—any more than the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, was power; but through grace it makes us find out we have none, and casts us on Another— “who shall deliver me?” —and then, as has been said, we find through divine teaching that God sees us as having died in Christ. The abiding power of deliverance and liberty—true heavenly liberty—is the law (that is, the abidingly active power) of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus; but though it may be possible that in some instances God may grant the faith of it in reply to the earnest cry of the oppressed soul (often dangerous, as leading the soul to think of what passes in itself120), the scripture account of deliverance is not redemption which takes place in our own souls then, but the divinely given understanding that God condemned sin in the flesh when Christ was a sacrifice for sin. We, as men in the flesh, were crucified with Him then.

Thus sin in the flesh was condemned, so that the believer is free. This is what faith lays hold of. This is the unvarying testimony of scripture, and it occupies us with Christ and not with ourselves. It is not that I expect every one to be able to explain what has passed in his

soul, nor recall the passages which explain it. But though the first effect may be merely the joy of liberty and peace perhaps of heart, if really taught of God, he will recognise that it is in the death of Christ he has died; that it is not a death which is then actually wrought in him, but faith in the death of Christ, as having died with Him on the cross.

But Mr. S. has largely explained it, and explained it wrongly. It is impossible but there must be experience. Something passes even in the natural man; but when the Spirit of God works, the deepest and most varied exercises of heart take place in this encounter of divine light and love with the darkness of the human heart. That is not the evil. The evil of the Methodist and Calvinistic experience system is that, instead of applying Christ as God's answer to their experiences, they apply another experience perhaps to it, and go back to what has passed in their own minds; that is, they are occupied with self, nourishing self, instead of substituting Christ for it. The evil is not the having the experience, but the making it the object of reflection. This is never faith, for faith looks outside itself. I know that Mr. S. says Christ is "all in all" (not really what is said, though commonly so cited; it is "all and in all"—all as an object of the soul, and in all as life); but for him that is a state of the soul, not really Christ Himself.

I have seen another book of Mr. Smith's, on which I will spend a few words. I repeat what I have said: I believe in deliverance from the dominion of sin, nor do I doubt—however little I except his unscriptural statements about it—Mr. S.'s enjoyment of it; but, with a confusion which makes his statement difficult to deal with (as we must divine from our own experimental knowledge the real

force of contradictory statements), his doctrine is really unsound and unscriptural; his explanations of scripture false, and founded on additions of his own not in the text. It is in vain to say he is looking for freeing souls, not controversy. I know what that freedom is, I think better than Mr. S.; but he makes large statements as to scripture, and his statements on the subject before us are anti-scriptural. Sinning and sin are again confounded, subjects carefully distinguished in Romans: one, as we have seen, guilt and its remedy, being treated of to chapter 5:11; the other from verse 12 of that chapter, our state by Adam's fall and its remedy, being spoken of. And it is, whatever Mr. Smith may wish, fully analysed. But of sin in the flesh he avoids the examination. He tells us we must be crucified hourly, and then that death is accomplished, but it is over.

But what is more serious, in his effort to avoid the abiding of sin in the flesh, a nature which lusts against the Spirit, he tells us we may be still tempted; but temptation is not sin; our Lord was tempted. No doubt He was; but this unhappy allusion ignores a difference clearly stated in scripture. Christ was tempted in all points like as we are (not, as in English, "yet" [which is in italics] "without sin," but sin apart, choris atnartias), in every possible way, which might tend to hinder the perseverance and obedience of a servant of God. Such temptations only drew out perfections and not sin. But there is another thing, called temptation. Every one is tempted, says James, when he is drawn away of his own lusts and enticed. Mr. S. says the avenues are still open. The avenues and motions—it is not said, I suppose by some misprint, motions of what. Motions being open in any case is obscure, wrong too. But avenues are open to

what? Is there any principle of sinful flesh which remains? Lusts and motions of sin there were none in Christ: that is certain; and comparing us to Christ tempted, and talking of avenues open, to say it in the mildest way, culpably avoids the question. Does sin in the flesh still exist in the man dehvered from its power? There is a thing which lusts against the Spirit, the two things are contrary one to the other. It is a most serious question for the Christian—Does the evil nature still subsist in the believer? And to speak of avenues open, if it does, is to deceive the Christian as to a traitorous enemy within, which he has to watch against. And if, as Mr. S. says, the Christian has to keep it in the place of death, what does he keep there?

But there are fundamental principles in question in this book which I must notice. “Death unto Life” is its title. One cannot have this life till we are dead. As expressed in the other book, when there is a vacuum, the Spirit pours in. Now allow me to ask, Is complete death to all sin, sin wholly losing its life in us, a vacuum if it is, produced in the soul without our having spiritual life at all? A negative process, producing this vacuum no one knows by what; the man remaining spiritually dead all the time, not having life and yet becoming dead to sin! It is as absurd as it is unscriptural. And do not let Mr. S. come and object to the metaphysics of sin, or say he does not write for controversy; he teaches utterly false doctrines; he may call it metaphysics or what he pleases, but a sober mind will hold fast by scripture, and reject his teachings. Romans 6 speaks of Christians alive in Christ, in telling us to reckon ourselves dead to sin.

I may add that the very question put by Mr. S. came up thirty or forty years ago with Irvingism, and was fully

discussed, and by those as free from sin as Mr. Smith; and his doctrine, on searching scripture, proved to be false. There is in scripture the very important truth of being dead to sin, and sin having no dominion over us, we being set free, so that we have no consciousness of its working, but not of finding death to it that we might have life. Scripture goes farther even than having life in order to our being dead to sin. “If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, and the Spirit is life because of righteousness.” It is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus which makes us free from the law of sin and death.

And this leads me to another capital point. Romans 6 has nothing to do with experience, but states the ground on which every Christian stands. Deliverance, which Mr. S. makes no matter of effort of, but jumping into holiness by faith, is the result of the painful and humbling but most profitable discovery that we cannot gain victory over sin in the flesh, even when born again. There is deliverance, not pardon, from its power and dominion, when knowledge of self is experimentally gained. Romans 6 calls upon us to reckon ourselves dead, but does not teach us that we die by any present experience. This scripture never teaches, but that the Christian was crucified with Christ; it is the judicial state of every Christian, of everyone baptized unto (not into) Christ. There is no union by faith, or experience, or anything else in the chapter, but doctrine and exhortation. The Christ we have been baptized unto is One who having died, we are accounted by baptism to take part in His death; it is that to which we come by profession in being a Christian; and the ground of the reasoning shews the absurdity of Mr. S.’s view of the chapter, as do its

contents. If one Man's obedience made me righteous, I may live on in sin, say the flesh and the world. But, says the apostle, you have a part in that by having a part in death with Christ; consequently, it is the opposite to living on in sin.

The doctrine of the chapter is perfectly plain. Whoever has been baptized to Christ has been baptized to His death. It is the force of the Christian profession, "Knowing this, that our old man is [has been] crucified with Him that the body of sin might be destroyed"; that was the object, so that henceforth we should not serve sin. The apostle carefully avoids, or rather repudiates, speaking of sin not existing in us; one would have thought the destruction of the whole body of sin in its entirety would have induced its non-existence in us. Not so; it is a practical conclusion he draws, that henceforth we should not serve it. So we are exhorted to walk in newness of life. Mr. S. will insist on this being realized by experience. Be it so: I cordially accept it; but it is no experience of some work wrought in us at a given moment by which and when we were crucified. There is a work wrought in us; but it is the teaching us to know that the old man was crucified with Christ, not that it has happened at a given moment by a work in us. We are called to reckon ourselves dead, because we were crucified with Christ, and this makes practically all the difference; the mind is not occupied with a petty exaggerated work in us, but with the absoluteness of Christ's cross, and in Another, which hinders our being occupied with self, as is invariably the case in Mr. S.'s system. I do not charge him in particular; it is the invariable and necessary consequence of the system.

Mr. S. may tell me it is Christ he is occupied with. My reply is, Read his books: they are the answer. The standard is thus fearfully lowered. Scripture never speaks of our having to die to sin—never; but of our having died, and of our reckoning ourselves dead. We are set free, and then called to yield ourselves to God wholly and without reserve, a living sacrifice. “Ye are dead “; reckon yourselves dead, and in practice always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus—not our dying, note. I do not know that I need add more.

I repeat, Romans 6 is not experience, but doctrine and exhortation; and the difference is of all importance. Mr. S. would have found, had he consulted the original, that “freed” from sin is justified from sin, which I only note as shewing the difference between sin and sins. Death does not justify a man from his sins; but it is impossible to charge a dead man with evil lusts and a perverse will. I judge then that the liberty from the power of sin and the necessity of sinning, and no present consciousness of sinning, on which Mr. Smith insists, is true, and I would plead for it as earnestly as he could wish; but he has gone on to teach and interpret, he has grievously lowered the standard and misled souls as to scriptural truth concerning it, and greatly, though I am sure unintentionally, put Christ out of view. To his desires for Christians I cordially adhere. His teachings and account of the matter, for Christ’s sake and souls’ sake, for the truth’s sake by which we are sanctified, I utterly and wholly reject; and the rather because he gives occasion to theologians to reject the deliverance by shewing the false doctrine and confusion by which it is accompanied.

The kind of changes in scripture Mr. S. allows himself are these:— “In the same way in which under and in the

first Adam sin reigned in the soul unto death without limit or reservation, even so under and in the new Adam is grace to reign in our souls through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ." Now the addition of "in our souls "(not given as a quotation) is a false representation of the passage. There is not a word about grace reigning in our souls in the passage. Mr. Smith further changes "as" into "the same way," which the passage does not say; and, I may add, "without limit or reserve "either ignores the existence of sin in the flesh, or blinds people by leaving it out. At any rate it is not said "in the same way," nor is it said "in our souls." It is a false representation of the contents of the passage.

The use of 2 Corinthians 5:21 (on page 8) is utterly inadmissible. "May we always remember that our adorable Lord became sin, which He was not, neither could be in Himself, that we might become, even now, that righteousness which we were not, neither could be in ourselves." This is very bad. It is not said "became sin," but that God made Him sin for us, a totally different thing; and our being God's righteousness in Him is not that righteousness, nor a state we are in. The passage is changed to "becoming sin "as to Christ, in order to our becoming righteousness now. To be of any avail to Mr. Smith, it must be a practical state in us which we could not be naturally; but the passage says, God's "righteousness in Him." The last words are carefully left out, and the statement as to Christ grievously altered. And if becoming sin is not a practical state (which I suppose Mr. S. would surely not say, ambiguous as are his words), his reasoning is of no force whatever; for our becoming God's righteousness in Him has then a wholly different sense from what it is Mr. S.'s

purpose to give it. The perversion of this passage, I confess, shocks me. I do not quote any more passages: these two will suffice to shew how he habitually uses scripture.

I have also read Mr. Smith's tract on Romans 7. I certainly recognise that it is not Christian experience; it is the experience under law of a renewed soul, before it has found deliverance. It is also true that, when forgiveness has been known by faith, souls come under law before they know deliverance. But, for all that, I believe Mr. S.'s explanation of the passage is all wrong. As to the mere law, Paul outwardly was blameless. He discusses its effect when known to be spiritual, but reasons on it purely as law. The knowledge of forgiveness modifies the experience, but does not alter the doctrine. The question is between connection with law and a risen Christ. But I do not think this little book calls for a detailed review. Mr. Smith has got as far as Luther on Galatians; but in his system a man may be in Romans 7 again every week!

117 Yet he denies it too, and talks of its reviving; and he is in inextricable confusion in his statements, covering them by saying we ought not to analyse.

118 It is said (1 John 2:5; ch. 4:12) "perfected in us"; but this is God's love shed abroad in our hearts, but still God's love.

119 The application of a fountain opened for sin and uncleanness to our hearts or to Christ's blood is really without foundation. A fountain of blood to cleanse is no scripture thought, of water it is. And it is said of Jerusalem in the last days. But there is no application of it to our hearts.

120 It is not experience which is dangerous, but thinking of it instead of Christ. It is really thinking of self: self is of importance to self. I never saw it otherwise. Here Calvinists and Arminians meet.

Letter On Mr. J.P.S.'S "Holiness Through Faith"

My Dear——,

The greater part of what is here, even to its terminology, is borrowed from so-called "Brethren," such as resurrection-life, etc. I do not mean by this, that it is not sincere or real, for I have no such thought, but that it is what you have known and received for years. You must be aware that the teaching that Romans 7 is not the Christian state, but that chapter 8 is, has been taught, as I have myself earnestly insisted on it now near fifty years, only I trust with increasing clearness. But what is added to it is not sound teaching, and lowers the standard which scripture presents to us, and tends to put estimate of self instead of thoughts of Christ.

Mr. S. does see liberty before God and from sin which is by faith, though not scriptural on this point either, as we shall see; but he compares a Christian state with those who are under the bondage of the law, or Romans 8, instead of comparing it with Christ glorified or down here, and hence falsifies that state as well as lowers the standard. Being free from the law of sin and death, filled with the Spirit, dead to sin, are to be pressed as the only right state of the Christian.

The question of the justness of the statement of this book does not he there. It confounds this with a supposed state of purity, which is not the scriptural apprehension of the Christian's condition when free.

I find in the very outset a mis-statement which affects the whole book. It is said (p. 12), "If we give rein to our

yearnings, asking of God whatsoever things we desire, what would be our first instinctive cry? That we might be holy and pure, and conformed to the image of Jesus Christ." Now while this sounds very well, and the desire after holiness is an essential part of the new man, yet this statement' is not scriptural, and falsifies the whole truth on the subject.

Conformity to the image of Jesus Christ is in glory. We are predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He may be the firstborn among many brethren. We have borne the image of the earthly, and we shall bear the image of the heavenly. The only positive object of the Christian is conformity to Christ in glory. And we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

And now mark the difference of the consequence. For Mr. P.S. it is to be holy and pure, etc. For scriptural conformity to Christ is in glory, and the consequence is, "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself as he is pure." The standard is Christ in glory, and it is not said pure, but "purifieth." This is always the scriptural estimate. "Beholding with unveiled face [looking fully into] the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory as by the Spirit of the Lord." Hence Paul, in his fullest energy, seeks to win Christ, and along with this that he may attain unto the resurrection from among the dead. His object is the prize of the high calling, his calling is up above (ano). No state here is the object of the Christian.

Now this alters the whole character of Christian state and attainment. For this Christ's state down here is never presented as a model of attainment, for He was

wholly without sin, and we are not in nature. Scripture says “he that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk as he walked.” Because we ought never to walk after the flesh, though the flesh be there.

No one desires that any should live in sin, or even sin at all. We have no excuse for a single idle thought, for Christ’s grace is sufficient for us, and God is faithful not to suffer us to be tempted above that we are able. But in Romans 6 it is not Christ’s walk down here or state which is presented, but His being raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, and our consequent walking in newness of life^ Here Mr. S. makes it the point of his argument (p. 15) that we are not to serve sin. Of course we are not. But his argument here is all fallacious. What is stated is urged as the only normal Christian state. But the ground of the argument is that we (believers) were crucified with Christ: that is, when He was crucified, we were. Now it is of course faith that realizes this through grace, and if we do we are free: but the thing realized is, that we were crucified with Him when He was crucified. And it is so taken as the Christian state that the introduction to Christianity (baptism) is the introduction to that as its proper force; being baptized to Christ is being baptized to His death; and this, not the question of guilt and sins put away (that subject is treated to the end of verse n, chapter 5), but our state and our relationship to God by Adam’s sin, to which state we have died, and so are clear from it and out of it, Christ having actually died for us to this as well as borne our sins.

Hence also we are dead to law, for law has power over a man as long as he lives, and we have died away from under it in Christ, and are to another—Christ raised

from the dead, and this is deliverance, not justification. It is thus we pass from Romans 7 to 8, the power and means described in chapter 8:2, 3, and the deliverance continued on to verse 11. How much state, and not Christ, is the object of Mr. S.'s mind is evident from pages 16-19.

But all this betrays too a failing apprehension of the existence of the flesh. "The whole nature is body, soul and spirit, it is a readjustment of it," not Christ my life giving me the consciousness I am to be like Him, as He is. With this comes temptation more fierce than ever. What does this mean? "Temptation is not sin, for my Lord was tempted" (p. 19). What does he mean by "temptation"? Satan came and tried Christ in the path of perfect obedience. But what has this to do with purity of heart? All this is exceedingly immature and uncertain, and a strange confusion of the question of purity and assaults by Satan upon us. Nor do I find consistency of doctrine with himself or with scripture. "We receive the purification from all iniquity by faith, and that now, and that is from all iniquity" (p. 21). But in page 55, "If he then walks in the light or in Jesus, it shines through and through him, revealing hourly the things contrary to God and holiness, and as they are revealed by the light, they are cleansed by the blood. To walk in the light always leads to the blood of purifying." Now sanctifying is not used in the passage of Hebrews in the sense he does; but the whole doctrine of that part of the epistle is different from Mr. S.'s. The statement there is that the worshippers once purged should have no more conscience of sins. And when he speaks of receiving the blood as cleansing the fountain, the very source of evil thoughts, murders; etc. (p. 55), is not the flesh the

fountain of them? Is the flesh cleansed? Why had Paul a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet him, if the very source of evil was cleansed? Nor is “inwardly “in the text, nor is Jesus here spoken of as the light. It is “If we walk in the light, as he [God] is in the light, the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin,” and it is clearly as set in the light, brought so, that the light shews we are as white as snow (p. 26). You see how he takes the low condition of evangelical Christendom as his point of comparison: “If sinning be the inevitable, constant, condition of the Christian.” Of course it is not.

Again, I find (in page 20) the false principle of conformity to Christ here, which, as stated by him, is not in scripture. “He knows no sin,” but this book tells me the light always leads to the blood of purifying. Was this true of Christ? If not, there is not conformity to Him as down here. To what He is up there clearly no one is yet conformed. But it is of this scripture speaks: the effect is to make us purify ourselves. Had Christ to do this? So “victory over sin” is not conformity to Christ (p. 30). Victory there ought always to be, and indeed I should go a great deal farther. But this vague use of conformity to Christ is really very mischievous. We are called to walk as He walked, never to be what He was. I do not admit that “whatever the Holy Spirit makes us to yearn for, Christ came to give “in this life (p. 31). I yearn for a state, and so did Paul in Philippians 3 and in 2 Corinthians 5, which he could not have in this world by any possibility.

The same excessive vagueness and neglect of the force of scripture which we have already found is repeated in page 37, “These things prepared by God are not all postponed to a future scene, but are even now

spiritually discerned." Now whatever is prepared is revealed, and may be all spiritually discerned, and this no doubt should act so as to make us live in these things, have our conversation in heaven, look on not the things that are seen but the things that are not seen—as those out of Romans 7 and alive from the dead. I have no wish, far from it, to weaken this. The flesh never should be allowed to act, even in our thoughts, but be held for dead, and Christ's grace is sufficient for it. But this is not "some things not being postponed to a future state," but the action of all heavenly things on a soul set free by being dead and risen with Christ; Col. 3. But here the things are above, and the essence of the teaching is that they are above. Our calling is above (ano), whatever we realize of it here.

Nor does Ephesians 3 (page 41) speak of our love to God required by the law, but of a much more blessed thing. We are rooted and grounded in love—not our love as man to God surely. It is Christ dwelling in our hearts by faith, and our knowing Christ's love which passes knowledge (and therefore "as far as I was conscious") so as to be filled up to (eis) all the fulness of God. It is a mischievous thing to make this our love to God according to the requirements of the law, and false interpretation, and shews how this system (not freedom from Rom. 7) lowers the true standard of blessing and holy privilege. If the system only affirmed what is stated in page 43, I should not have a word to say against it. "He simply is placed where he by faith receives from God power to act day by day up to the given measure of light upon his duty. It is the power of overcoming all descended evil that is bestowed." Now scripture is perfectly clear as to this: sin shall not have dominion

over us. Christ's grace is sufficient for us. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. All are not in Romans 7. But this is not the principle on which this freedom is based here. Mr. P.S. talks of conformity to Christ here, of being pure, etc. Now had Christ simply the power of overcoming discerned evil, and is overcoming discerned evil purity? The system is all false. Deliverance from the state of Romans 7 and being in Romans 8 and always so, is not false, but very important; but the principles on which this is based in the book are quite false.

Perfect (pages 43, 44) in Philippians 3 refers to the recognition of a calling above, having the conversation in heaven and this giving a motive for looking always onward; it knows no standard but resurrection, and not conformity to Christ here. I might say the perfection Philippians 3 speaks of is the denial of Mr. P.S.'s perfection, for it knows none but likeness to Christ in glory acting on motives now. Here again the standard is lowered, and a state here which is only a passing and imperfect effect of it called perfection. Perfection in Philippians 3 is not the walk. The perfect are exhorted to have this mind and walk and conversation. It is our heavenly standing as contrasted with forgiveness and morality. Enoch walked with God or pleased Him (this is only the LXX translation of "walking with") and God took him away out of the world. That was what satisfied his heart, not his walk, though he had the knowledge that he pleased God, a most true and blessed privilege. Note too here (p. 46) he identifies "sinning and under sense of condemnation" —things essentially different. It is clear that he has no distinct sense of justification and acceptance in Christ, as his reference to the application

of blood to purify on each failure also distinctly shews. The doctrine of no more conscience of sins is unknown to him. I admit that knowledge is a poor equivalent for taking Jesus for all and present victory (p. 46), but it is not the question.

We have again false doctrine (in page 47), “God’s Spirit cannot dwell with sin, or even with the love of the world.” Had he said that it is not being filled with the Spirit, I should have heartily agreed. But I ask, did the Holy Spirit dwell in Peter, or had He left him when he used dissimulation, or how do I grieve the Spirit if sin and the Spirit cannot be there together? If a man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. Do we cease to be Christ’s if anything of worldliness gets into the mind, most sad as it is to see it? I have no desire to weaken the force of the solemn texts he quotes, but to apply them earnestly to conscience; but his use of them is wrong. We are not in the flesh but the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in us. It is a state, not a walking up to that state, all important as this is. We have natural men, carnal Christians, and spiritual Christians, in 1 Corinthians. But it is a serious thing to say a man is none of Christ’s, because he fails to live up to the power which works in him, though he has no excuse for not doing it, and is judged by the perfect law of liberty.

The body dead because of sin is the practical conclusion the apostle draws as to the Christian state. In 2 Corinthians 4 always bearing about Christ’s dying is the practical realization of it. But I reckon myself dead by faith. All this is confounded, and false doctrine the consequence.

The use of the Epistle to the Hebrews (p. 51) I believe to be wholly false. Sanctification by blood is not the same thing as sanctification by the Spirit; and here I remark that the use of the symbol of water, of which scripture is full, is wholly ignored in this book. Christ washes the disciples' feet with water, He sanctifies and cleanses the church with the washing of water by the word, the disciples were clean by the word spoken, and out of His pierced side water came as well as blood.

Hence in this chapter Mr. S. purifies Christians by blood again if they fail, and (as we have seen) sinning and a sense of condemnation go together for him; and so of course repurifying has to be wrought by blood. In the doctrine of the Hebrews, which treats of the blood and work of Christ, it is when He had by Himself purged our sins, that He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens. And the worshippers once purged have no more conscience of sins, and by one offering He has perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

As to water and feet-washing this is not so. So if (1 John 2) any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins. Here communion is in question, and this for the time is wholly destroyed by sin. On the other hand, righteousness is not in question before God, because Christ is our righteousness. It is not the sense of condemnation, but horror of sin and judging ourselves, not the thought of being condemned for it. The whole doctrine of the chapter is error. Further, the passage in 1 John 1 does not speak of a Christian's sinning (chap. 2 does this), but of the Christian position abstractedly, walking in the light as God is in the light, not of our sinning in the light, and then being cleansed. Perfect

light, communion (not surely with God here, but) with one another, and perfect cleansing by blood, is the Christian's place.

And if (p. 57) the body or root of sinning within us be kept in the place of death, as it ought to be, there is no need for cleansing, nor is the conscience bad. The existence of flesh does not make the conscience bad, the allowance of its activity for a moment does. All this is confusion. Bearing about Christ's dying is not cleansing, but prevention, and this ought to be; but it is always bearing about, not a thing jumped into by an act of faith (whereas liberty is by faith, of which hereafter). It is when we fail in this that we have need (not again of blood, but, founded on that) of having our feet washed, or of the ashes of the red heifer in running water; Num. 19.

Further (in page 59) we have "the remedy applied to the very sources of the spring itself and the waters flow out sweet." Now this is false doctrine. The flesh is not changed. Keep it dead; all well, but this is not a remedy. Sin in the flesh when we are set free is condemned, not remedied, or the flesh purged. Paul's thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet him, was not healing a source, but putting down by a constant thorn what remained evil. Paul's mind was thus kept from the evil, but the source remained unhealed. That our value for the blood may hinder from sinning is all true (p. 60); but how cleansing by blood is to prevent sinning I am at a loss to conceive. Scripture never so speaks; it does of purifying our hearts by faith. Death only clears from sin. For even water flowed from the side of a dead Christ. And (p. 62) the Holy Spirit as power in life is consequent on the blood of sprinkling. There was no such thought as

putting the blood after the anointing too. So (p. 63) sweet water and bitter do not come out of the same fountain; but it is not a mistake at all. Where a man is not set free according to Romans 8, the desires of the heart are right, but the waters that come out are bitter because the man is not free. Where he is free, and there is power as well as desire, there is no excuse if there be anything but sweet. They that are Christ's have crucified; but then the flesh is to be always reckoned dead, not to be purified. Why reckon it dead if it can be purified? All this, however well meant, is unscriptural error. It is at this point that the system touches Wesleyan perfection, though there be much more light.

To the general statement of the beginning of chapter 6 I have no objection: only cleansing, holiness, is substituted for deliverance. It is deliverance from a power to which I was captive, not cleansing. This falsifies all, and shews the confusion into which the writer has been led by mingling his thoughts with scripture.

Further, he will have a heart consciously cleansed, that is, a heart which reflects on its own state. Now a soul really delivered does not think of itself. What characterizes it, when it comes sensibly into God's presence is, that it has not to think of itself, but can think of God and the Lord Jesus. Coming into the light, if the flesh has been allowed to act, forces the soul to think of itself, yet not of conscious holiness, but of the evil allowed, which is not according to the light, to purge it. All this again practically lowers Christian privilege, and fills with self. The mischief arising from taking consciousness, not the word, for a guide is found in page 71.

There is no such uncertainty in scripture. Having been in the third heaven only awakened pride in the flesh, and called for a messenger of Satan to buffet it—not, remark, to put it down or to cleanse it when arisen, but to prevent its arising. It was there in the flesh ready to rise. This mistake, I doubt not, was the origin of Wesleyan perfection. The writer seeks to avoid it, but by pleading scripture is speaking generally to consciousness, not searching what it says on the matter. “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and these are contrary one to the other.”

As regards the incidents (mentioned in pages 74, etc.), it is only uniformly overcoming the world. Against overcoming and uniformly overcoming I have not a word. The second (p. 77) is only victory.

On chapter 7 I have no remark save its connection with others as its groundwork. I quite agree that we should not expect to sin again. The illustration cases (chapters 1 and 2) prove nothing but that there is deliverance from captivity to sin by being dead to it, according to Romans 8, Galatians 2— a point I should earnestly insist on. The third case is professedly deliverance according to Romans 8, which is not the doctrine of cleansing but of being made free. Nor do the others give further light on the point.

But it is right I should speak of my positive estimate of the truth, and not merely comment on another. There is a deliverance, a liberty wherewith Christ makes us free, which is other than forgiveness and the joy that may accompany it, and which is often felt to be experimentally a mightier change than the first discovery of mercy and conversion to God. The Epistle to

the Romans treats distinctly of these two things. First, propitiation and forgiveness of sins—justification from all the first Adam produces—through Christ's being delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification, and the blessed grace which has thus given us a portion with God, and given us to joy in Him. This closes with chapter 5:11.

Then comes the state of the sinner by one man's disobedience, what we are and where we are, not guilt from what we have done. We are in the flesh. The quickening power of God does not deliver. It works the desire of holiness and shews us the necessity of it; but the flesh works still. To this the law which requires righteousness from us directly applies. The remedy for this is not the same as for guilt and sins, though it be still Christ's death. There it was Christ bearing our sins in His own body on the tree, making propitiation, purging us from them before God. But the remedy for the power of sin in us, our state as in the flesh before God, is taking us out of it, our having been crucified with Christ. We have part in righteousness by having part in death. If we have part in death, we shall not live on. We are, by the Holy Ghost given to us, in Christ, not in the flesh. It is a new state and place, not the forgiveness of the sins of the old; as Israel not only escaped judgment by the blood on their doorposts, when God was a judge, but were wholly out of Egypt at the Red Sea, where God was a deliverer. So we are not only secured from judgment, but out of the flesh, sin, and the world when through the work of Christ we have received the Spirit through faith. We are not only born again, but have put off the old man, have been crucified with Christ, are dead; our life is hid with Christ in God. The Christ who

has become my life, the new I—which lives to God and to Him only—has died, and I reckon myself dead. It is a mistake to say, when we are emptied of self, we can thus live. It is as alive from the dead that we yield ourselves to God as truly free.

The doctrine of this is in Romans 6; the practical process by which we arrive at it is in chapter 7, a humbling process, as it always is (though it may be modified by the knowledge of forgiveness), under law, the first husband, where a state is required, which we are not in. The flesh is not subject to the law of God, nor can be. We discover then our state, what the flesh is—not guilt. “I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing “; next through divine teaching that it is “not I but sin that dwelleth in me”; but then that it is too strong for me, that I am captive to the law of sin in my members.

This is clearly not the Christian state at all, but a renewed soul under law. It does not say that the flesh is in me, but that I am captive to it, sold under sin. I am there, though it be not I, and cannot get out. But this is my state under the first husband, law. Death dissolves this bond. I have died in Christ, I have been crucified with Him, and power in the life of the risen Christ is now my portion, the flesh reckoned dead, and I alive to God in Christ. Consequently it is not when brought to be empty of self I am filled with the Spirit, but when brought to find self or flesh wholly evil and that I cannot get rid of it or get the victory over it. When I have learned that I have no strength as well as that I am ungodly (a point much harder to learn and more humbling), then I find I am delivered, having died in Christ to sin, and the flesh, and the law withal. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, Christ risen, hath

made me free from the law of sin and death. I am not a slave or captive, but free. What the law could not do, being weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin (a sacrifice for sin), has condemned sin in the flesh—not forgiven it. But when it was condemned, death was; so that, while the condemnation has been carried out in Christ, it is for faith dead since He is; and now the power of life in Him risen is that in which I live, dead to sin and alive to God, not in Adam or flesh at all, but in Christ.

Now being wholly free I can yield myself to God as one alive from the dead. I reckon myself dead as regards the flesh and alive in Christ only. I am not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if the Spirit of God, given on cleansing by the blood, dwell in me; and if Christ be in me, the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. Thus there is not any reason for ever having even an evil thought. Sin has no dominion over me. I am not a debtor to the flesh; and, being set free in the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, I am able (for Christ's power is there) to hold the flesh for dead. There is no reason why one single thought in my mind should come from the flesh, or from anything but the life of Christ, which is in me in the power of the Spirit. There is no excuse if such do arise.

There are two elements in this state: having put off the old man and put on the new, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness; and having the Holy Ghost dwelling in me. Hence God's way of acting is my measure of good, Christ, God manifest in a man, being the expression and model of this. I have perfect liberty in divine favour, loved as Christ was loved, and knowing it; and I may and ought to be occupied with what is

revealed in Him, my affections being engaged there, and I filled with the Spirit.

But as this is a state of dependence, diligent seeking of grace alone can keep us thus, and in fact in many things we all offend. But my normal state is not grieving the Spirit, and so in God's presence, being able to think of Him and not of self. No state here is the object of the saint. He is not alive in the world, and he looks, having this life, to be conformed to Christ in glory, and if he thinks of himself at all, it is only to judge himself. But I believe—in complete deliverance from the law of sin which is in our members—that I am called to be filled with the Spirit, which would not allow thoughts from the flesh to arise in the mind, nor anything that would soil the conscience, but would make us live in the atmosphere of the divine presence. The practical realizing of this is by always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus; and thus God helps us by delivering us to death by trial that this may be fully made good; 2 Cor. 4.

I allow therefore no captivity to sin, no dominion of it. This, even when hopeless as to getting the victory, we find to be ours in Christ; and there all has to come from the Spirit, and all is fulness of joy with God. But this is carried out first by knowing, when hopeless as to victory over the flesh, that we have died in Christ, and then by always bearing about His dying, death still working in us, that the life only of Christ may be manifested.

"So that ye cannot do the things that ye would" is utterly false in Galatians 5. It should be "in order that ye may not do."

But there is complete deliverance from the whole power of sin, we reckoning ourselves dead, and undistracted enjoyment of divine favour in the relationship in which Christ is. The only normal state of the Christian then is unclouded fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ, and the uninterrupted manifestation of the life of Christ in his body, and (when in God's presence) not having to think of sin in himself, but freedom to think of God and what He is. He is divinely free through and in Christ. But he has no thought of a present state of perfection or of purity (only the Spirit is ungrieved and has not to make him think of himself); for his only owned state is conformity to Christ in glory, God having wrought him for that selfsame thing, in virtue of which he purifies himself as He is pure; and if he does think of himself, he has the consciousness of his not being like Christ as he would, but is glad to have to think of Christ only. But purifying himself is not consciousness that he is pure. His conversation is in heaven, his motives there, and hence necessarily, if he thinks of himself, the consciousness of shortcoming, though he be not troubled by any present thought of sin, but is able to think of Christ. A return to think of himself is for him already failure.

Yours,

J.N.D.

Brief Remarks on “An Address For The Promotion Of Scriptural Holiness”

[“The Southern Ohio Association for the Promotion of Scriptural Holiness does not believe, nor teach, that either by nature or through imparted grace can an absolutely sinless life be realized on earth. Whether tried by the commandment of God, which is ‘exceeding broad,’ or the example of the Lord Jesus Christ, the most holy human being is, through infirmity, ignorance, and faulty judgment, in God’s sight, found full of short-comings and imperfections, and constantly needing the application of the cleansing blood. Neither do we believe that mortals ever attain to a position beyond which there is no progress or improvement, for we are taught that even after the redeemed come to ‘a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ,’ they have yet to ‘grow up into him in all things which is the head, even Christ’ (Eph. 4:13, 15), and will evermore be ‘pressing forward to the mark,’ and, beholding the glory of the Lord, be ‘changed into the same image from glory to glory.’

“We accordingly declare that the names and phrases current in connection with our work, such as the higher Christian life, entire sanctification, perfect love, full salvation, Christian perfection, and the like, are not used in any opposite or contrary sense, but as having a meaning consistent with the truth we have just affirmed.

“This much being said to remove misapprehension and prejudice, we proceed to say that we do hold, and endeavour in humility and love to teach, that there is to be found in the Lord Jesus Christ habitual victory over

known sin; whether in the grosser forms, which men can see in one another, or in the more subtle shapes of pride, envy, discontent, ambition, covetousness, animosity, or selfishness, which may be known only to ourselves and to God; that it is the privilege (and therefore the duty) of each Christian to say with Paul,' I know nothing against myself' (1 Cor. 4:4), and of all of us, to be able with him to call God and all who see us to witness how 'holily, justly, and unblameably we behave ourselves among them that believe'; with Enoch to have the testimony that we 'please God'; with John to have an uncondemning heart; and with Peter, and the Gentiles to whom he preached, to rejoice in the possession of a pure heart, created through faith by the 'falling' of the Holy Ghost. (Acts 10:44; ch. 11:15; ch. 15:8, 9.)

"The particular proposition which we all, without regard to denominational connection, unite in affirming, is a definite and distinct work of the Spirit in the human soul, subsequent and in addition to regeneration or conversion. 'The promise of the Father,' which came upon the disciples at Pentecost, had been spoken of by the Lord Jesus in such terms as shew unmistakably that it was for every one who would keep His words (John 14:16-23), and Peter, in explaining the Pentecostal baptism to the wondering multitudes, declared that they also might receive the same, and that the promise was to them and their children, and 'to all that were afar off, even as many as the Lord our God should call.' The apostles were converted before this; they knew the Spirit (John 14:17), and the 'gift of the Holy Ghost' was an additional privilege and blessing, given of God to be the distinguishing characteristic of Christian experience

during the dispensation which then began (John 7:39), and continues until now.

“Many of us believe that we find this truth taught in the scriptures, not merely as the baptism of the Holy Ghost, or the coming of the Comforter, but also as the revealing of the Son in us (Gal. 3:26; ch. 4:19; ch. 1:16; John 14:20); the mighty strengthening of the Spirit (Eph. 3:14, et seq.); dying and rising again (Rom. 6:35; ch. 8:11, 13; ch. 7:4; Col. 2:12; ch. 3:3); obtaining the glory of Christ (John 17:22, 23; 2 Thess. 2:13, 14); overcoming (Rev. 2:17; ch. 3:12; 1 John 2:13, 14; Gen. 32:28); the sealing of the Spirit (Acts 19:2, 3, 6; Eph. 1:13, 14; 2 Cor. 1:21, 22); and in type in the Old Testament, as the crossing of the river Jordan.

“The state into which souls are introduced by this experience many of us believe we find described in connection with such ideas as soul union with Jesus (Hos. 2:16, 19, 20; Rom. 7:4); abiding in Christ (John 15:4-9); sanctification or holiness (Ezek. 36:23-29); 1 Thess. 5:23, 24); full salvation (2 Thess. 3:35 1 Cor. 10:13); Christian (not sinless) perfection (Phil. 3:12, 15; 1 Cor. 2:6; Prov. 11:5; 2 Chron. 16:9; 1 Kings 15:14); heart purity (Acts 15:8, 9; 1 Pet. 1:22; 2 Tim. 2:22); the peace of God, as distinguished from peace with God (Phil. 4:6, 7); the anointing which abideth (1 John 2:27); being filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18, 20); the life more abundant (John 10:10; ch. 7:38, 39); following fully (Num. 14:24; Rev. 14:4); risen with Christ (Col. 2:12; ch. 3:1, 3); the life of faith (Gal. 2:20; Heb. 11:8, 13, 17); the rest of faith, or life in the land (Heb. 3:17, 19; ch. 4:3, 10, 11); the riches of full assurance (Col. 2:2); deliverance (Rom. 7:24, 25; 1 Cor. 15:57; Gal. 5:16); life in heavenly places (Eph. 1:3; ch. 2:6); dwelling in love (1

John 4:12, 16); the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ (Rom. 15:13, 29); walking with and pleasing God, or fellowship and communion (Col. 1:10; Heb. 11:55 1 John 3:22; Prov. 16:7; Psa. 147:11; 1 John 1:3-7; Heb. 13:20, 21).

“It will, of course, be understood that in this we are referring not so much to what God has done for us, as to what the Spirit does in us; not so much to standing as to state. As to the former, all God’s children are heirs of His, and ‘joint-heirs with Christ,’ and ‘blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places.’ All are ‘complete in him,’ and by Christ’s one offering are ‘perfected for ever’; but the realization is another thing, and it is of this that we speak. The least little one in the host of Israel was as truly in the land as Caleb and Joshua, but in a most important sense the little one did not enter into possession. We are speaking of the ‘apprehension of that for which we are apprehended’ (Phil. 3:12); the working of the Spirit by which we ‘may know what is the hope of Christ’s calling; the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and the exceeding greatness of his power to upward who believe,” Eph. 1:18, 19.”]

I have received the address of the Southern Ohio Association for the Promotion of Scriptural Holiness. My simple business here is to see whether this system is based on scriptural ground. I cannot say I believe in associations for holiness, unless it be the church of God; but I let that pass.

Imperfection is now admitted. It is “Christian, not sinless, perfection,” and the Christian is “full of shortcomings. An absolutely sinless life cannot be realized.” I wholly object to the distinction, as vaguely

allowing some measure of sin, and yet, speaking of perfection. It is founded on error.

My first remark is, that the system (and I beg attention to this) ignores the communication of what in itself is sinless life, a life that cannot sin, the seed of God in the soul, what is born of the Spirit and is spirit, the new man after God created in righteousness and true holiness. It is “nature or imparted grace.” A real being born again, the communication of a new life, the very starting-point of the Christian state (not standing), is supposed, and all depends on this.

Next, we are told that Christians “are constantly needing the application of the cleansing blood.” Now there is no such thought in scripture as a renewed application of the blood of cleansing. As to this, scripture tells us that without shedding of blood there is no remission: otherwise, the apostle tells us, Christ must have often suffered. But by one offering He has perfected for ever (eis to dienekes) them that are sanctified. There is in scripture no re-application of the blood to cleanse. That is, the two essential foundations of the Christian’s state before God are set aside. And we must remember that we are sanctified through the truth. The system is wrong in its first principles; it denies the two capital points of true Christianity.

The notion that after we come to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, we have to grow up into Him in all things, is assuredly not found in scripture, but is a simple absurdity. I am arrived at a perfect man, the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, and yet am to grow up farther! I suppose they may have founded it on some mystical sense of into; but

there is no ground for “into,” instead of “unto”; it is the same word as “to” a perfect man, “to” the measure.

The mere words in the second paragraph, though unscriptural, I do not speak of; but they are all founded on a totally false and unscriptural notion of the new birth, or rather are really the denial of it. “Perfect love” is in God, not in us; “full salvation” is only in glory.

That, as stated in paragraph third, habitual victory over known sin is found in the Lord Jesus Christ, I fully admit. “Rejoicing in the possession of a pure heart created through faith by the falling of the Holy Ghost,” is an utterly unscriptural way of putting the matter, and, as far as true, is true of all Christians. But it is not a definite and distinct work of the Spirit which was the promise, but His presence. It is for every one; but a person is not in the Christian state without it, and by it his body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which cannot be by any distinct work.

John 14:17 is quoted to prove that Christians knew the Spirit. This is all a mistake. Christ is speaking of the Comforter not yet come (see ver. 16); “dwelleth with you” is the same word as “abide.” Christ could not abide with them; this Comforter, when He was come, would, and be in them, which Christ could not then either. But the Lord is distinctly speaking of the Comforter not yet come. He is speaking in express terms of the gift of the Comforter. I admit, and insist on, the sealing as distinct from conversion and quickening. But all is confusion here. This sealing is not “revealing the Son in us.” The expression refers, as Paul uses it, to Christ’s making Himself known to him. He was sealed after that through Ananias laying his hands upon him. “Strengthened with

might by the Spirit" is the desire of the apostle for those who had received Him, as the apostle expressly declares; Eph. 1:13. "Dying and rising again" is our state in Christ, and belongs to all Christians.

The great mistake of this system is, that it makes an extraordinary mystical condition of what scripture speaks of as the only true Christian state; and so fills with thoughts of themselves those who think they have got it (possibly have been sealed). And further it is all man's will and heart, not grace and the power of the Holy Ghost, as is said indeed in this paper: "It is not of the mind, but a matter of the will and of the heart"; but of its being a matter of the Holy Ghost's presence and power, which makes a person to be of Christ, not a thought. The body is dead because of sin, the Spirit life because of righteousness, if Christ be in us; if not, we are none of His, if even like the prodigal on the way.

Dead and risen with Christ, and we in Christ, and Christ in us, is the Christian state; different from conversion, I admit, different from being born again; as the prodigal converted, repentant, and returning, was different from the prodigal with the best robe on him, and the ring on his hand, and then only fit to go into the house. We cannot be in Christ without Christ being in us. (See John 14:20; Rom. 8: 1, 9, 10.) One is standing, the other is state. Romans, however, does not give rising with Christ now as a present state, for this epistle looks on the man as an actual living man down here; Colossians does, but speaks of all Christians when it does.

"Obtaining the glory of Christ" now is a simple delusion. Our calling is above, in heaven, and when He shall

appear, we shall be like Him; we shall be glorified together.

To the rest of this paragraph I have no objection, save that it is mixing what is sober and scriptural with what is false and illusory, and thus discrediting all.

“Soul union with Jesus” is language unknown to scripture. “He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit,” and by the Spirit we know we are members of His body, and in Him, and He in us. Hosea 2:16, 19, 20, applies to Israel, and has no reference to “soul union.” In Romans 7:4 they have been betrayed by the word “married,” which is not in the original; and further this should have shewn them that it is a question of the Christian state; for till then those spoken of were in the flesh, not of Christ; and it is by the Holy Ghost dwelling in them that they are not in the flesh; Rom. 8:9.

“Abiding in Christ” no Christian can speak against; but it has nothing to do in John 15 with any special privilege. It was the duty of all, and applied then before the Holy Ghost was given. The same as to holiness; without it no man shall see the Lord. We are called to it; but Ezekiel 36:23-29 refers first to Israel, and then, according to John 3, to the new birth; 1 Thessalonians 5:23, 24 to the Christian’s whole walk in holiness, and no special gift—“full salvation.” These quotations are a general wish for all Christians; and the fact that God will not let us be tempted beyond our force (1 Cor. 10:13) is a blessed truth, but common to all saints. Neither of the quotations has anything to do with full salvation.

As to Christian perfection, perfect (teleios) means “full grown,” translated in Hebrews 5, “of full age.” But the passage in Philippians 3 just shews the falseness of this

view. This perfection the apostle had not attained—sinless or Christian. Our strangely deluded friends may think they are beyond him; they cannot be surprised if others demur to such a pretension. But he tells us what it is—the resurrection from among the dead, and winning Christ in glory; his calling was (ano) above, heavenly glory, and nothing else. And "perfect" means, when applied now, the knowledge not merely that our sins are forgiven, but that we are in Christ, having this new place with the second Man in glory, the mystery which God ordained before the world to our glory, as is expressly said in 1 Corinthians 2:7.

"Heart purity" I have not a word to say against, only that there is nothing peculiar in it; but it is attributed to receiving the truth, to faith, or to all faithful Christians, in the decay of the church.

What is said of the "peace of God" is a mere blunder. It is of the peace in which God is Himself. The passage speaks in respect of our cares, which we bring to Him, and His peace keeps our hearts, not our hearts keep it. It is a direction to all Christians.

The "anointing which abideth," presented as a special experience, is expressly, and with purpose, spoken of babes in Christ, in contrast with advanced Christians, to encourage them against seducers. "Being filled with the Spirit" is an exhortation addressed to all Christians, because they all had it. If they had not, they were none of Christ's; Rom. 8:9. And this I would press; for it is the grand and mischievous mistake of all these Christians. They give as extraordinary, and an acquisition of their own, what scripture teaches as the only true Christian place of any. I admit the low state of the Christian

church has given occasion to this; but our bodies being the temple of the Holy Ghost is given as a motive for the avoidance of the lowest and grossest sin.

“Life more abundantly” is again a true and blessed thing, but the only true Christian life. I do not deny that multitudes do not realize it, and that insisting on this is most profitable. My objection here is not to the fact, but to its being mixed with false pretensions and errors which discredit it.

So again of “following fully”; it is the duty clearly of all Christians. Christ is all, and they should walk as He walked— do this one thing—have no other motive for anything.

John 7:33, 39 is stated of all believers, characterizing the dispensation of the Spirit, if I may so call it. John 3 gives birth by the Spirit; chapter 4, communion in the power of eternal life; chapter 7, the Spirit flowing out in spiritual blessings to others, in contrast with Christ’s presence in the world.

The “life of faith” is the only Christian life.

“Risen with Christ” (Col. 3) is clearly of all Christians. Press its realization; you cannot do better.

The “rest of faith” is all a delusion; we are in the fight and labour of faith now, being told (in the passage referred to) that there remains a rest, and that we must labour to enter into it. It is the object of the passage (Heb. 4) to shew that Christians are not in it. It is said that believers are those who enter in, but not that they are entered. Life in the land shews the absurdity of it, for our land is heaven, and we are not there. And the

passage insists on those in the land not having the promised rest.

The citation of Hebrews 4, though wrong, they may be excused, for many take it falsely thus, but to quote chapter 3 is too bad. “The riches of full assurance” might be passed over too, only that it marks the excessively careless and unintelligent use of scripture. In Colossians 2:2 it is the “full assurance of understanding to the acknowledgment of the mystery,” etc., and refers only to being guarded from philosophy and vain deceit by sound divinely-given knowledge. There are full assurance of faith and hope (Heb. 10:22; chap. 6:11); on this they may rightly insist. What they quote has nothing to do with the matter.

Deliverance (Rom. 8) is all right. It is what is the real truth in the high pretensions made by them, and mysticised.

“Dwelling in love” is all right: only (though it may be more or less realised, a matter of real importance) it is expressly said of everyone who confesses that Jesus is the Son of God. “The fulness of the blessing of the gospel” is the character of Paul’s visit to Rome. The rest are all well, but the duty and privilege of every Christian.

I have omitted “life in heavenly places,” Eph. 1:3; chap. 2:6. Both places refer to the Christian position as such. The first says nothing of how far it is realised; it is simply God’s thoughts about Christians in contrast with Jews: Christians are blessed in that way. The second is a careful statement of the position of all Christians or Gentiles.

The use of “apprehension,” taken from Philippians 3, shews only a mixture of ignorance and carelessness. Apprehension is just laying hold of that for which Christ has laid hold of us; that is, heavenly glory, resurrection from among the dead, the changing of our vile body. So Paul tells us that he had not attained it. The present state was “conversation in heaven”; the unattained was “the calling above.” There were professors who had their mind on earthly things; but their end, as such, was destruction. It is utterly false that what he was pressing after was anything down here. Paul states the contrary, and it is the folly of mysticism to pretend it has apprehended what Paul had not. The addition of “apprehended of Christ “ought to have shewn them that the word could not have any spiritual signification. Was Paul spiritually apprehended by Christ?

The passage in Ephesians 1:18, 19 is falsely quoted, and only so can be misapplied. It is God’s calling, and God’s inheritance (an inheritance which the chapter expressly declares we have not yet got): the Spirit is the earnest of it. God’s calling is in verses 3-5. How far it is realised in spirit now actually, when we are in the state to which we are called by God, is not touched on. It is simply what the calling is, which he desires they may all know.

It is really a weariness to discuss quotations made with no attention to the mind of God, and applied nearly all of them falsely to what they in no way refer to in the text. Knowledge is not everything; but when persons set about to teach, they ought to have respect for God’s word and acquaintance with it. I reject their views. There is a setting aside of the true Christian state (not standing) which I believe most mischievous, turning what God states of it into an experience of which they

can boast, an art they have learned, an expression they specially approve of. I believe Christians are in a low state; but they hinder their deliverance by connecting it with error, and by the abuse of scripture taken apart from the context, and the mind of Christ revealed in it. Receiving the divine mind from the word of God is not theory, or calling anything by a right or wrong name. Theory is neglecting it for men's experience.

I have thought the best and most useful thing to do was to analyse briefly their use of scripture, and to see, thus far, what their statements are worth. They substitute a work of the Spirit and their experience according to a low human theology, for the presence of the Holy Ghost and the revealed state of Christians according to the word. According to scripture a man is in the flesh, if the Holy Spirit does not dwell in him. This gives the deliverance they speak of, and Christian universal responsibility flows from it.

Dr. Bonar On Christ's Work

121

Dr. Bonar's book was sent to me, I know not by whom, with some passages marked. I send you the notes I made in reading it, for this is all that which follows pretends to be, though reviewing the work. The importance of the doctrine in question will justify my taking it up.

"The altar is the only place of expiation, and it is death that is the wages of sin" (p. 37). "Justified by His blood is the apostolic declaration; and, as the result of this, saved from wrath through him. Here we rest… It is at and by the cross that God justifies the ungodly. By His stripes we are healed, and the symbol of the brazen serpent visibly declares this truth. It was the serpent when uplifted that healed the deadly bite" (p. 38). "Reconciled to God by the death of His Son, is another of the many testimonies to the value and efficacy of the cross… The peace was made by the blood of the cross… What can be more explicit than these three passages, which announce justification by the blood, reconciliation by the death, and peace by the blood of the cross?" (P. 39). "This sweet savour came from the brazen altar, or altar of burnt-offering. It was the sweet odour of that sacrifice that ascended to God and that encompassed the worshipper, so that he was covered all over with this sacrificial fragrance, presenting him perfect before God, and making his own conscience feel that he was accepted as such, and treated as such" (p. 40). "In so far, then, as substitution is concerned we have to do with the cross alone" (p. 41). "The justifying fact—the

death of Him whose name is Jehovah our righteousness" (p. 79). Compare also page 219.

Thus speaks Dr. Bonar, and justly and well as far as it goes. But who would have thought that these are the statements of a book, one main object of which is to prove that it is not so, but that Christ was a sin-bearer all His life, and our presentation perfect before God depended upon His sin-bearing all His life, and that He only finished that work upon the cross? "They who own the doctrine of Christ suffering for sin, the just for the unjust, will listen to those bitter cries (those uttered during His life), as to the very voice of the Substitute, and learn from them the completeness of the work of satisfaction, for the accomplishment of which He took our flesh, and lived our life, and died our death upon the tree. But the completeness of the substitution comes out more fully at the cross… Then the work was done, 'It is finished.'" (p. 36).

Now it is quite true that in the previous quotations, except the last and more important one from page 79, Dr. B. is resisting justification by resurrection (an idea I never heard of till I saw it in this book, and which has no sense if speaking of the value of the thing in itself). But in his zeal against this imaginary enemy, he has, I hope with his true and better feelings of faith, declared that, by the cross and blood and death of Christ only, we are justified and reconciled. The rest of his substitutory work is then only studied theology, not personal faith.

As to argument, Dr. B. so mixes up one truth with another, is guilty of such excessive carelessness, and exhibits such incapacity for seeing, not only what another says, but the force of what he says himself, and,

I am afraid I must say, such ignorance of scripture on the subject, that it is difficult to deal with his reasonings. Christ's bearing our sins and our dying with Christ are confounded together; law and Christ's suffering life: accounting righteous or guilty is substitution; the actual transfer of guilt turns out to be only something available for everybody. But into these I will enter.

I regret to have to notice his book in such a way, for he pleads real and full atonement, and the need of it is as against rationalists, and assurance of salvation, if not in the clearest way, yet so honestly and fully that I should regret sincerely anything that might weaken his arguments as to this. But he has so lowered the gospel, so hidden God's love in "courts of law," though not denying it, so confounds propitiation and substitution, and so totally does away the real value of the latter by his missing altogether and falsifying its true character, that I feel it well to take it up and review his book. He has accepted, I see, the force of anenegke: so we may hope for acceptance of other truths; but he has not learned to be more careful in other statements. Let us see if a review of them may lead him on here too.

That Luther may have taken up imputing legal righteousness, as others did, may be all true. But, though he admits doubts and distress come from law, that he never knew real deliverance from it his famous treatise on Galatians clearly proves, as other parts of his life and his death. But Dr. B.'s "Luther's Rock, the righteousness of God," is an unhappy blunder. He carefully excluded the word from his translation of the New Testament. He always puts, "the righteousness available before God," Die Gerechtigkeit die vor Gott gilt: an unwarrantable and mischievous change which

destroys the whole nature and character of the scriptural statement. Luther was an eminent instrument of God in His work: we have all to be thankful for it. But the word of God is above all price.

Dr. B.'s style is full of effort, and tedious by repetition, and turgid, sometimes descending very low in the effort, as when he says, "Possessed of this preciousness (imputed, still ours), we go into the heavenly market and buy what we need without stint. We get everything upon the credit of His name… In His name we carry on all our transactions with God." But my business is with doctrine, not with words. And it seems to me that the whole tone of the book falsifies, even where there is truth mixed up, the entire presentation of the gospel in scripture.

Besides making of substitution a false and inefficacious unreality, the bringing the questions into God's courts of law is an idea wholly foreign to the scriptures. That law has been established by faith—that Christ has magnified it and made it honourable—is most true; but scripture does not describe the gospel as bringing men into courts of law. There is a solemn bringing in of unrepentant sinners into a court of judgment hereafter (yea, all shall give an account of themselves), and there is a reconciling of persons now: Dr. B. speaks of neither. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. This is the very opposite of bringing them into courts of law. As such He was rejected, and the full sinfulness of man brought out. But it was mercy, not law, brought it out, the rejection of One come not to judge but to save.

With Israel some such figure might be used. He was in the way with them as an adverse party; but then the result was in government on earth and judgment. The nation was set aside (as it will be till it has paid the last farthing—and even then its restoration is sovereign grace), that the apostolic embassy of the gospel might go forth, still beseeching to be reconciled to God, and grace reign through righteousness. He who knew no sin was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. God is revealed as reconciling the world, or as beseeching men to be reconciled, Christ having been made sin for us, not bringing them into His courts of law.

The notion that He of whom it is said, “who knew no sin,” is God as such, and that He was made sin in incarnation, which is Dr. B.’s interpretation, is too monstrous and too offensive as well as absurd to need reply. God has made God, who as God did not know sin, to become sin by being a man: can any Christian taught of God receive such a thought? God does know sin perfectly: to apply it to His not knowing it in conscience is blasphemy; to affirm it of One who was in the likeness of sinful flesh is of vital importance. “Which of you convinceth me of sin?” In Him is no sin. Is God’s making God become sin (vicariously of course, I admit) any better? The Lord declares He comes to do God’s will and that His law is in His heart. It was the Lamb, the spotless Lamb, the victim that was made sin.

Nor does scripture speak of God or the Father making the Word become flesh. Jehovah prepared a body. Then He says, Lo, I come, in the same willing and blessed love. It is an interpretation which outrages all spiritual intelligence. I should call it blasphemous, but that I am

sure Dr. B. has no such intention. He is blind to the force of what he says; but it falsifies the whole force of God's coming into the world in grace, making Himself of no reputation (ekenosen eauton), when the Word made flesh dwelt among us full of grace and truth. This for Dr. B. is only Christ, the law, and we, when willing to go too, brought into courts of law to judge about the case! Besides, if this took place in the life of Christ, why have ambassadors? If it referred to Christ's death and His then going away, it required others to announce it.

The whole force of the passage in every aspect is set aside by this ruinous idea. It is miserable doctrine; and Dr. B.'s mind does not rest on the reconciliation of the sinner (I may say not at all, even in result; for it is only available to him: he is not reconciled). "Law and love must be reconciled" (p. 4). "The reconciliation God has accomplished"; and, as man's consent is required, the reconciliation God has accomplished must be effected before that. Man did not consent to this way of reconciliation when accomplished, save in rejecting and crucifying Christ. "God has done it all, and He has done it effectually and irreversibly,… He has done it by removing the whole case into His own courts of law… God comes into court bringing man and man's whole case along with Him, that, upon righteous principles and in a legal way, the case may be settled at once in favour of man and in favour of God." Now this not only gives a representation of this matter of which there is no trace in scripture, and falsifies the character of the gospel; but it is alike absurd and misleading. Who is judge of the court? Nor is this all. Man is brought into court; but, in reconciling law and love, no individual man at all is

reconciled. It is the reconciliation, not of a sinner, but of law and love. Perhaps no man may accept it.

“The consent of parties to the acceptance of the basis is required in court “(p. 6). Now where was this reconciliation of law and love on the cross? Man was only accomplishing his sin there, yet there law and love were reconciled. When the whole thing is settled, man’s consent is asked—to what? To a reconciliation already accomplished? God, we were told in page 5, has done it all; and He has done it effectually and irreversibly. Done what? “Reconciled law and love” (p. 4). But here there is no substitution, or anyone reconciled: God has done it all before man has accepted anything. It is an accomplished thing, all done, finished, and yet no man reconciled; so that it is no reconciliation of persons at all. What was the principle of the work? “Transference of guilt, from one who could not bear the penalty without being eternally lost, to One who could bear it” (p. 17), and again the transference of the wrath from the sinner to the representative (p. 21); and so often. Now whose guilt was transferred? the wrath resting on what sinners was transferred to the representative?

Substitution is never spoken of in this vague way in scripture. All through, Dr. B. confounds propitiation and substitution. Substitution is one taking really the place of another; reconciling law and love has nothing to do with substitution. Was anything substituted for law or for love? Clearly not. They were both maintained and glorified. Were then everybody’s sins transferred to Christ? If so, all are saved, or His having borne the wrath due to them is ineffectual and reversible. The whole argument of the book shews Dr. B. has confounded substitution which does suppose

transference of guilt and crime from the guilty to another, a substitution of one person for another, as when a debt is paid (the illustration Dr. B. gives); while propitiation is to Godward. But one passage will suffice to shew this confusion. “God has introduced the principle of substitution into His courts … presenting a divine surety as a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are passed.” Here they are clearly treated as one and the same thing.

Now on the great day of atonement there was Jehovah’s lot and the people’s lot. The blood of Jehovah’s lot was put on the mercy-seat. God’s righteousness and love, and majesty and truth, all that He is, were perfectly glorified. Besides this, there was the scapegoat, both goats representing Christ in the same great sacrifice; but the high priest represented the people, and their sins were confessed on the head of the goat, and carried away, never to be found. Now here there was representation, transfer, substitution, and the work was effectual for those represented. In scripture all is simple and clear; and though in the mere shadow only for the year, yet it was effectual and irreversible. Substitution is simple and intelligible; the sins were confessed on the head of the goat, the people’s sins, and they were gone. But in Dr. B.’s substitution the man may not consent, many alas! (we know) do not. Were their sins transferred to the Substitute and the wrath borne effectually and irreversibly, and yet they reject Christ and die in their sins? Dr. B.’s substitution is no substitution at all, for nobody’s sins were really borne, and no people really represented. Christ is a propitiation for the whole world; but this is Jehovah’s lot, the blood, in which God has

been perfectly glorified in all He is, presented to God and accepted of Him. Now, says the Lord, is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him; and if God be glorified in Him, God shall also glorify Him in Himself, and shall straightway glorify Him. And so it was and is.

Propitiation is presenting to a holy God what the righteousness and holiness of that God necessarily claim, while infinite love has provided, and infinite love has offered, the spotless sacrifice.

Substitution is for people whom the substitute represents; it is one man or person substituted for another, and taking actually the consequences of the conduct or position of him whom he represents. I speak merely of the meaning of substitution, not of the value of the Substitute, as Dr. B. says. The propitiation refers to the holy righteous nature and glory of God (and Dr. B. cannot too earnestly insist on its necessity); substitution, to those whose place Christ has taken. He was substituted for them and took the consequence in sovereign grace; and they are saved. He cannot charge as a judge the sins which He has Himself borne and expiated on those for whom He Himself has already borne them.

But not only does Dr. B. confound these two great scripture truths, but a third with them, namely, our dying with Christ, which scripture applies to quite another purpose. (See page 42.) Probably Dr. B. has never learned to make the difference between sin and sins (so clear in the Epistle to the Romans, on which indeed its whole structure depends): one referring to actual guilt, what we have done; the other to our lost estate, what we are.

But at any rate, “The transference of our guilt to the divine Substitute, and the transference of that Substitute’s righteousness or perfection to us, must stand or fall together” (p. 29). When then a man’s guilt has been transferred to Christ, he becomes the righteousness of God; yet the man may after all not consent and dies in his sins, though the righteousness of God is transferred to him! If it be said, man was represented in Christ, and He consented—consented to the transfer, then our consent is immaterial; and we are not brought into court, and saved all with no consent at all.

But now see the frail and inconsistent statement of Dr. B. “The one man’s offence rests upon all men to condemnation, so the one man’s righteousness, as the counteraction or removal of this condemnation, is available and efficacious unto justification of life.” Now he has changed the passage.122 “Rests upon” in the first clause is exactly the same expression in Greek as is “available “in the second. And why this? And still more, if transference of guilt involves transference of righteousness, how is it only “available”? If it be said, yes; but the substitution is not efficacious unless it be accepted; then there was no real transference of guilt. If it is transferred and gone and if He has suffered, it is irreversible. The truth is, it is a denial of real substitution, and substitution is confounded with propitiation. The whole teaching is confusion and darkness; for Dr. B. tells us that substitution is the transference of the penalty from him who had incurred it to one who had not. How is this available for any, if the penalty have not been transferred? If it have, why not effectual for all by a judicial process, a legal title?

But I will follow some of the details of Dr. B. on the subject, and we shall see the inconceivable carelessness as to scripture, and how little he seems to weigh anything he says. I can only account for it by excessive confidence in his own thoughts. Victory over our great enemy was not by substitution. The perfect work of Christ and His death gave Him a title to annul the power of Satan; but it was not as substituted for any one.

In all the other examples we shall find there is personal appropriation, not an available means in the air. Jehovah accepted Abel and his offering. The typical victim was set between a known person and God. It was 'Abel's substitute,' but not something in the air available to some one who might accept it; in which case transference of penalty is an absurdity, as then the one to whom the penalty is due is relieved by its being transferred. Noah and Abraham are in the came case: only in Abraham's we have an example of the carelessness I speak of. There was no "consumption of Abraham's sacrifice by the divine fire," but quite a different thing: a burning lamp and a smoking furnace passed between the pieces—a well-known form of covenant engagement in Israel, and the covenant was of the land to Israel. If Dr. B. would seek excuse from a confusion with the sacrifice of Isaac, it is in vain. There we read, "Behold the fire and the wood, but where," etc. In the passover those in the house were preserved. Dr. B.'s account of the sacrifices I cannot go into in detail: it would carry me too far; but there is the same inaccuracy. Remark only that, as to the burnt-offering, all is confusion. It is the perfection of the substitute presented in the room of our imperfections. A substitute for whom? If it was penalty transferred, whose penalty?

But what is more important, blood was shed, atonement was made. It is not merely that He loved God instead of us. This is not atonement by blood. No doubt the Substitute was perfect, but it was where He was made sin, glorifying God there. Imperfection is a strange word. The mind of the flesh is enmity against God. But why the perfection of the substitute only when Christ's blood-shedding is prefigured? For whom was He a substitute? In the meat-offering, save in the case of the extreme poor, there was no atonement. Nor is there a statement of God's feeding on it; in the peace-offering there is; Lev. 3:2. The meat-offering is much more the perfection of the substitute: in the burnt-offering there was a victim with blood-shedding.

In the sin and trespass-offerings we are told that sin-offerings were for unconscious sins—sins of ignorance; trespass-offerings, for conscious and wilful sins. This is a mistake. All the trespass-offerings in chapter 5 are sins of ignorance unless verse 1. The only cases not of ignorance are wrongs done to a neighbour, when, besides the offering, he was to restore it and a fifth part more. All this shews how careless and superficial all the statements are.

As to the explanation of the drink-offering, I confess it is beyond me. Dr. B. connects it with the Lord's blood being drink indeed: why, I know not; and my reader may remark how in all this the perfection of the substitute is put for substitution. For what was the drink-offering a substitution? or how was it transferred penalty?

And now note the effect in the presentation of the gospel. It is not that precious blood is on the mercy seat, that God hath set Him forth to be a propitiation through

faith in His blood. It is this principle of substitution. “And as He [God] acts on it in receiving us; so does He invite us to act in coming to Him.” That is, the guilt of him who is invited has been transferred to the substitute, and so righteousness transferred to those guilty, so that it is not a sinner that is invited as such. Who can tell that to an unbelieving sinner, in order to his coming to God? I must tell it evidently to every sinner, and every sinner is certainly saved, and righteousness is transferred to him. Christ was raised, according to Dr. B., because that sinner had been justified by the cross; for so Dr. B. translates the passage. “It is this truth the gospel embodies, and it is this that we preach.” The belief of this gospel is eternal life; and yet it is only available. I repeat my question; was the guilt really transferred or not? Was Christ a substitute for every sinner to whom Dr. B. preaches, so that all his guilt was transferred to Christ? If so, he has already none; nay more, Christ’s righteousness is transferred to him before I invite him, and it is effectual and irreversible.

In speaking of chapter 3 I feel the need of care not to offend when the solemn, deeply solemn, subject of the sufferings of the blessed Lord is before us. It is unpleasant to speak of the folly and contradictions of man’s thoughts when what ought to move our inmost soul occupies us. But mischief and contradiction are there, the deep sense of wrath and of the curse is lost and trifled with, and man’s rejection turned into God’s forsaking and wrath. It is a medley which on such a subject offends—I am afraid I must say, disgusts. Sufferings in which we are called to follow Christ, and take a part, are confounded with that in which He was

really a substitute, the perfection of Christ's obedience confounded with the part of bearing sin, because the being made sin took place in that in which the perfection of His obedience was accomplished.

I have already noticed the contradictions which flow from Dr. B.'s reasoning against the dream of his own mind that some make the act of resurrection to have worth for justifying. Then he insists earnestly that the blood, the cross, death alone does, assuring us (p. 41) that "so far as substitution is concerned we have to do with the cross only"; and this in a chapter which is written to prove that He entered our world as the substitute, that "His vicarious life began in the manger … His sin-bearing had begun (pp. 26, 27), that He was circumcised and baptized as a substitute (pp. 29, 30); He was always the sinless One bearing our sins" (p. 32); that the Psalms in their confessions of sins are the distinctest proof of His work as the substitute, that is, during His life; that God's wrath and anger were then upon Him (p. 34), yet that the completeness of the substitution comes out more fully at the cross. There the whole burden pressed upon Him, and the wrath of God took hold upon Him (p. 34); yet He does not speak of the cross when He says, I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted; or when He says, Thy fierce wrath goeth over me, Thy terrors have cut me off (p. 32).

I have discussed all these Psalms fully elsewhere, and only state Dr. B.'s self-contradictions here. But when a person says that Christ was a substitute and shed His blood when He was circumcised, it is difficult (when we think of the wrath of God against our sin, which made the blessed Saviour sweat great drops of blood in only thinking of it beforehand and then drinking the cup we

had filled for Him with our sins) to hinder oneself from expressing one's feelings at the cold and idle trifling. But we must speak of the general principle. Dr. B. makes His sufferings from man His being a substitute for us in bearing God's wrath. "For what can this poverty mean, this rejection by man, this outcast condition, but that the sin-bearing had begun?" (p. 27). Now Christ's outcast place we may partake of with Him. If we suffer with Him, we shall reign with Him. His disciples were not of the world, as He was not of the world. "If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you."

But what has all this to do with substitution? Was He born in a manger that we might be spared it? He was circumcised as the substitute, and this was "inexplicable "save on the supposition that even in infancy He was the vicarious One, not indeed bearing sin in the full sense and manner in which He bore it on the cross (for without death sin-bearing could not be consummated) but still bearing it in measure according to the condition of His years (p. 29)! Only think; it leads to doubt whether Dr. B. has any serious idea of what sin deserves, or what the wrath and the curse really is, and that the wages of sin is death. Bearing sin in measure according to the condition of His years! But His sufferings from man are always distinguished from His drinking the cup. See Psalms 20, 21. Those bring wrath on man (if not repented of and blotted out); this is atonement and brings salvation. In Psalm 22 He appeals from man's violence and wrong to God, and there finds forsaking in the words He used, where He alone could express them; but then the result is all unmingled blessing because it was atonement, deeper at first but extending waves till it reached the whole earth, and the seed to be born

there. We are called on to suffer with Him, we read of filling up what was behind of the sufferings of Christ. Was atonement to be made—filled up—by any other? Circumcision in particular is not, in the Christian application of it, substitution; on the contrary, it is the putting off the body of the flesh, being dead to sin by Christ, not His bearing sin for us.

But the whole principle of a sin-bearing life is false. It is sin-bearing to no purpose; for without shedding of blood is no remission. He came to give His life a ransom for many; His taking it was not the ransom. Dr. B. now admits that anenegke refers to the cross. Where is apenegke used as to sins in His lifetime? He through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God. But here we have the man, the spotless victim, offering Himself, not becoming it in incarnation: that was no offering Himself by the eternal Spirit. It is for blood-shedding to purify.

He offered Himself (Heb. 9:14), and so verse 28 where it is expressly said to be (apax) once. So 1 Peter 3:18, “For Christ once (apax) suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh.” So Hebrews 10:10, “By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all,” and so He perfected the sanctified by one offering (p. 14).

It is certain, that till after Gethsemane, the blessed Lord had not taken the cup to drink, for then He prays that if possible He might not drink it. The trouble of soul then so deeply felt, and in a measure in John 12, demonstrates not (as Dr. B. would allege) sin-bearing then, but exactly the contrary, anticipation of a coming

hour of death, and being made a curse. In Gethsemane it is plain, but equally so in John 12. The coming up of the Greeks, bringing before His blessed mind the title of Son of man, brings into it at once the death needed in order that He should take it. “Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but, if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I to this hour. Father, glorify thy name.” Is it not evident that it was a specific hour—the hour of His death which was before Him, when He must die that the corn of wheat might not remain alone?

Dr. B. tells us Christ bore our iniquities up to, and on, the cross; for the former, having given up anenegke, he quotes nothing. There is nothing to quote. His only proof is making the contradiction of sinners the same thing as the wrath of God, and the miserable contemptible use of circumcision and the like. He quotes Isaiah 53, giving a new translation of some expressions, which seem to me unfounded, whoever is their author. Thus, verse 11, “he shall look upon,” etc., seems to me quite unwarranted, and the sentence to be justly translated, He shall see of the travail of His soul—that is, of the fruit of it. The words amal and min are simply this. Nor do I believe that “answerable” is the sense in verse 7. The English translation is right in both. The latter is an effort to bring Christ as answerable for sin during His life, but an unjustifiable one. His bearing our griefs and carrying our sorrows is applied to His healing—has nothing to do with righteousness. It shews He felt in His soul the burden of the sorrow He removed; and this is a most precious truth, as He groaned at the tomb of Lazarus when seeing the power of death on all around. But this

is not bearing sin. Nor did He become sick to take away our sickness.

As I am on translations, I will add, that raised again "because of" our justification, is an evil mistake—evil as to doctrine, for it shuts out faith from justifying, and falsifies chapter 5:1. Men (why not all?) would be justified before believing at all, consequently not by faith. Further, it is not the force of the Greek. Had it been, because we were justified, it would most assuredly have been dia to dikaiothenai emas, which only comes in chapter 5:1. "Having been justified by faith," when faith is there. Dikaiosis is the active doing of a thing, not the thing done, the noun derived from the second person of the passive perfect. The English translation is right. You may say "on account of our justifying." Our justifying was the why of the act. Then faith coming in, it is realized, and we are justified. Scripture does not know justification without faith, which this false translation asserts. But the whole doctrine of a sin-bearing life, from His birth up, is as false as it is mischievous.

There was an hour, the drinking of a cup, from which the blessed Lord sought if possible to be free, to be saved, the thought of which He went through in the deepest agony because it was sin-bearing, being made sin. Did this apply to His whole life? There He came in the divine freeness of His love. "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." But divine willingness, and human agony, are not the same thing. Did He pray if possible to be spared being a man? He did that which He suffered at the cross. It is false in every aspect and feature of it.

Dr. B. tells us He was born the Saviour. Of course He was. But this does not tell us that He was bearing sin all

His life. He came to deliver His people from their sins: what He went through to that end, and when, is not touched by that. He manifested the Father, and God in love to man in His life, a perfect man amongst them. He stood as man made sin before God on the cross, though a divine Person, or He could not have done it. He may be said to be the substitute of His people personally at any time, but the substitute was when He bore their sins. He was God's Lamb always, but not the victim slain till the cross. How was redemption wrought? We have redemption through His blood. How is He set forth to be a propitiation? Through faith in His blood. What purges the conscience? The blood of Christ, who, mark, through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God. This was clearly when He was a man. The question is not, whether His obedience was perfect, even unto death, the last test of it; nor if we are made righteous by it; but whether He was bearing sin all His life, yet no wrath upon Him, no propitiation nor redemption nor remission obtained. All these are by blood-shedding. The testament had no force while the testator lived. The putting away of sin was by the sacrifice of Himself. He was once offered to bear the sins of many. What does this mean if He were the sin-bearer all His life? Indeed the whole of Hebrews 9 is to shew the place this blood-shedding and bearing of sin once for all holds in the counsels of God, and makes the doctrine of a sin-bearing life worse than absurd. There was a sacrifice for sins which gives us boldness to enter into the holiest. A sin-bearing where there is no sacrifice is a sin-bearing which brings no remission to man and no glory to God.

The truth is, Christ never says, "My God" before the cross (always My Father), not even in Gethsemane. On

the cross, in the hour of drinking the cup, He says, “My God”; after it (because now as man He is going to glory in righteousness, and has brought us there with Him), “my God and my Father,” for He is re-entered into the full enjoyment of sonship again, and has brought us there: surely never so the object of God’s love as when drinking the cup, for He could say, “therefore doth my Father love me,” a word that belongs only to a divine Person, but in His own soul tasting all its bitterness undiminished by any consolation, or it would not have been absolute and complete, yet shewing His perfectness as to the state of His own heart in the words “my God.”

I have gone thus into the great general truth of where sin-bearing was. But I must shew the carelessness and vagueness which baffles all hope of getting any serious doctrine from Dr. B. His very theme in chapter 3 is “His vicariousness is co-extensive with the sins and wants of those whom He represents, and covers all the different periods, as well as the various circumstances, of their lives.” Now what is, I beseech my reader, vicariousness as to wants? Suffering, being tempted in all things, that He might be able to succour the tempted— that is blessedly true. But this is not transfer, that the other might escape. Supply for wants I can understand, but vicariousness as to wants is beyond me altogether; yet it is the real inlet into all the error. Substitution was said to be the transference of penalty, guilt, wrath, from one who could not bear the penalty to One who could. How does this apply to “wants”?

I will not dwell upon it; but John’s baptism was so far from being a symbol of Christ’s death that, so far as it would be received, Christ would not be put to death at

all, but received by faith. Hence (Acts 19) those who had received it had to be baptized over again.

Resurrection does not justify us—assuredly not. No man is justified till he believes; and Christ's blood-shedding, and death, and drinking the cup, is the sole meritorious cause. But we are accepted in the Beloved, our place and standing before God is in a risen Christ. If we are in Him at all, there is no other but a risen One; but we are in Him before God.

It is not the whole truth, that being justified by faith we have peace with God; but there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Probably Dr. B. has confounded this blessed truth, being ignorant of it, with being justified by resurrection. Of course some one may have said so, but it is the first time I ever heard of such a thought. Dr. B.'s interpretation of dia dikaiosin I have already spoken of, and do not hesitate to say it is unsound interpretation, and false doctrine leading to fatal errors. For we are then, clearly, justified without any faith at all.

There is another most mischievous statement (page 11), "Without law sin is nothing." "Until the law," says the apostle, "sin was in the world." And again, "they that have sinned without law." "Sin by the commandment became exceeding sinful": which it could not do, if it were not there already. "When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." "Sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence." I know men have (for this grave Presbyterian error, which contradicts all Paul's teaching) the passage in the English translation, "Sin is the transgression of the law"; but this is merely a false

translation, founded on a doctrinal theory. The word anomia is never so translated elsewhere, and transgression of law is parabasis nomou. Not only so, but the same word adverbially anomos is translated sinning “without law” (Rom. 2:12), in contrast with sinning under law.

I need not return to Isaiah 53 which is dwelt on in chapter 4. The sufferings referred to (page 47) we are clearly called on to undergo with Christ. If they called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more they of His household! if they have persecuted me, they will persecute you also. Paul was the off-scouring of all things. There was no transfer, but the same enmity. If we suffer with Him, we shall reign with Him. His whole statement is mere blindness and delusion. The “scenes before the cross were while He was on His way to it” and during what He calls “his hour,” which till then He declared was not yet come. Now it was. Before that He had disposed of every heart as Emmanuel; so that His disciples lacked nothing. Now all was changed: He was reckoned among the transgressors; Luke 23:35-37. But though then taking, so to speak, the cup into His hand, which His Father had given Him to drink, we are simply certain from His own lips that He was not yet drinking it, for He prays it might pass without His doing so. But this was their hour, and the power of darkness.

The statement in page 58 I hold to be highly objectionable; for after shewing from scripture that He sits down consequent on offering a sacrifice for sins, Dr. B. says, “the first note of that gospel was sounded in the manger, the last from the throne above. How much is contained between?” Thus the sacrifice in its proper importance and place is dropped, coming in as an

incident among many things, shewing the system adopted, confounding God come in Christ to a world of sinners, and the man gone up on high in virtue of redemption accomplished.

I know not to whom Dr. Bonar alludes as having done with the cross. They are not Christians. It is the eternal centre, as to acts, of all moral glory. This is true, which from Dr. B.'s words he seems not to apprehend, that there is a difference between coming to the cross, as on this side of it, so to speak, and knowing it as meeting our wants, our sins, the way we must come; and looking at it when we have passed into God's presence through the veil, and are at peace in the holiest, looking at it on God's side, so to speak, and seeing how God is glorified in it. For this last we must have peace by it. Indeed neither has its real place with Dr. B. The first is merely a judicial decree in a court of law, the second is not in his system at all.

I turn to chapter 5. That grace reigns through righteousness is most sure, and that God is just in forgiving. But it is not righteousness that reigns; that will be in the age to come. Nor has Dr. Bonar any authority in scripture for the statements with which he begins. It is never said that God saves a sinner by righteousness. It falsifies the gospel, though God is righteous in saving him, and the believer is made the righteousness of God in Christ. The statements are unscriptural and mischievously so.

We have further the absurdity of the system in page 71: "The transference is complete and eternal from the moment that we receive the divine testimony to the righteousness of the Son of God; all the guilt that was on

us passes over to Him, and all His righteousness passes over to us." Was ever such utter nonsense? When I believe, my guilt passes over to Him—now in glory! It is astonishing that such a sentence did not awaken Dr. B. to the falseness of his whole system. My guilt transferred to Christ now in glory! One is led sometimes really to doubt whether he can know the truth at all. These are blunders which seem impossible for one who does, for whom this is the reality of faith. It shews what his substitution means. Further, the righteousness of the Son of God is language unknown to scripture, wholly foreign to it. That Christ is of God made unto us righteousness, I bless God for with my whole soul, and that we are made the righteousness of God in Him. But nothing of the statement of Dr. B. is in scripture, and the quotations of Deuteronomy and the Psalms have nothing to do with the matter. Let the reader consult them.

Dr. B. reads, Christ is the end (or fulfilling) of the law for righteousness, which is wholly unwarranted. Telos is the end rather as concluding, or the object, just as "end" in the English, but it is not fulfilling. Will Dr. B. give a passage in scripture where telos is so used? I notice these things because they belong to a great system of doctrine. Thus in this chapter we read, "Jehovah is satisfied, more than satisfied, with Christ's fulfilling the law which man had broken "(p. 80). Why then need Christ die, if Jehovah is more than satisfied? Righteousness comes by the law, and Christ is dead in vain. And it is expressly said in the life of the God-man. And note that this was before the cross; it is transferred to me, so that I am partaker of, or identified with, this law-fulfilling—have perfectly fulfilled the law: all the law

sentences against us are cancelled (p. 81). What then did Christ die for?

The statement in chapter 6 is a positive falsifying of scripture. This everlasting righteousness (law-fulfilling) comes to us by believing, the fruit of which is peace with God (p. 82). Now the antecedent to this in scripture is exclusively, “He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.” “Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God.” It is Dr. B.’s scheme, but not scripture.

As to 2 Peter 1:1, we obtain like precious faith by the righteousness of God, not righteousness by faith. Obtaining precious faith by righteousness is, as Paul says, “after that faith came.” That is, God has been faithful to His promises and given us Christ. At any rate, faith coming by righteousness has nothing to do with righteousness coming by faith. Dr. B.’s note is all a mistake. The Epistles of Peter are addressed to Jews—to the sojourners of the dispersion. The faith, like precious faith with Peter and those in Canaan, the dispersed believing Jews had received through the righteousness of God. It was not indeed Messiah Jewishly they had got, but precious faith. Still it was their God and Saviour Jesus Christ.

But in this chapter we come to a point on which we must rest a moment. “The scriptural meaning of imputing,” we are told, “is that the things that He did not do were laid to His charge, and He was treated as if He had done them all; so the things that He did are put to our account, and we are treated by God as if we had done them all.” Now, where the principle of substitution enters, this is an important truth; but “imputed” is never

so used in scripture. And Dr. B.'s quotations are a new proof that he really has no capacity to seize a statement of others, or to know what he means by his own. Look what a vague account he gives of Genesis 15:6. It was imputed to him for righteousness, that is, his faith, as the apostle himself explains it. Now what is there here that another had done which was put to his account? The statement is that his own faith was imputed to him for righteousness.

Genesis 31:15. Are we not counted of Him as strangers? Nothing done by another is put to account. They were treated or reckoned as such, just the meaning of the word. We are reckoned righteous: whether by something put to our account is another question. In the cited passage it was certainly not so.

Leviticus 7:18. Not a word of transfer or putting another's work to account. In a certain case he got no credit for his offering.

Numbers 18:27. Something reckoned or considered as having a certain value.

2 Samuel 19. It is holding him guilty for what he had done that he would deprecate, no transfer of anything.

Psalm 32:2. Nothing is put to account. The man is blessed whom Jehovah does not reckon guilty. It is not said why.

Romans 4:3, 5, we have had. The explanation of the construction put on the Greek is all nonsense. Counting him into righteousness (of "bringing him into" there is not a word) is worthy of all the rest. The English is quite right.

Romans 4:6. “Imputeth righteousness” is reckoning himself righteous.

Romans 4:8 is just a proof that it does not mean what Dr. B. says. The Lord does not impute the sin, that is, reckon the man guilty of it. It is his own doing which is not imputed, not somebody else’s doing which is.

It is useless to comment on the others. In none of them is there a hint of something done by another put to the account of him who did not do it. They are negatives; so that it is simply not reckoning to a man what he has done himself, or faith is reckoned as righteousness—the man’s faith. The whole statement is a mere delusion, as the citations prove. Will Dr. B. only give us a passage in which justifying is by a righteousness legally transferred? A man’s being righteous is his standing in the sight of God, not a quantum of righteousness transferred to his credit. Indeed the Greek word for this is different. It is ellogeitai, not logizetai.

But the legal system taints every thought and apprehension of Dr. B. The purpose of God before the foundation of the world, to conform us to the image of His Son, is lost. It is merely an infinite legal claim. God recognizes the claims of righteousness (p. 100). It is an exchange of judicial demands (p. 101). We can plead in our dealings with God the meritoriousness of an infinitely perfect life, the payment effected by an infinitely perfect death (p. 101). So, from Bunyan, “defending thee with the merits of His blood, and covering thee with His infinite righteousness from the wrath of God and the curse of the law” (p. 104). The assumption of all our legal responsibilities by a divine substitution is that which brings deliverance, etc. (p.

105). The second Man came as the righteous One to undo by His righteousness all that the first man as the unrighteous one had done by his unrighteousness … yet such is the power of sin that it took thirty-three years of righteousness to undo what one act of unrighteousness had done (p. 105). So God can accept Him, and the law recognize Him as entitled to blessing.

Can anything be more unlike scripture? The love of God, God commending His love to us, by Christ's dying while we were yet sinners, God so loving the world, all the activity of God's love, His seeking and saving what was lost, God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, the Father on the prodigal's neck, when in his rags a great way off, with no best robe upon him: all is lost. I admit, as fully, as earnestly as any can, the need of propitiation and substitution; but all true gospel, the grace of God that brings salvation, is lost in this unscriptural, unchristian system. Law accepts where it is satisfied.

All Christ's sympathy, suffering to succour the tempted as merciful and faithful High Priest, is lost. No such thought is found in Dr. B. It is the triumph of evil, or substitution. Righteousness did "retire from the scene" and is seen only now in Christ's sitting at the right hand of God. (See pages 98, 99.)

There are four reasons given in Hebrews 2 for Christ's taking our nature, and suffering: God's glory (v. 10), the destruction of Satan's power (v. 14), to make propitiation for the sins of the people (v. 17), to be able to succour them that are tempted. Not one enters into Dr. B.'s gospel. Christ comes to meet the claims of the law; and that is all.

Faith is nothing but our consenting to be saved by another, Dr. B. tells us (p. 109). This is utterly wrong. Faith is setting to our seal that God is true in His testimony, and practically the reception of Christ, by the word, through the power of the Holy Ghost. “When it pleased God,” says Paul, “to reveal his Son in me.” Page in shews that there is no real apprehension of what faith is. It is “human and cannot satisfy.” “God’s pardoning, and justifying, and accepting, must be connected with the cross alone” (pp. 118, 119). Yet, just now, it took thirty-three years to do it. Of an infused resurrection righteousness I know nothing, save as practical fruit of righteousness by Jesus Christ our life; but of being accepted in the Beloved I do, and that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. And this connects our acceptance with death to sin, and deliverance from it by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which Christ’s bearing our sins does not. This difference between the teaching of Romans to chapter 5:11, and from thence to the end of chapter 8, Dr. B. is wholly ignorant of.

What it is to be not in the flesh but in Christ, of the law’s having power over a man as long as he lives, but that we are delivered from it, having died with Christ, the difference between Christ’s dying for our sins, and our having died with Him, of His meeting our responsibilities by bearing our sins on the cross, and our being in Him and accepted in Him, now He is risen and glorified, inseparable from His being in us, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, sin in the flesh being condemned—of all this Dr. B. is wholly ignorant. Legal claims satisfied is all he knows; and of course he condemns and mistakes what he is ignorant of. It is

striking to see (p. 121) how he speaks of Christ dying for us, and Christ being in us, but leaves out, as a thing totally unknown to him, our being in Him. And note again how, in all this part (pages 119-121), the whole of his statement of a sin-bearing life is utterly subverted, “All comes from the one work of the cross.” “It is death throughout.” This is not true of the meat-offering, but it sets aside all Dr. B.’s theory. Dr. B.’s anger against others has betrayed him into sad statements.

To deny that a risen Christ is our life may be fit for legalism, and a denial of all real spiritual hfe; but if there be a real gift of life, in whom and whence is it? This is terrible—our being in Christ left out, and Christ denied to be our life. And Dr. B. forgets the verse even as to justification, that, though justification is not by life in us, yet it characterizes justification, as it is written, “by one offence towards all to condemnation, so by one righteousness [or act of righteousness] towards all to justification of life.”

The truth is, the whole doctrine of acceptance in Christ forms no part of Dr. B.’s scheme. But that our whole position and partaking of life too depends on resurrection, though surely the whole foundation is Christ’s death (which is indeed what I must insist upon), is clear, and it is the real point in question. Dr. B., though inconsistently talking of its being solely death, bases it on Christ’s previous life, as meeting legal claims. Scripture declares that, unless the corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone, and that it is in Christ risen that we have our place before God, knowing by the Comforter that we are in Him (and therefore there is no possible condemnation for us), that He is gone to our Father as to His Father, to our God as

to His God. So Paul would not know Christ after the flesh, though he had.

The cross made the great turning-point and separation. In the law God put up a barrier round the mount of fire — was hidden behind the veil; there was no entrance into the holiest, the way not made manifest. As I have sometimes said, God did not come out, and man could not go in. Now God has come out in grace to man, and man has gone in in righteousness to God, we are in Him there sitting in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. He is our life. I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me— the risen Christ, or One not risen? Christ alive in the days of His flesh abode alone. “If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above,” where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. “Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” “When Christ who is our life shall appear.” Here it is distinctively a risen Christ. Our life is Christ who is risen; we have been quickened together with Him, and raised up together.

Save in the vague words, “brother, and sister, and mother,” Christ never calls His disciples brethren until after His resurrection. Nor is being quickened by the Son the same thing as being raised with Him: for here He is looked at as a man, and we have part spiritually in resurrection with Him; whence it is said in Colossians 2, “having forgiven you all trespasses.” He bore our sins in coming down, and put them away, and then we are raised with Him. He has put us in the same place with Himself—His Father and our Father, His God and our God. Till redemption was accomplished, the corn of wheat abode alone. Dr. B.’s system is not Christianity in grace to the sinner, God in Christ seeking the lost, and

on the sinner's neck when the prodigal had not the best robe on; and the whole of Paul and John's teaching as to our place and life and acceptance in Christ he is wholly ignorant of. God, for him, is a righteous judge, and if we come by a legal satisfaction into court. He is satisfied because the law is. The Lord keep me from such a gospel, and such a gospel from the world.

Even when he speaks, as he must in quoting scripture, of being in Christ, it is an exchange of persons. It is a judicial verdict or sentence given in our favour. God seeks for us, and when at last He discovers us in our hiding-place, it is not me He finds, but Christ. We are partakers in law of all the results and fruits of His work, no identity with Christ literal or physical (pages 79, 80). Jehovah is satisfied. Is this the gospel of the grace of God? God sought sinners. Is it not as if we found our way into Christ by our own consent, and then God found, discovered, us hidden there? And are we not really members of Christ, of His flesh, and of His bones? Are we not really living in Him, and He in us?

My conclusion is, that it is a deplorable heart-saddening book, almost leading one to doubt whether the author knows Christ and the gospel at all, and giving the certainty that the blessed gospel we have in scripture he certainly knows nothing about, at any rate not the gospel of the grace of God revealed in scripture. Such is my answer to whoever sent me the book.

121 "The Everlasting Righteousness, or, How shall man be just with God?" By Horatius Bonar, D.D. London: J. Nisbet & Co., 21, Berners Street. 1873.

122 The translation of the English Bible is quite faulty; but it does not affect the point I am on.

Review Of Dr. Bonar’s Work Entitled “The Rent Veil”

If it were only Dr. Bonar’s returning to his vile and miserable thought of Christ being banished, or the persevering insolence of mind with which he changes scripture to suit his own purpose, I should take no notice of his book, “The Rent Veil.” Christ has directed us what to do with the blind leaders of the blind—to let them alone. But the book is written with another object.

Dr. Bonar resists truth in every shape. In another book he mocked at the conflict of two natures in us, and that in a way which makes it mocking Paul’s own words on the subject. Here the object is to set aside the sure settled standing of the believer before God. Dr. Bonar is evidently not in the liberty wherewith Christ sets us free, and he naturally teaches from the ignorance in which he is as to it. Only it is a sorrowful thing when ignorance is taught. He gives no sort of heed to the statements of scripture. He invents views of his own, and sets them forth as truth, with entire neglect of the word. Happily this enables us to detect how utterly groundless his statements are.

Two things alone occupy me here—his view of the Hebrews, which in every particular is the opposite of the truth, and the effort to continue on the first Adam by uniting Christ with him, instead of basing all—the first Adam being judged and rejected—on the last Adam, Him risen from the dead, when redemption is accomplished, with whom alone, when glorified, there is union. These two are vital points at the present day. Dr. Bonar is seeking to destroy what the Spirit of God would press on

the heart especially now. I shall, however, shew that his statements on all connected with these points are wholly unscriptural, that godly souls may distrust his statements, and be on their guard. He seems to allude to perfectionism of Mr. Pearsall Smith's class. This I have met and answered in its place; and not only in print, but have had much to do with it where it is current. I should not notice it here, but to remark that, what is one great source of their errors, Dr. Bonar equally fails in the knowledge of the use of water for cleansing in scripture. They are really on the same ground; for both, if there be failure, there must be a re-application of the blood; of the water, the washing of the feet, they are alike wholly ignorant. It forms no part of their system.

But, to pursue our inquiry into the statements of the book, paradise is treated as the place of God's dwelling, which there was no veil to hide. Man could go in to speak with God: God came out to speak with man. It was not till after man had disobeyed that the veil was let down which separated God from man, which made a distinction between the dwellings of man and the habitation of God. All this is a fable. There is no hint of paradise being the dwelling-place of God. "The Lord God took man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it" (pages 39, 40). You may see a still more definite statement, that God was there even when man was turned out. "Both the veil and the flame said, We guard the palace of the great King, that no sinner may enter; yet they said the King is within." All this is a fable. One has only to read Genesis 3:22-24 to see it is pure invention. The cherubim and the flaming blade of a sword, turning on itself, were set at the east of Eden, to

keep the way of the tree of life, with this express and only object. Dr. Bonar slyly leaves out the cherubim.

Now for him they are always the church; but to make the church keep the way of the tree of life against man, as God's judicial watcher, would not have done; so it is left out. "God's first words to man were those of grace" (p. 16). There is not a word of grace addressed to man at all—temporal judgment, and that only indeed. In the judgment on the serpent it is declared that the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. But Adam was not the Seed of the woman. His faith may have laid, I trust did lay, hold of it; but it was laying hold of another, not grace addressed to himself: a difference of all importance because it brings forward the second Man, in whom all the promises of God are yea and amen, and is no setting up of the first again. We are told that (p. 17) "man was allowed to build his altar, and worship at its gate. At the gate of paradise the first altar was built," etc. But man must remain outside meanwhile, he was not allowed to enter the place as holy; only he sacrificed at the gate of it. All a fable.

Page 19: "God then began to teach man by means of sacrifice. This method of teaching him concerning grace and righteousness widened and filled up age after age. For this fuller education the tabernacle was set up… Not till man, the sinner, should master the profound and wondrous lessons contained in that book (Leviticus) could the veil be removed, and access granted." Was this so? There was no growth, but the whole thing established according to the pattern shewed in the mount. There was no such education. The apostle (2 Cor. 3) declares that from the very origin they could not, and never did, see the purport of this, in truth, most

instructive system when we have the key. What the world learned of it Dr. Bonar must tell us. The whole thing is clean contrary to scripture. The importance is that it is, in Dr. Bonar's scheme, bringing on and educating the first man, and so bringing in blessing. The apostle is proving, on the contrary, the impossibility of this with man; that is, he teaches the exact contrary of Dr. Bonar's teaching..

We are told (page 22) "The second veil allowed any one to look in." Not only is this untrue as a fact (they could not see through the veil at all, nor is there any trace that the ordinary Israelite ever went beyond the brazen altar —the brazen laver was for the priests only), but the word declares the contrary in the strongest possible way. If the most privileged class of Levites saw anything inside of the tabernacle, it was death to them. (Num. 4:20, and what precedes). That is, scripture carefully teaches, as to the essence of the position, the contrary of what Dr. Bonar teaches, and what he teaches as giving its character to the state of things, his whole system, of which this is a part, is the exact contrary of the truth.

I turn to the cherubim. "Doubtless," we are told, "Abraham," etc., "knew about them." All this is to carry on the alleged teaching of man. It is naught: no trace of it in scripture; a false conception of the position of Abraham, the root of promise, not of law. The cherubim were in the pattern on the mount. "The cherubim aid the Messiah (p. 28) are all of one; the church is represented in the tabernacle as one with Christ,—members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. Israel was taught that the church in the wilderness (Acts 7:38) was as truly the body of Christ as the church at Pentecost."

“These cherubim symbolized the church of the redeemed.”

Page 55, where it is said, “He that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all of one,” there is no thought of the unity of the body; indeed the assembly as the body of Christ is never spoken or thought of in the Hebrews. “They are all of one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren; saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the assembly will I sing praise unto thee.” All is carefully individual, even when the assembly or church is spoken of. Priesthood for men walking on earth, while the high priest is in heaven, is the subject of the epistle, not union with the head on high. But of this anon.

But the statement of page 28 has Dr. Bonar’s authority, but not even an attempt is made to found it on scripture. That there was an assembly in the wilderness, no one in his senses denies; but what assembly? The nation of Israel, and nothing else; a body which excluded Paul’s account of the founding of the church. That assembly in the wilderness was based on the middle wall of separation being strictly kept up 1 the assembly of which Paul speaks is based on its being wholly thrown down. “The church is represented in the tabernacle as one with Christ, members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.” “Israel was taught that the church in the wilderness (Acts 7:38) was as truly the body of Christ as the church at Pentecost.”

Paul tells us the mystery had been wholly hidden—hid in God. But Dr. Bonar does not tell us how Israel was taught it, or how it was represented; how even it was in the cherubim, and “they symbolized the church of the

redeemed." Would my reader take a Concordance, and trace the word cherub? The cherubim are the seat of divine authority in the exercise of judicial power. They are found when God judicially excludes man from the tree of life. They constituted the throne of God in the tabernacle. "He sitteth between the cherubim." "They were made out of one piece with the golden cover of the ark." There God judged and had His throne; therefore blood had to be brought to make propitiation. (See 2 Sam. 22:8, and following.) There the cherub is in the strongest way the seat of judicial power. "Jehovah thundered from heaven, and the most High uttered His voice. And he sent out arrows, and scattered them by lightning, and discomfited them," etc. Let my reader turn to Ezekiel 1 and 10, where the judicial and throne character of the cherubim is displayed in so solemn a manner. If chapters 1-10 be read, the judgment of Jerusalem at that time will be clearly seen.123 It is evident that the cherub is the judicial throne or power of God. That the members of the church may come in as instruments of that power when they reign is very possible, as the angels may in their own time and place. But to make what kept the way of the tree of life—what fills the first scenes of Ezekiel's vision—the throne in the tabernacle, or the careering judgments of 2 Samuel 22, the church, as such, evidently is simply absurd. The ground of it is that there were cherubim on the veil. It suits Dr. Bonar, because he can connect Christ with man in union, and make Israel the church, and deny the unique position of the church in union with Christ glorified. It sets up the first man, the great object of Satan in these days. Take Ezekiel. It could not be the church as now. That is clear then. Was God riding or sitting in Israel when He destroyed Jerusalem under

Nebuchadnezzar? The statement of page 28 has no ground whatever to stand upon.

The next thing we have is the blood on the veil. “As often as the priest offered a sin-offering, the veil was wet again with the blood which dropped on the floor. Is this Christ bathed in the blood of atonement?” And he then refers to Christ’s circumcision and Gethsemane. Then “we see the blood-sprinkled veil.” The last sentence I must leave my reader to understand, if he can. “And all this for us, that the blood which was thus required at His hands should not be required of us.” What has that to do with His being bathed in blood?

I do not dwell now on the effect such statements and language produce. But all is wrong. It is not true that the blood was sprinkled, then, as often as the priest offered a sin-offering. It had no reference to the individual sins of the people; the blood for these was sprinkled at the brazen altar. What is here spoken of was done only when the anointed (that is, the high priest), or the whole congregation, sinned; and the whole ordinance was different; the bodies were burnt without the camp. There is no ground to change the translation. Before Jehovah, in front of or before the veil, is right in word and sense. At any rate Dr. Bonar is wrong. He speaks of the wet veil, and its dropping on the floor. Not both; the purpose is represented in the type. If it was the veil, not the floor; if the floor, not the veil. The point was, it was in front of the veil. All the statement in pages 29, 30 is entirely false.

It is part of Dr. Bonar’s system of preparing man by the partial apprehension, before Christ came, of the same divine things. The worshipper in the outer court saw

nothing, could see nothing, was meant to see nothing. The whole statement is a fable. We have seen it was death, even for a Levite, to see the things in the outer part of the house. And even the descriptions had no prospective sense for Israel, as we have seen from 2 Corinthians 3. “The rending of the cherubim signified our identification with Christ in His death” —confusion twice confounded, and nothing else; as many errors as words. The church, as the body of Christ, was not to be rent. The figure is Christ’s personal death, a most important and weighty truth assuredly, but nothing to do with our dying with Christ. The rending of cherubim is never given as a symbol in scripture, or in any way. Dr. Bonar cannot even say that it materially happened; neither the thought nor the fact is scriptural. It is Dr. Bonar’s invention, connected with his invention that they are the church (itself a monstrous absurdity); but when we died with Christ, it is in no sense as members of the church: as such we shall never die. We died with Christ as Adam’s sinful children. Sin in the flesh was condemned there. “Our old man was crucified with Christ.” “They that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh” — “dead to law.” The idea of crucifying the church, when such, is as gross a perversion as can well be conceived. This part of truth is individual, as (save in the hortatory part) Romans always is. It was the condemnation of sin in the flesh, but by which we are dead to it for faith, being baptized to His death.

As regards the actual rending of the veil, it is sufficient that this momentous fact is stated as it is. The Jewish system set aside, access to the holiest is fully open to the believer. Dr. Bonar’s long dwelling on details only weakens by physical circumstances the immense moral

weight of the symbolical act. It is in every way most unhappy. It drags down the details, which teach nothing, and force one to remember that there was then no true ark and no Shechinah in the temple at all, nor had there been since Babylon. When Christ was on the earth, He was the place of the Shechinah—the true temple. Dr. Bonar confounds the access of the worshipper and the call to the sinner, which makes even his treating of the rent veil false.

As regards propitiation and substitution, they are points of great importance, and important to distinguish; but, in order to deny the true import of these words, and the truth connected with them, Dr. Bonar has made confusion, and indeed most mischievous error, out of it. That Christ, for God's glory, stood as the representative man before God, and in a certain sense took our place, and died for all, making propitiation for the whole world, is true; and I add that if Dr. Bonar chose to call this substitution, though I should regret it as unfitting, and enfeebling its use in other vital aspects, yet it would not be my place to prescribe words to him. But he does a great deal more than this. By his hatred of the truth and fondness for his own views, he has upset the whole gospel. "The blood brought within the veil," he tells us (p. 109), "contained a world-wide message, so that each one hearing of that atoning blood might at once say, then God is summoning me back to Himself," etc. Be it so; but then "propitiation," he continues, "rests on substitution. In all these symbolical transactions we have one vast thought, the transference of guilt from one to another, legally and judicially." If this be so, then if each one hearing of it could apply it, the guilt of all had been transferred to Christ, and it cannot be

untransferred, or transferred back again, for Christ has died under it, a work “perfectly valid for all ends of justice”; consequently there can be no imputation of sins to anybody at all—the guilt has been transferred.

Scripture carefully distinguishes propitiation and the transfer of guilt, Jehovah’s lot and the people’s lot on the great day of atonement. Sin being come in, God’s glory was in question, and our sin too. The blood was brought under God’s eye as propitiation, and the sins of the people were laid by their representative on the head of the scape-goat. Both ends were met, God glorified in what He was, and the people’s guilt put away. So Christ appeared at the end of the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself; but besides that He was once offered to bear the sins of many.

Dr. Bonar confounds it all, and there is no sure gospel for the believer; for the transfer of his guilt to Christ does not assure his salvation, nor set him in divine righteousness before God; for this is equally true of the lost according to Dr. Bonar, and there is no true gospel for the sinner, for propitiation and transfer of guilt are the same; and the latter is not true, or all the world is saved. God has been perfectly glorified in the work of atonement, and that in the very place of sin, that is, Christ made sin, His righteousness against sin, His love to sinners, His majesty, all He is. God has been, then, glorified in the Son of man; and the testimony of grace founded on propitiation can go out to all the world. But, besides that, in the same work He has borne the sins of many, and they are cleared for ever. Propitiation, by the force of the term, refers to God—substitution to men. And though propitiation is by reason of man’s sin, yet it refers to what God is. His nature and character, and

God’s glory, is involved in it. It goes a great deal farther than meeting the sin which may have occasioned it. Substitution takes up the sins it is occupied with as its whole subject and measure. But on this I will say no more here. If blessed truth is to be spoken of, it must not be in answering such a book as Dr. Bonar’s.

Only a point or two remains before I say a few words on Hebrews. He quotes the beautiful Psalm (of confidence) 16: “Therefore my heart is glad, yea, my glory rejoiceth” (p. 88). Here is his commentary, “He speaks as an exile far from home, weary, troubled, exceeding sorrowful even unto death “(p. 94). “Looking upwards to the happy heaven which He had left, He could say, ‘How many servants in my Father’s house have bread and to spare, and I perish with hunger.’ “(p. 97). The statements in pages 152, 153 are all utter confusion and mistake. In 1 Corinthians 3 the apostle is insisting on the responsibility of man in the work; and where it was of wood, hay, and stubble, all would be burned. Nay, more; if a man corrupted the temple, he would be destroyed. It is the temple of God, not now such as is spoken of here by Dr. Bonar, but that temple under man’s responsibility. And Paul speaks of laying the foundation of it. Strange if Old Testament saints were in it! It is confounding what Christ builds and what comes of man’s responsibility;—just what God is carefully distinguishing now, and which Dr. Bonar confounds together, without finding out the difference, which stares us in the face in the passage he quotes.

How completely the work of Christ is looked at as completing the progressive operation of God in the education of the old man may be seen in page 79: “The ages of delay are over; the day of expectation has come

to an end. The purpose of Jehovah is now consummated. The Father now delights in the accomplishment of His eternal design. Now grace and righteousness are one. So long as one burnt-offering remained unpresented, there was something wanting—something unfinished. But now the last of the long series has arrived. The type is perfected, the last stone has been laid; the last touch has been given to the picture; the last stroke of the chisel has fallen upon the statue. The imperfect has ended in the perfect—the unreal in the real." It is arrant nonsense; but what a place it puts the previous series of sacrifices and Christ's in!

But I turn to Hebrews, my main object in all these lines; and very few words will suffice. "It assumes throughout," says Dr. Bonar (Preface), "that the present condition of the church on earth is one continually requiring the application of the great sacrifice for cleansing. The theory of personal sinlessness has no place in it. Continual evil, failure, imperfection, are assumed as the condition of God's worshippers on earth during this dispensation… Personal imperfection on the one hand, and vicarious perfection on the other, are the solemn truths which pervade the whole. There is no day nor hour in which evil is not coming forth from us, and in which the great blood-shedding is not needed to wash it away… God's purpose is that we should never while here get beyond the need of expiation and purging… They who, whether conscious or unconscious of sin, will take this epistle as the declaration of God's mind as to the imperfection of the believing man on earth, will be constrained to acknowledge that the blood-shedding must be in constant requisition, not (as some say) to

keep the believer in a sinless state, but to cleanse him from his hourly sinfulness."

Now that the blood of Christ is the eternal security of all blessing, even in the new heavens and new earth, I wholly believe; and that no saint is personally perfect, I entirely accept. I see no perfection for a Christian but likeness to Christ in glory. That is before his soul now, and hence the intelligent Christian can have no thought of perfection here. He purifies himself as He, Christ, is pure. That in many things we all offend, as a fact, I believe—not taking my own failure as a rule from scripture itself. But the necessity, as "God's purpose," that we should be always sinning here, as Dr. Bonar would have it, I reject. We should be walking always in communion, and manifesting the life of Christ in our bodies, always bearing about in the body His dying. That, and that only, is the normal state of the Christian. To say that we do fail is a very different thing from saying we must. I can never excuse myself, for Christ's grace is sufficient for me, and His strength made perfect in weakness; and God is faithful not to suffer me to be tempted beyond that we are able. If we are vicariously perfect, that is, perfect through Christ before God in God's sight, we cannot, in coming to Him, come with a bad conscience.

I have given thus fully, with a short clearing up of the point as to personal perfection, the statement of Dr. Bonar, to shew that it is in every point exactly the contradiction of the epistle he is speaking of. Our imperfection in sinning is never spoken of in the Hebrews. When sinning is spoken of, it is unbelief; as Israel in the wilderness sinning wilfully after the knowledge of the truth, apostasy, and profaneness, and

in every case final, hopeless, and irrecoverable ruin. When sinning is spoken of in this epistle, it leaves a man without remedy, as chapters 3, 6, 10, 12. Priesthood, as now exercised by Christ (I do not speak of the work of the great high priest on the day of atonement, that is finished), is not for sins in the Epistle to the Hebrews. It is for grace to help in time of need, mercy and goodness in all our temptations and trials, that we may be sustained, and not sin, but not for sins. The doctrine as to a perfect conscience, taught in chapters 9 and 10, would make it wholly out of place here. The conscience, in direct contradiction of Dr. Bonar's statement, is always perfect. For him the blood-shedding is in constant requisition. "There is no day nor hour in which … the great blood-shedding is not needed to wash its evil away." The epistle is just to shew that in contrast with Judaism, where such repetition went on, it is not the case.

Let us ask the epistle itself. Chapters 9 and 10 are the special chapters on this point. I beg my reader to read them through, and see how, once for all, "eternal" is repeated. I can only quote a few texts directly to the point; and note, the question is purging the conscience, not merely putting away the sins before God, which of course must be done to purge it. He begins his great thesis in chapter 1. "When he had by himself purged our sins, sat down." And this sitting down he emphatically uses afterwards. "We have such an high priest, who is set down on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens."

And now for the conscience—the value of Christ's work as to it. "Christ entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption. How much more

shall the blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge our conscience?" That is its character and value. "He is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." "Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others, for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world." But I must be more precise. The point in question (chap. 9:9) is making him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience. What meets this is (v. 12): "By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place." This blood (v. 14) purges the conscience.

Further, "Without shedding of blood is no remission." "Christ is entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (v. 23)—always there in the virtue and efficacy of that which He has wrought. Nor can He "offer himself often as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others, for then must he often have suffered." There can be no renewal of imputation or guilt, no expiation, no blood-purging, but by taking the guilt, and drinking the cup. If Christ expiates and purges (that is, with blood), He must suffer. But He "hath appeared once in the end of the world to put away sin," been "once offered to bear the sins of many," and "appears the second time to them that look for him "without sin (choris amartias), having nothing more to do with it for them. Could anything more distinctly exclude repetition of purging, or repeated purifying, to make the conscience perfect?

But is there not a repeated application of what is here spoken of as done once for all? Let us see the next

chapter, where this comes practically up. Dr. Bonar insists on repeated purging, repeated application of the great blood-shedding; that it is in constant requisition to cleanse him, is needed to wash evil away, and that in order to the worshippers drawing nigh. I read that the old Jewish sacrifices could not make the comers thereunto perfect, the repetition being a remembrance that sin was there; but, if it had made them perfect, the purging and offering would cease, as Christ's sacrifice did, because the worshippers once purged would have no more conscience of sins. Does this look like admitting a perpetual cleansing with blood—once purged have no more conscience of sins?

But it is more explicit still. Christ comes to do God's will in grace. "By the which will we are sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all," chap. 10:10. The Jewish priests were daily standing to accomplish a never-finished work; "but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool." For His friends He had no more to do as to this conscience-cleansing work. "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." And this word "for ever," in verses 12 and 14, is not the word "for ever" used when it is said a priest for ever, eis ton aiona, it is eis to dienekes—uninterruptedly, without discontinuance. Thus those sanctified by Christ's offering are continuously, perpetually, perfect, as Christ sits continuously at God's right hand.

There is no interruption in that perfectness, no more conscience of sins, and this gives them boldness to enter into the holiest. There is not only no hint of reapplication

of the blood, but a declaration of no more conscience of sins, that the sanctified ones were continuously perfect, uninterruptedly so, so that they had boldness to enter into the holiest. It is not personal perfectness, but it is perfectness of conscience uninterrupted; Christ appearing before God for us, sitting continuously at God's right hand, because all is done, and we are perfected for ever—hence, in going to God, no more conscience for sins. It was the church not holding this fast that laid it open from the beginning to absolution and sacramental grace, and, till absolution was invented, that there was forgiveness for one sin after baptism; after this you must leave a sinner in God's hands. This is clear that the teaching of the Hebrews is formally, in a set and purposed way, the positive denial of Dr. Bonar's teaching; its object is to teach exactly the contrary to what he ascribed to it. There is, we learn elsewhere, a sprinkling of blood to seal the covenant, to cleanse the leper, to consecrate the priest; but not repetition. The repetition of the application of the blood is a denial of the gospel. And this truth comes in here, which I will notice to make all clear.

When it is not a question of conscience, and imputation, and guilt, which does require blood-shedding to put it away, but of communion, there is a cleansing of the state of the soul, but this is by water. The righteousness and propitiation remain unchanged in their value, and are the foundation of the other. In 1 John communion is spoken of. There, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins." But an idle thought interrupts communion, and that has to be restored, and Christ's advocacy comes in. So, in John 13, referring to what He

does on high, He washes the disciples' feet, once washed, and in this sense for ever clean (this also with water). Bathed as the high priest was, they have need only to wash their feet, when they have picked up dirt in their walk. But it is no repetition of blood applied; there is no such thing in scripture for a Christian. Practical cleansing for communion there is, but imputation, guilt, has no place; expiation, propitiation, no place; "Jehovah imputeth no sin." Christ must suffer often. If the sin is borne, put away, and He has washed us from our sins in His own blood, all that is done once for all; but to clear the conscience by blood, Christ must suffer. But this is done once for all. He sits at God's right hand, because the sanctified are perfected for ever. Dr. Bonar has no idea of anything but personal holiness, or perpetual cleansing by blood. If he will read the Hebrews, he will find perpetual perfectness, no more conscience of sins. There is besides this a washing of the feet with water, a kind of cleansing, which all who do not see the perfectness of conscience taught in the Hebrews always leave out—do not apprehend. The apprehension of what is taught in Hebrews takes the cleansing out of the domain of righteousness, as to which we are perfect, and places it in that of holiness and communion with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Water is the remedy for that; the word, that is, in the power of the Spirit, as blood is for expiation and remission.

I will only add further, that Hebrews never contemplates the church as such, but the people of God walking in weakness on the earth, and Christ for them a separate person on high. Union with Christ is not its subject, and it is just this gives it its preciousness. Nor does it speak of the Father, but how we believers stand with God, and

how we approach; and that is with a perfect conscience through Christ's one offering, so that the worshippers once purged should have no more conscience of sins. If the reader examine the statements of the Epistle to the Hebrews, he will find that it is the work itself, or the offering of Himself, or it by Christ to God, not the process of application to us, which is spoken of; the effect is, but not the application. Thus we have, through the Eternal Spirit, offering Himself without spot to God, blood-shedding, the sacrifice of Himself, one offering, entering once into the holy place, not without blood, or in the power of His own blood, into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. It is the offering of Himself, or entering into the holy place, but no trace of application to us as the means of its efficacy, still less repeated application. By one offering He hath perfected for ever, in perpetual continuance, them who are sanctified. They have no more conscience of sins.

123 Save the king of Tyre in Ezekiel 28, these are all the cases of the use of cherubim, besides the instructions for the tabernacle and the temple, in the Old Testament, or allusions, as Psalm 80:1; 1 Samuel 4:4. In the New Testament, the cherubim and seraphim in Revelation 4, though the word be not used, are a most instructive connection, because it gives judicial power, not only as governmental on the earth, but final according to the holy character of God.

Cleansing And Deliverance

As regards perfection, which is often a difficulty, the ground has been taken that, while the flesh never changes, which is perfectly true so far, yet supposing we sin, by referring to the blood of Christ, inasmuch as it cleanses, we are constantly thus perfectly clear. Blood has to cleanse because we are not clean. But this does not at all meet the point. What is wanted is not so much cleansing as power.

Now Christ's blood, though the ground of all blessing, connects itself directly with the conscience, with imputation, not with power; and to bring in the blood at once raises the question of the state of my conscience, and the consciousness that I am unclean. They tell me there is power sufficient to put you in relationship with God, and then that you are there pure. Now it requires earnest and honest attention to make the difference between deliverance from the power of sin and purity. Because, till we are delivered through a just sense of redemption, the sense of the presence of sin and of want of perfect purity connects itself with conscience and acceptance with God. Take Christians in general; and you will find they have a kind of feeling, though they would not like to say it, that they must sin. And quite true it is that, if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us; and that, in fact, in many things we all offend.

But you will notice in 1 John 1, when it comes to sinning, the apostle puts this in the past tense, "If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." Speaking of sin, it is the present tense, "we have

no sin”; but of sinning, in the past tense, “we have not sinned,” not “if we say we are not sinning”; and there is no such consequence to be drawn as that we must sin. “My grace,” said Christ, “is sufficient for thee, and my strength is made perfect in weakness”; and “God is faithful not to suffer us to be tempted above that we are able.” “I can do all things through him that strengtheneth me.”

Nor does the existence of the flesh give a bad conscience: else I should never have a good one, because the flesh is always there. Neither is it a question with me whether God can impute a sin to me as a believer, for Christ has borne them all; nor is it a question of past sins or future sins, inasmuch as for Christians now Christ never bore any but future sins, though past sins are necessarily what affect the conscience. But the question is, whether that kind of power comes in by which I am brought into a condition where sin is not operative. I never could say that it must operate. For God is faithful not to suffer us to be tempted above that we are able; and, if I bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, only His life will work in me. So that if an idle thought is in my mind, I cannot excuse myself. Grace still acts in the advocacy of Christ; but I never can excuse myself for having ever allowed the flesh to act. Had I been faithful in closeness to Christ, the flesh would not have acted. Had I been occupied with Him, the evil would not have found place in my mind.

Here is a mother; she is told that her child has been run over at the railway. She is off directly. Does she think of the things in the street as she passes? Not she; on she runs. All those things which might have been an

attraction to her if she had been unoccupied—a fine dress hung out, or a pretty picture—they none of them arrest her attention now; she does not see them. And so ninety-nine out of a hundred temptations never would be such to you if Christ were in your mind. If we were full of Him, there would be no room for the idle thoughts with which Satan seeks to distract us by the world around us, if he cannot occupy us with them as an object.

And if we do fail, this is no question of putting away sin, and of blood; but it is a question of water, when Christ is an advocate pleading for us to restore our souls. In John 13 He did not put blood into the basin, but water. Now, if my feet did not pick up the dirt—and they ought not to do it—then I should not need that action in John 13; but they do, and the Spirit of God brings the water of the word to my conscience, and this is the value of the passage. I have defiled my feet, and then I get water, and not blood. Water, as a figure, signifies always the application of the word by the power of the Holy Ghost. Christ has entitled us to heaven, but for our restoration He works in us by the word when it is needed, though it ought not to be.

The existence of the flesh does not stop communion, but the allowance of it does. In 1 John 1 fellowship or communion is the same word; and it is stopped by an idle thought; for the moment it is totally interrupted. God evidently cannot have communion with such.

But, further, in connection with this, Christ dying for our sins is quite distinct from our dying with Christ; it is a different thing entirely. We are called upon to recognize this, and live in the power of it. If we are dead with

Christ, then “reckon yourselves” so; only I add that this is not finding out that I have died at a particular moment, and am brought by faith into this state (though every truth is learned by faith), but the truth learned here is that I died in Christ’s death. It is my Christian profession. Being baptized unto Christ, I am baptized unto His death, and when the apostle bears about in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus, it is clearly not his own dying, but, as it states, the dying of Jesus. The thing I say is, Christ was the one who bore my sins, and so I get pardon; but I find no pardon for the evil nature. “What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.” But when God did that, what happened? Christ died; them I am dead. If it had been myself personally under law, I should have had condemnation as well as death; but being crucified with Christ, condemnation is gone, and the death has come. If I apply it practically, and honestly say I am dead, how can Satan tempt a dead man? And how can you say a dead man has lusts and a bad will? It is not true. Yet this doctrine of purity in yourselves attained by faith, and that without the self-knowledge gained by exercise of heart under law, as taught in Romans 7, is very rife around us; and it is winning honest and sincere persons through the craving for a deliverance they have not got.

It is stated that there is a purifying that makes us now like Christ here. But this is unscriptural. It is asked, “Did you not when converted desire to be conformed to Christ?” But this is misleading people’s souls; for I desire it now too. But what is taught in scripture is that, “when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall

see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure." This is a very different story. If I am already purified, I do not want to purify myself. The conformity to Christ proposed in scripture is in glory. He was absolutely without sin here; if I say I have none, I deceive myself. I ought to walk as He walked, not allowing sin to stir in me; but it is there in the flesh.

The effect of the whole thought is to lower the standard of the Christian altogether. I want to be like Christ in glory, and I shall be; and, meanwhile, though the flesh is here, this in itself would not interrupt my communion; and I recognize fully that as a Christian I ought, not grieving the Holy Spirit of God, to live constantly in the unclouded sense of God's favour.

I dare say there may be Christians who never have really comprehended what it is to be dead and risen with Christ. They cannot, as to their own souls, take this up. It is what the scripture calls being "perfect"; that is, not merely being forgiven the sins of the first Adam, but having our place in the Second, and that in the power of the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. We shall be actually perfect when like Him in glory; never before, because this is our standard. But if I have realized that I am in Him, dead and risen with Him, as He is, so am I in this world—first, as to judgment, and then as to the power of life and state before God, recognizing the deadness of the old man for faith through Christ's death on the cross.

But the view I have referred to supposes that a person can by faith slip into a state of purity; just as by faith he knows his justification. Now such are deceiving

themselves, and that for this reason—you do not know yourselves yet, and you must. I repeat, what I have said elsewhere, that you do not get out of Romans 7 in some shape, till you have got into it, and know not merely guilt, not merely that you have an evil flesh, but, what is harder to learn, and more thoroughly humbling, that you have no power.

Suppose a person owed money, and I tell him it is all paid. If he believes I am a man of my word, no experience is needed; he is at ease, and very glad to hear it. But suppose I say, You are dead to sin. This is not the payment of a debt, it is an absolute statement of your condition. The man might say, “What is the good of telling me that? Why, I was in a passion this morning.” His experience contradicts me. Nor can you get out of the difficulty until you have come to the personal consciousness, the self-knowledge, which finds out that you cannot get the victory over sin. It is a terrible thing to see; but it is learning this, that I have no power, and not merely that I am guilty. “To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not”; and until you are brought to the conscience of “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?” I cannot succeed; sin is too strong for me; I am not brought to the point, where alone the deliverance is got. I may or may not have the knowledge of forgiveness. This modifies the form, but not the substance, of the experience. It is always essentially under law, that is, a claim upon us to be in a given state. But you say “I must try.” “Very well,” I say, “Try away, try away.” Why? Because then he will learn that he cannot, and presently he will say, not “How shall I do better? “but, “Who shall deliver me?” He is then in such a condition that another must take him out

of it. He finds he is not only ungodly, but without strength; he has learned what he is, not merely what he has done; and then he sees Christ there in power, and the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus makes him free from the law of sin and death. This is not a question of non-imputation, nor of cleansing, but of making free. Then I find it settled in seeing the truth and ground of it in the cross of Christ, and not in my personally obtaining of purity at a given moment.

Another thing I would just add. I ask, Are you content to have died then, and not to have the least atom of will of your own, nor wish, nor desire? Is there nothing in your heart that you would like to hold back against God? This tests us. Have we so learned what the principle of will is, or do we want to keep a little bit of it? Our state ought always to be one of unhindered communion in the power of the Holy Ghost without a cloud upon our spirits. But this is not really the state of things, and so it is power we want.

Cleansing By Water: And What It Is To Walk In The Light

I have carefully compared with scripture, I trust before God, the system now pressed upon many as the desirable Christian condition of liberty and holiness. I have done it in His fear, not willing to lose any profit or advantage which faith in divine power could give me. However happy, I am too poor and weak not to be glad to have everything I can of Christ and of His Spirit. I admit that mere knowledge is far from being all, even when correct in the things of God. Power by the operation of the Spirit is needed, and the evangelical world is very unbelieving as to this. Still we are sanctified through the truth, and hence the question is—Is this system the truth, the truth of God? It seems to me to fail entirely, if examined by scripture as to the true standing of God's children—their real place in peace before Him; it has not learned this place, nor the character, extent, and means of holiness. It comes wholly short of the state of conscience produced by the Holy Ghost consequent on redemption, and as a necessary consequence lowers the character of holiness, and eclipses the place Christ should hold in the heart. There is more than one thing, I think, true in it, and important to Christians in these days; and it is because these are obscured by false teaching, and souls are thus misled, that I take notice of it. I desire to speak soberly, not slighting what is true, but guarding the soul of my reader, if God graciously permit and deign so to use it, against what obscures the truth. I shall first state what I do not oppose, that I may give no handle to those who

might reject the presence and operation of the Spirit of God, and give all due credit to those who look for it.

In Mr. R. P. Smith's last work, "Walking in the Light," there are counsels which are useful, such as, when temptation is there, to look at once to Christ, One who has overcome. I have no doubt that, when we do, the enemy will flee, so to speak, as a frightened bird. It is not simply as if we were better, but the thing is gone. We may have sometimes to wait where there has been any giving way, but if we resist the devil, he flees from us. And this is important for assailed saints; there is positive strength in Christ and grace sufficient for us. I repeat, it is not merely an improvement or change; the assailing evil is gone.

Doubtless there may be other just and useful remarks; but my object is not this book but the system, and I have met many who hold it. I go on with what I admit and fully receive. I fully receive that sealing by the gift of the Spirit, founded on the precious blood of Christ, which sets at liberty, by which the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts and we cry, "Abba, Father" in the consciousness of being sons, know we are in Christ and Christ in us, loved as Jesus was loved—a wonderful place in which rest of heart is found. This I not only admit, but have pressed it some fifty years. Indeed it has distinguished characteristically the labours of those with whom I am associated. Not only so, but a multitude of souls in receiving it have found the power and presence of God more sensibly than at their conversion. I recognize fully that "there is no necessity and no excuse for sinning." Christ's grace is sufficient for us, and "God is faithful not to suffer us to be tempted above that we are able." Mr. Varley's tract shewed evidently that it was

this deliverance and conviction that he had never had before and now received; and that was all. It is because this state of bondage is so common that the deliverance taught in this system is attractive. The normal state of the Christian is to live in the unclouded and conscious favour of God, and, if he lives in the Spirit, to walk in the Spirit. In fact, in many things we all offend.

That God often heals the sick in answer to prayer is clearly taught both in James and John: in the former according to ecclesiastical order, though by the prayer of faith; in the latter as an individual matter, and I have seen and assisted at the clearest examples of this both in England and on the continent. In two cases, at the request of the parties, prayer was accompanied by anointing.

There is danger of the mind being turned to, and stopping at, what after all is only a testimony, though a blessed one. The professing church has lost the sense of that which characterizes Christianity—the present living power of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. It is not the end; for He leads us to the Father and the Son, and is the present power of our condition.

But it is of all importance not to separate the Spirit from the word of God, as it is not to separate the word from the present power of the Holy Ghost. The word is the sword of the Spirit, and what it reveals is spiritually discerned. The pretension to use it by the power of the human mind, or judge it by conscience, is really rationalism, or, to speak plainly, infidelity. And taking the power of the Spirit apart from the word lays men open to take every wild imagination of man and even an evil spirit for the Holy Ghost, as the word plainly shews us.

Those who know the early history of Friends know the excesses to which some ran. It will be said, you cannot attribute this to the body or to those who were esteemed leaders among them. I admit it; but I do attribute it to the principle adopted by them: that the Spirit in them was superior to the word, a name which indeed they would not give to the scriptures, and this has been openly avowed to myself now by those who looked to the present special operation of the Spirit and its power.

It will be again said, this is not countenanced by those active in the movement. I do not deny this, but the way they leave aside the word and look to present power and experience as adequate testimony has led to it. I do say that this is the tree that fruit has grown on, and avowedly so; and this is very serious.

I admit further the difference between conversion, the power of the Holy Ghost in life consequent on the resurrection, and the coming down of the Holy Ghost from heaven, now known in the sealing and anointing of believers. The last two cannot be separated now that the Holy Ghost is come. Of this Romans 8 is a plain proof. They may be considered apart, but in fact they are one. The same Spirit that is life bears witness with our spirit that we are sons. The Holy Ghost when given distributes to every man severally as He will. He may be looked at as power, as in 1 Corinthians 12, power which is regulated in its use by the word there and in chapter 14, and here there is no promise of continuance; or these gifts may be looked at as given by Christ who is Lord in the administration of them in 1 Corinthians 12, and in this case only what is needed for the work of grace is spoken of (Ephesians 4, compare 2:20), and there is promise of continuance. It is Christ’s care of His body in

gathering and nourishing it. In this aspect the apostles could confer the Holy Ghost, but there was also the general promise of Acts 2:38. I do not go farther into this, interesting as the subject is. I do not resist faith in present operation and power of the Holy Ghost, provided scripture has its place, and the present condition of the church in the last days be borne in mind.

Further, I recognize that Jesus the Lord and Saviour can and does manifest Himself to us, as He has promised, when we walk obediently, so that what shall be our everlasting joy in heaven fills our souls here. It may be according to the weakness of the vessel, but still truly. This John 14 clearly tells us. Scripture sanctions such experience, though the passage may go farther than this. The love of God withal is shed abroad in our hearts. The Father and the Son make their abode with us. It is a blessed and unspeakable privilege. This, as the chapter cited clearly shews, is connected with our obedient walk —keeping Christ's words. The whole of this part of John is not sovereign grace to sinners, but the Father's dealing with His children as responsible as such.

My objection to the whole system is, that it subverts the true liberty and perfectness of conscience of the child of God; and, perpetually recurring to this point as if the perfectness was lost and incomplete, it applies to clearing the conscience in view of this what in the word is a question of communion and holiness, lowering and falsifying this last also.

It will have many supporters in this, because unbelief as to it is the prevailing state; but it is sorrowful when the pretension to a higher life is the support of unbelief.

The ground they go upon is the common ground of unbelief in the offering of Christ—the doctrine of continually cleansing and recleansing in Christ's blood. This is wholly unscriptural, and subversive of true Christian standing according to the word—that the worshippers once purged should have no more conscience of sins. Nothing can be clearer or more positive than the teaching of Hebrews 9 and 10 on this subject, where it is elaborately argued, in contrast with the repetition of Jewish sacrifices, and as giving us boldness to enter into the holiest. The question raised is of a perfect conscience; and a perpetually unchangeably perfect conscience is elaborately taught, with a declaration that otherwise Christ must often have suffered, but that His work has done this once for all. He was once offered to bear the sins of many, and appears a second time without sin to salvation; a repeated cleansing of the conscience by blood is herein formally negatived. Christianity is contrasted with Judaism on this particular point. It is the offering, the blood-shedding, which clears the conscience, and that could be only once, and so that the worshippers once purged should have no more conscience of sins; and hence, while the Jewish priests were always standing, because their work was never done, Christ, having offered one sacrifice for sins, is sitting constantly at the right hand of God, having no more to do as to the worshippers' conscience, because by one offering He has perfected for ever them that are sanctified— by one offering, note, and thus we have no more conscience of sins. And this word "for ever" is here eis to dienekes, not eis ton aiona, that which is continuous and uninterrupted, as Christ now sits at the right hand of God, constantly, till His enemies be made His footstool. And remark that it is not

merely the putting away of sins efficaciously, true as of course that is (see Heb. 1:3), but the perfecting of the conscience; Hebrews 9:9; chap. 10:1, 2, 12, 14; and see 12, 19. The Epistle to the Hebrews teaches clearly, unequivocally, insisting on it as characteristic of Christianity, a conscience constantly perfect, as sure as Christ is ever sitting on the right hand of God; perfect, not by repeated application of His blood, which is being imperfect, and cleansed again and again, but no more conscience of sins, perfected for ever, and that by one single thing in contrast with repeated cleansings. This blessed truth and state is ignored and denied by the system I am commenting on. The whole place is lost for the soul—the very truth God is pressing on His saints for their deliverance.

This error is founded on an entirely false application of 1 John 1 to which I will turn just now. But another point must first engage our attention—sin in us. This Mr. Smith is now obliged to take notice of. Scripture is plain as to it. I admit that the existence of sin in the flesh does not rest on the conscience. It is the allowance of its acting for which our hearts condemn us. But here all is confusion through the ignorance of “no more conscience of sins.” We are told “that which brings a sense of condemnation or impurity.” Condemnation and impurity are very distinct things. Is it here condemnation on the part of God? This can never be the case with the believer. If it be self-condemnation, although free communion be not restored, yet a holy judgment is; I condemn what I had allowed. The whole operation of God in restoring the soul is lost by confounding the state of the soul, and a perfect conscience. This system brings back into imputable evil, needing blood-shedding or

cleansing by blood, what is a question of holiness, of state, of water-cleansing; and the perfectness of standing, and holy dealing with the state, are both lost.

But I turn to what scripture states as to sin in the flesh. That of which I have already spoken refers to the fruits of the old nature, and the perfecting the conscience as to them by Christ's one offering of Himself. He has borne our sins in His own body on the tree, all of them. If all are not for ever put away, they never can be; He cannot die over again. Were this the case, as it is said in Hebrews, He must suffer often, bear the sins, drink the cup; but this is done once for all, and through faith in His work the conscience is perfected; if He did not bear all my sins, nothing is done; if He did, I am clear for ever.

But this is not all. The first part of Romans, to the end of chapter 5:11, treats this question. But there is more. Not only are the sins of the old man all put away for the Christian, but he is in Christ. There is a positive acceptance in Him. He is in a new place according to the value of all Christ has done for God's glory. There is no condemnation for them who are in Christ Jesus. Now this is directly connected with the power of a new life, the possession of which, founded as it is on the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, sets us free from the law of sin and death. There is no captivity under the law of sin, no necessity of ever sinning. But this, again, is based on the condemnation of the old man in the death of Christ. What the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. It is not forgiven as sins are. The only remedy against it is its death; it has been condemned when

Christ died, so that there is none for me. But in His death I died, being crucified with Him; that is, as there is no condemnation, so I have died for faith in Christ's death. In that He died, He died (not here for sins) unto sin once; in that He liveth, He liveth unto God: so reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God, in Jesus Christ our Lord. God accounts the believer dead (Col. 3); faith counts us dead, crucified with Christ (Rom. 6; Gal. 2); and (2 Cor. 4) it is practically carried out by always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus.

But this is the Christian standing and position. "Ye are dead," "ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you; and if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

Mr. Smith's notion of getting back into Romans 7 is all false. That would be ceasing to be a Christian. There it is said, "when we were in the flesh"; in chapter 8, "ye are not in the flesh." It is the state and standing redemption has put us in. "Ye are not in the flesh." This is God's estimate of the believer; he is in Christ, and Christ in him; and such is faith's estimate. "Reckon yourselves dead." If Christ be in you, "the body is dead because of sin." It is a new state of existence, though yet in an earthen vessel. Realizing it in practice is of all-importance, but I must be in it to realize it. But this Mr. Smith has absolutely nothing of. His perpetual cleansing of the conscience with blood denies it. He is with thousands, alas! on Jewish ground. Our being dead to sin is for faith reckoning ourselves so because Christ has died to sin once, and the sin in my flesh has been condemned then once for all already, and if I yield myself to God, it is not that I may have this or that, as

they would teach us, but as one that is “alive from the dead.” It is the Christian state, the basis of yielding myself to God. The sins are borne, and before God I have no more conscience of sins, and have perfect divine favour, as in Christ before God; sin in the flesh is condemned, but for faith dead, because Christ died, when and wherein it was condemned. “I am crucified with Christ.” This is known by the Holy Ghost dwelling in us. “If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” He may be on the way, but he is not in the Christian state.

I turn to 1 John 1. The whole use of it is false. The case of actual sinning is in chapter 2. The first chapter is entirely abstract. Fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ is the joy and privilege of the Christian; but this must be according to the nature of God, who is light. Mr. S. speaks of bringing everything to God without evasion. Now this is most right and important. I would press it, not weaken it in anywise; but there is not a word of it in this chapter. “Walking in darkness,” and “walking in light,” are contrasted, as in Paul’s mission to the Gentiles, “To open their eyes, and turn them from darkness to light, and the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified, by faith that is in me.” So in chapter 2, the darkness is passing away, and the true light now shineth. God is light, and walking in the light is walking in the true knowledge of God; the new man is “renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.” Light came into the world in Christ. He who follows Him has the light of life. And note here, what is spoken of is “walking in the light as God is in the light.” It is not

according to the light, but in it. There is no darkness at all in God. This is the revelation afforded, the message heard.

The question is not raised if we walk according to it or not. We are in the full revelation of God without a veil, or in darkness, having no knowledge of God. It is not the question how far we live up to it. But the Christian is really walking there. If it was my consistency, how could I say, walk in the light as He is in it, and then speak of cleansing from sin? There would be no need of it. It is upon the face of the passage the true Christian position, in contrast with ignorance of God. It is as much as to say, if you are a Christian—have been turned from darkness to light. But it is no partial light, but as God Himself is in it—the unveiled light of God's nature, as revealed through redemption in Christ. If this be so, two other things accompany it; it is not mine and thine, but communion in full blessedness in God revealed.

Further, to be there we need to be as "white as snow," and have "a perfect conscience"; for if the conscience is evil, the heart is never free. And this Christ's blood gives. It is its intrinsic value; as if I should say, That medicine cures the ague; it is not, goes on by repeated applications relieving details, but cures it.

Failure, I repeat, comes in in chapter 2:1. Chapter 1:5-10 takes up the details of any possible self-deception in the matter, as to sin and sins, and where we are as to them; but verse 7 is the abstract, absolute, statement as to Christian standing: in the light as God is, fellowship with one another, and under the efficacy of that blood which cleanses from sin. If it be our consistency, walking in the light as God is, then speaking of cleansing is

absurd. Of bringing our state to God there is not a word. It is absolute and abstract.

But it is alleged that “cleanseth” is going on cleansing. It is not “has cleansed,” nor “will.” If people will take a continuous present, for which there is no ground, it must be continuous, not repeated, as “I am writing.” But this has no sense. Particular failure, as I have said, is in chapter 2:1, where we have no application of blood, but the contrary. It is perpetual righteousness in Christ, and propitiation which was once for all. But a continuous cleansing is absurd and unchristian; it is self-contradictory.

Of repeated application of blood scripture knows nothing. I must be redeemed over and over again, justified over and over again! And let us see what it comes to in this system. Mr. Smith tells us that “trusting Christ for cleansing is only through the constant supply of blood from the heart, and guidance from the head. Lessen the current of blood, the corrupt matter from the flesh is imperfectly carried off, and disease ensues” (Preface, p. 7).

Now, I appeal to every Christian, to every one really taught of God, whether scripture ever so speaks of the efficacy of Christ’s blood as cleansing the sinner. It would not be cleansing, but preserving in health. But the idea is wholly foreign to scripture.

“If we walk in the light,” is walking in the true knowledge of God, fully revealed as He is in His holy nature without a veil, as contrasted with ignorance of God. Christianity is in contrast with a God who could give commandments but was hidden behind a veil. This brought fellowship in common joys, and we can stand in

the light; for that which revealed it, the cross, the blow which rent the veil, put away every sin, every stain, and I am in the light, as white as snow. All is the present condition of the Christian as such. It is not that it will cleanse us if we fly to it, or if we bring everything to God without evasion. It is “if we walk in the light,” not even according to our capacity in realising it (all these details are foreign to the verse, and come after), but if we walk in it as God is in it. The very expression “all sin,” or every sin, shews us the same thing; it is not a question of details, but its universal and absolute value.

Then comes what the truth in us makes us know, and what we have to do if we fail, and the ways and government of God, and what Christ does if we fail. The righteousness and propitiation being ever there, our failure awakens the advocacy of Christ. But here there is no reference to the cleansing of Christ’s blood. A repetition of blood-sprinkling, or blood-cleansing, is a thing unknown to scripture. The worshippers once purged have no more conscience of sins; Heb. 10.

But there is a cleansing which may be repeated, and which this system everywhere ignores, and of which we have a precise account in scripture—washing with water. “Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.” “Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water by the word.” “Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth”; so indeed we are born of water, and begotten by the word of truth. The water came out of His side, as did the blood. When the Lord spoke of their having a part with Him now going on high, because He could no longer have a part with them, it is of this water-cleansing He speaks. Nor, as to the

substance of it, can this be repeated. He that is washed (leloumenos), his body bathed, as the priests were in their consecration, needeth not save to wash his feet (nipsasthai, wash hands or feet, etc.), but is clean every whit, and ye are clean, but not all, for Judas was there. When sanctified and renewed by the word with the truth Christ's death and heavenly relation give to us, still we pick up dirt in our walk, and the Spirit (Christ being our Advocate) applies the word to the conscience. We are humbled, confess, are cleansed as to the state of our souls, morally, purified in thought and heart, and communion is restored.

We have the same in the ordinance of the red heifer in Numbers 19, the book which gives us the journey through the wilderness,, to which this kind of cleansing applied, and not in Leviticus, where the sacrifices in their proper value are described. Nor in the case of the red heifer is there any cleansing by blood: this was always by blood-shedding, no remission without it; and that has been done once for all. The ashes in the running water were the testimony that the sin had been all consumed in Christ when the offering was made; but communion was interrupted, and the sense of what sin was, according to the death of Christ, brought home to the soul.

Thus this all applies to the state of the soul, to holiness, and to our judgment of sin. All this instructive and heart-searching truth is not only left out, but denied, in the system which, in these cases, applies the blood, not the water. And this is not merely a mistake in the terms, but denies the efficacy of the blood as that which perfects the conscience once for all, and the repetition of which is unknown to scripture. And so entirely is the use of

water set aside that, in speaking of the consecration of the priests, Mr. Smith says, “first the blood, then the oil,”124 whereas the first thing was washing with water, and by this he was consecrated to God, though the blood and the oil were absolutely necessary to perfect him in his place. Mr. Smith adds, “God’s order is the blood for pardon, the Spirit to enlighten; the blood for cleansing, the Spirit to fill the purified temple.” Now the blood was never repeated with the priest, nor indeed the oil; but he washed his feet and hands on every service he rendered, to which I doubt not John 13 makes allusion: only now it is only the feet.

Let me add here, that so far from the present tense in verse 7, on which so much is insisted, being repeated cleansing, when he comes to details and forgiveness in the present ways and government of God, in verse 9 he leaves the present tense, and says nothing of blood-cleansing. My anxiety has been to shew what the system deprives us of. Of the system itself I need not speak. Mr. Smith has avowedly brought it down to what I estimated it at the beginning; that it is simply deliverance from legal bondage, which is captivity to sin. He says (p. 107), “The better life we seek to portray differs from the former Christian fife, as the sixth and eighth of the Romans differs from the seventh.”

Now this deliverance is of great moment, and it is a distinct thing from forgiveness. On this I have so largely insisted elsewhere, and for so long a time, that I say nothing more of it here. I quite trust that Mr. Smith’s and others’ insisting on this will be useful.

To the end of Romans 5:11 we hear of forgiveness; from thence to the end of chapter 8 of deliverance; in one, of

the sins of the old man being put away; in the other, of our not being in the flesh, but in Christ and free.

Only one thing Mr. Smith has not noted, that one not in Romans 8 is not recognized as in the Christian state. “Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.” Now “if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his; and if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, and the Spirit is fife because of righteousness.” The final result is quickening this mortal body. Before having the Spirit, they may be on the way but are not in the Christian state, any more than Israel were out of Egypt till they crossed the Red Sea, though the blood was on the doorposts. There God had the character of a judge; at the Red Sea, of a deliverer. Mr. Smith makes it a difference of degree, “erased blots on an early page, in a book scribbled on every page.” Scripture makes it the difference of having the Holy Ghost or not, of being in the flesh or out of it, of being of Christ or not. I do not suppose Mr. Smith would deny this; but not knowing the true ground on which it rests in scripture, he obscures it all, lowering it down to experience. Yet he speaks of cleansing from all sin, that deep evil of our nature which is antecedent to sins.

Now what is cleansing from a nature, and that by blood? Cleansing from a nature by blood is unknown to the word. Sin in the flesh is condemned, and any cleansing there is is by our having for faith died to sin. Cleansing is from some actual defilement. From a nature we are delivered by death. All this cleansing from the evil of our nature is unscriptural, and arises from an attempt to reconcile an unscriptural system with what cannot now but be recognized as the truth of the word. Elsewhere

Mr. Smith uses these very words for cleansing from actual defilement.

I must refer to another practical point in connection with the substitution of the blood of Christ for the washing of water, for repeated cleansing. They hold that, where we have failed, instantly recurring to the blood cleansing us, we are as happy as ever. All is right in a flash, rest of soul at once restored; and this I have found current among those professing to have attained this state in various instances, and in one very striking case published by an English clergyman.

Now in cleansing with blood this is so, because it is pardon and forgiveness of an act committed, or say even of a thought. It is gone, I am forgiven, and the joy of God's goodness in it is in my soul. I confess my fault, and, as to forgiveness, there is no question remaining between me and God, and the sense of His goodness is deepened in my soul, because it is a question between me and God, and is perfectly settled by the precious blood of Christ. Mr. Smith puts the case of impatience with a workman, and confession to him.

But when my state and God's glory are referred to, it is another case. Mr. S.'s conduct was most Christian and right, and the blessing which followed easy to be believed. But supposing Christ's name had been dishonoured before the world by some act or word of mine, where no confession to an individual had anything to do with it, I have no idea of anything being imputed to me; actual present forgiveness my soul may find; but am I to take it quite coolly that I have dishonoured the name of that blessed One before the world? Let every Christian's heart answer it.

Nor is this all. This wretched doctrine of repeated cleansing by blood hinders all self-knowledge and true growth by it. It is not a question of pardon: this is settled; nor doubting divine love: the Father loves us as He loved Jesus. But when the Lord looked on Peter, he went out and wept bitterly. Was he wrong? But more, when the Lord restores his soul, He never speaks a word of reproach as to his denying Him, nor refers to it. It was put away by the death of Jesus, but He does say, “Lovest thou Me more than these?” He goes to the root of it in the heart of Peter—self-confidence. “If all deny thee, I will not.” That is, there is no hint of remaining guilt, but there is a probing to the root of the evil, of which the actual failure was only a fruit. Now this cool return to rest and ease of heart looses all this. There is no searching of the spring of evil, unsuspected perhaps in the soul, for growth in true spiritual life; and the soul is never thoroughly restored and blessed till this is done.

A man may be taken in a fault, but a fall is never the beginning of evil. Take Mr. Smith’s case; he was impatient, and spoke so to the workman; he owned it; all well, but how came he to be so? Neglect of prayer, of keeping in the sense of God’s presence, with the seriousness and self-restraint it gives, too much setting of heart on the arrangements which were spoiled, a spirit too much engrossed with them, a tendency to impatience not adequately subdued by the habitual sense of God’s presence. Here it is not a question of forgiveness, but of holiness of heart, of its depths, of the state of my heart. All this is lost on the system of cleansing anew by blood. It is a superficial system; it takes a low standard of what should occupy a Christian’s heart; it makes a question of mere pardon of what

should be a question of holiness; it denies the perfectness of conscience belonging to a Christian; and by raising this question in an unscriptural way, contenting the spirit with ease and rest through pardon, blinds it to the further exercise of soul, which seeks holiness and judges everything that hinders it as well as actual failure. It is not a doctrine promotive of holiness. There is levity in it. Individuals may escape the effect; or in the first fervour and tide of deliverance the soul may be above the shoals and banks; but in the long-run it leaves the soul in a superficial state.

There is only one more point which I feel called upon to notice—temptation, so called, not being sin. I have heard those under the influence of this system talk of suggestions, and slur over what has passed in their hearts. Mr. Smith (p. 105) says, “Let us beware of one special snare of Satan—that of trying to persuade us that temptation, or mere infirmity, is sin. Christ was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. His temptations were actual and real pressures to evil. He yielded not, and was without sin. Neither is the unwelcomed, unindulged, rejected temptation sin to us.” This is very bad. Mr. Smith must forgive me for speaking plainly. He has fallen into the snare of Satan. Mr. S. is so exceedingly loose in his statements, that one has to make all sorts of necessary distinctions before there can be any answer.

Temptations and infirmities are not the same thing. Paul gloried in his infirmities, certainly not in sins, and if we do put them together, the sense of temptation is at once defined. Infirmities in this sense are the persecutions, and difficulties, and reproaches a Christian has to go through, if he will be faithful and devoted, and which

would tend to hinder him in holding fast his faithful course. (See 2 Cor. 12:9, 10.)

Mr. Smith might see that the “yet” in the passage he quotes [from Heb. 9] is in the Authorized Version in italics; that is, it is not in the original. Hence we can say that any such application to Christ as is involved in Mr. Smith’s statement, is carefully guarded against. He was tempted according to [the] likeness [He took], that is, as a man, as we are in this world, sin excepted. He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities; He was, and is still, for us, sensible to all that human nature can feel from outrage, reproach, desertion, unrighteousness, isolation, and the want of sympathy. The word of God discerns the thoughts and intents of our hearts, judging their true character in us according to His holy presence. In all our trials and difficulties we have Christ’s full and tender sympathy. What does Mr. Smith mean by actual and real pressures to evil? From within or from without? Were they (the Lord forgive the word!) lusts in that blessed One, suggestions of His own sin in the flesh! Was there anything in Him which was not to be indulged because it was evil? Let Mr. Smith explain himself. What did He not yield to? When Satan succeeds in “touching” us, he awakens the thought of evil, even if we do not yield to it. Did he succeed in doing this with Christ? “The thought of foolishness is sin,” says the word. Was this in Christ? In His temptation He was hungry. This was no sin; it was a human need, and He felt it, and Satan sought to lead Him to do His own will as to it. But He lived by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. All the glory of the world from without was offered, but it awakened indignation, not any question. God’s word was His motive for acting, as

well as His rule. He was led of the Spirit to be tempted. We are tempted when we are led away of our own lusts.

All this flows from the damnable doctrine that lust is not sin. What is it? Is it holiness or righteousness? Where does it come from? It is the fruit of the sinful nature; "sin taking occasion by the commandment wrought in me all manner of lust." Those who rest on fruits in James —and I do not call it a strawy epistle—find no sin till it has conceived and brought forth. Those who go to the root with the word of God know that there is sin in the flesh. If Satan were to suggest to eat a handful of mud and dirt, would any one be inclined to do it? If he succeeds in touching us, it is because there is a desire in the sinful nature to which he adapts himself. If we are full of Christ, he will not succeed; but if the suggestion is awakened in our hearts, sin is awakened into the activity of desire, though we may rightly resist it; and if we look to Christ, we shall be victorious. Was any such suggestion awakened in the blessed One? All this loose insinuation as to Christ, to excuse and cover sin in ourselves, is very bad indeed. Was anything within in Christ which He had to resist? It must not be covered over with loose words, as "temptation or infirmity," which words have professedly in scripture a double meaning. (See James 1.)

The word judges thoughts and intents, the priesthood takes notice of difficulties and trials. Was the pressure of evil in Christ from within or without? From without He was spared nothing, but it only brought out a sweet savour. Within there was nothing but what gave the sweet savour in life and in death. I know of nothing more horrible than thus sacrificing the holiness of Christ to excuse and allow "suggestions," suggestions of sin in

us. Instead of taking Him as the living standard of holiness, holiness is lowered in us, so as to allow of evil suggestions, and Christ is brought down to this level, that sin in us may be passed over. I do not rest on the word peccable, applied to Christ by some of those in these views; evil and unholy, I should say, unintelligent as the thought is, because it is not the real question.

Mr. Smith speaks of “that deep evil of our nature which is antecedent of sins or sinning.” Was there anything of this in Christ? Mr. Smith would surely answer No. It was not an innocent thing which was born of the virgin Mary, but a “holy thing.” Could Satan introduce anything of it in Him? He takes the love of money in Judas with subtle wile to betray the Lord. It was a suggestion, a temptation from without, but met that which was within, awoke it, and then there was a suggestion, in which the thought of the heart had a part— even if judged and resisted. There may be suggestions of blasphemy or despair, which are fiery darts of the enemy, when there is no lust. But there were never even such as these in Christ; if forsaken, He could say, “My God,” and “Thou continuest holy.” Did the enemy succeed in arousing evil thoughts in Christ which He resisted. I ask of any honest Christian are not these suggestions, thoughts in his heart? If they are not evil, why does he resist them? It will not do to talk of pressures of evil. From without? Yes. Did these pressures awaken in Christ’s heart suggestions which He resisted as evil? If so, He ceased to be absolutely “that holy thing” —really never had been. He was a holy man, not an innocent man, and ever maintained His holiness—met Satan by obedience and dependence on God by the word. The wicked one did not touch Him. There were no suggestions; there are, or

may be, in us, because the flesh, sin in the flesh, is there. Others, under the influence of these doctrines, I have heard say, He was imperfect, alleging His growth in wisdom and stature. He was a true real man, and, as a child, He was perfect as a child; the vessel grew as ours does. But this shews the way this doctrine works. Was He ever anything but perfectly holy? That is the question. If there were evil suggestions in His heart which He had to resist, He was not.

I seek, then, a fuller, more assured, unchanging ground and state of acceptance, and divine favour, than this system gives me. Here it fails and goes back to the common evangelical ground, which God is leading us beyond. I look for a deeper character of holiness, of which the false doctrine on the other point deprives us; and I see it depriving Christ of His holy glory, and me of a Christ who can be the treasure and food and light of my soul, and fixing the attention on self instead of on Christ.

I admit fully the work of deliverance distinct from forgiveness; the Epistle to the Romans elaborately teaches the two. And I believe all this stir as to a higher life has done good, in awakening souls to the need of something better than current Christianity, and I bless God for it.

I trust there is nothing which has the form of attack in what I have written. I not only disclaim any such thought, if such there be, but regret and recall anything which may seem to have this character, save what concerns the holy nature and Person of Christ; on that there can be no compromise. This dragging of Christ down in doctrine to excuse the evil suggestions of our

hearts, as if there were no sin in them, is intolerable to every godly heart. The perfection was found to be imperfect, and Christ lowered to make it pass as no sin. This is intolerable.

I only add, it is not looking back to past experience that is our strength, though it may occasionally have place, but living on Christ now in the path of God's will. I deny Paul's talking about himself and his experiences, save where he says he is a fool in doing it—they had compelled him. "I say again, let no man think me a fool; if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little." (See 2 Cor. 11.) He does personify great Christian truths in his own person, as at the end of Galatians 2, as I have done a hundred times myself without suspicion of any particular reference to self. "I am crucified with Christ" is the only true state of every Christian; and he is pressing it as such in rebuking Peter.

124 This is not exact, but it is of no consequence here.

Scriptural Unity And Union

Editor's Note 126

My object is in no way to assail Dr. Stuart (of whose personal worth and piety, though myself unacquainted with him, I have no doubt) but to take up the true grounds of unity and union: points not only of great importance, but occupying the hearts and minds of Christians everywhere.

The desire of unity flows, I cannot doubt, from the Spirit of God. True unity and true union are from Him, and according to His mind. He will bring all things that are blessed around Himself as a moral centre. It evidently must be so, for He is God, and the true centre of all blessing. That according to this there is a special effectuation of this in Christ in the fulness of times, is clearly also revealed to us in scripture. Our question is: What, and of what, and how is this unity or union? How far is it unity, and how far union? These are not the same. Scripture must be our guide in the inquiry. And it is as precise as Dr. Stuart is vague. It reveals the purpose of God according to the good pleasure of His will, for the administration of the fulness of times, to gather together in one (anakephalioasasthai) all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are in earth. It reveals an eternal state when Christ shall have given up the kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all—surely ever Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; but God as such all in all, not the subsistence of the kingdom held by Christ as man. As man the Son will then be subject, as we know He was on earth, though God over all blessed for ever, all the pleasure of the

Godhead in Him bodily. I only add this to guard from error, as I have alluded to the passage in which His giving up of the kingdom and His subjection are spoken of.

There is another unity spoken of; that is, of saints on earth, and I may add in glory, and in a twofold way. First, as individual saints, a family I may call it, as it specially refers to the Father—Christ being the first-born among many brethren. Of this John speaks; of the church as the body he never does. Its second aspect is this:—those in whom the Spirit of God dwells are really united to Christ by the Holy Ghost, are members of His body, who, as man, is exalted to the right hand of God, in the glory He had with the Father before the world was. Both these will be perfected in heavenly places. The sons will be in glory conformed to the image of the Son. They have borne the image of the earthy; they will bear the image of the heavenly, made perfect in one. He will be the head of the body, the church, over all things.

I have thought it better to state briefly the scripture revelation as to unity. My statements are little more than scripture texts strung together, so as to shew what its doctrine is distinctly, before any comment on the statements of Dr. Stuart's sermon. For the truth itself is what enables us to discern any departure from it, and ideas which are purely human in their true light. True unity is too precious a thing, too much according to the heart of God, and must be, not to seek to guard against any erroneous views as to its nature.

The passages I would refer to, some of which I shall be led to notice more fully, are John 17:11; 20, 21; 22, 23: three distinct unities. Ephesians 1:19-23. Compare

Colossians 1:15-18. The same twofold headship is in 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:9, 10; Romans 8:29, 30.

I am somewhat surprised, not at the sermon's producing an impression, but that its vague statements were not estimated more justly by those who sought its publication. I suppose want of scriptural habits of thought is what accounts for it. Its references to scripture are everywhere loose and inaccurate. The text itself connects part of verse 23 of John 17 with verse 21, leaving out verse 22, which makes a total change in the phase of unity treated of, and the effect of that in verse 24 is left out, or the discrepancy would be manifest.

There are three unities spoken of in John 17. First is that of the immediate disciples of Christ. The application of this unity to them is incontrovertible, as is evident from the language of verse 12. The second (20, 21) is of those that believe through their word, "one in us," and this was to the intent that the world may believe. The third is unity in glory, the glory given to Christ Himself of the Father, when the saints are made perfect in one, that the world may know He was sent of Him, and, seeing them in the same glory as Christ, know (most wondrous word!) that we have been loved as He was loved. May our souls admire such grace, and know what it is to dwell in it.

Dr. Stuart omits the statement of their being in glory (ver. 22), and connects the world's believing with their being made perfect in one. This is not the right way of dealing with scripture, and scripture so solemn and precious in its import as this is.

He tells us further, “the union of the true believer to Christ is set forth in our text, and secured by the double bond of a mutual indwelling.” Now there is a mutual indwelling blessedly set forth in John 14 as known to saints when the Holy Ghost should be given, as He was on the day of Pentecost. But no union with Christ is spoken of in the text, nor indeed does John ever speak of it. It is another thought—one which in his epistle he carries on to dwelling in God and God in us, known by the Spirit He has given. Perhaps it is even a more precious thought than union, if in such infinite and unspeakable privileges, conferred by grace—of which, His grace, God will shew in the ages to come the unspeakable riches in His kindness towards us through Jesus Christ—we can speak of more and less.

On this mutual indwelling of Christ and us Dr. Stuart insists much. There is not a word of it in John 17. The mutual indwelling of the Father and the Son is spoken of as “Thou Father art in Me, and I in Thee,” but not so of Christ and the believer. Dr. Stuart has been misled by the sound of the words in “I in them, and Thou in Me”; but there is no mutual indwelling here at all. It is display in glory—Christ in the saints, and the Father in Christ. The whole statement is a mistake. We have only to read the passage to see it; and in privileges so wondrous, and thoughts so deep, it behoves us to keep close to scripture. If we do not, we shall lose much, following our own thoughts. I cannot doubt that so excellent a person as Dr. Stuart has done so here in giving course to his own thoughts, instead of cleaving close to the word.

I do not dwell much on the “oneness of evil.” There is a oneness in evil in one sense. It is in man self-will departed from God, and enmity against Him, whatever

its form, lawless lust, transgression of the law, and hating Christ, and therein His Father. Still the statements of Dr. Stuart seemed to me to hang little together. “The oneness of evil is among the most marked of its characteristics,” yet “sin and unity are everlasting opposites.” However, as my object is not to criticise, but to treat the subject of true unity, and there are important moral observations in the remarks of Dr. Stuart on the oneness of evil, I do not comment on it farther.

I should wholly object to his use of John 15 which is hortatory; and the true vine applies immediately to the then state of the disciples: “now ye are clean,” being really, ye are already clean (ede). Hence, as the blessed Lord knew them, verse 6 changes from “ye” to “if a man,” and returns to “ye” in verse 7, when fruit-bearing, not withering and burning, is the subject. “The true vine “refers to the vine brought out of Egypt. Israel was not the true vine, but Christ; as Christ, not Israel, was in result the servant owned of God— Isaiah 44. It is not church union. That is union of members to Christ the head in heaven, where it is not a question of cutting off, nor of fruit-bearing, nor of purging. I quite admit that there is the general analogy now, and the applicability of the exhortation. But I cannot go farther into the interpretation of the passage here. It has no application to Dr. Stuart’s object, for it is at all events an exhortation. All this part of John takes up the responsibility of saints with the Father. It is “a lower sense “in which the disciples are said to be in Christ, namely, their connection with Christ then upon earth (ede, already), not when He was the exalted man in

heaven, which alone is church union, as Ephesians 1:19-23 makes evident.

But I pass on from this section, which is a matter of interpretation, on which I should be glad to hear any godly person, though not doubting the justness of what I have said: only remarking that when Dr. Stuart says “a lower sense,” it cannot have two senses, and I suppose he would not deny that, if it speaks of “temporary believers,” it cannot refer to union with Christ as members of His body.

In the following section, I admit the difference between the individuality of angels and the one race of which Adam was the head. And that Christ was the head of a spiritual race, taking Adam’s place in a higher way, every intelligent Christian taught in the word will admit, and will moreover feel the importance of it: Romans 5 and 1 Corinthians 15 are clear on the point. Dr. Stuart has given us, too, some interesting observations on the elements of all being united in Christ’s Person, the full justness of which I am not prepared to speak of without weighing them more than I have, but which are quite worthy of being weighed, and which I pass from, only to pursue my main subject, union and unity. Here all is confusion, and sometimes difficult to seize from the way it is expressed. Union and unity, as here used, have no scriptural intelligible meaning.

That God is the fountain of all angels’ good, and the source of their happiness, and the centre of their harmony, is certain. But what means their being “united to Him”? Who ever heard, in scripture at least, of angels being united to God? No trace of such a thought is in scripture. I am sure Dr. Stuart means no harm in it; but

it is this loose thinking., away from scripture, which has deprived the church of so much precious truth. We, that is all those who have the Holy Ghost, are united to Christ, the glorified Man, as members of His body. “He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit.” But angels united to God is really in itself a blasphemy— though I am quite sure Dr. Stuart means such as little as I do. But the reality of union with Christ is lost through this loose way of speaking. When Dr. Stuart says, “Many of them fall away,” I thought at first it might be a misprint for “fell away,” as we read of angels, who kept not their first estate, and are reserved in chains of darkness to the judgment of the great day. But he says, the elect angels abide, in the present tense too, as is the whole statement. The rest in the paragraph is really one mass of confusion. Their everlasting union to the centre of all good appears to be increased, confirmed, and secured.

As I have already said, there is no union to God. Angels, and principalities, and powers are made subject to Christ; and the whole state of things will be reconciled to God in His fulness, and brought into order under Christ, when the fulness of time is come. God has given to Him, the exalted Man, to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him who fills all in all (compare Eph. 4:9, 10); but the increasing, conjoining, securing union with God, is an idea utterly foreign to scripture, and excludes what is in scripture, by what is substituted for it.

I will just remark that goodwill to men is not the form of the angels’ words in Luke, but good pleasure (eudokia) in men. He did not take up the angels, but He took up the seed of Abraham; and it is beautiful to see the unjealous delight of these holy beings in the plans of

God’s glory, though in others than themselves, for “His delight (Wisdom’s) was with the sons of men.” But the reciprocating song of earth, when He had finished His work, is all confusion. The babes and sucklings spoken of in Psalm 8 are celebrating Messiah according to Psalm 118, a prophecy of which several verses are cited as to the latter days by the Lord and the apostles, particularly by Peter the apostle of the circumcision. It is the anticipation of that day, “the day which Jehovah hath made,” when Hosanna to the Son of David will resound, not from the mouths of babes and sucklings, and the crowd that were divinely-compelled to do it, lest the stones should have to cry out, but from a people willing in the day of His power, when His heart will set Him in the chariots of His willing people. And note here, in this remarkable anticipation of that day, the expression “peace in heaven.” It is not till Satan and his angels are cast out thence, that the full accomplishment of this will take place. Then in due time they shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of Jehovah. Till then their house will be left unto them desolate,, and they will not see Him. He meanwhile sits, not on His own throne, but on His Father’s, as He expressly states (Rev. 3), according to the word: Sit on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool. Then Jehovah will send the rod of His power out of Zion, and He will rule in the midst of His enemies.127 The Lord had not finished His work when He entered into Jerusalem. His course down here may be said, in a certain sense, to have closed. His work He was just about to accomplish. But it is here summed up by Dr. Stuart, as God in Christ reconciling all things to Himself whether they be things in earth or things in heaven. There is no such passage, no such statement in scripture. Two passages are confounded, both

misapplied. God, we read in the end of 2 Corinthians 5, was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing to them their trespasses. But the world would not have Him. Then, having accomplished the work of atoning redemption, and gone into glory, having been made sin for us, He sends out His ambassadors, to beseech men to be reconciled to God. Blessed gospel testimony and grace! There is another passage on quite a different subject, in Colossians 1. All the fulness (pan tu pleroma, a word of all moment against the Gnostic heresies—compare chap. 2:9), was pleased to dwell in Him, and … by Him to reconcile all things to itself, by Him I say, whether they be things in heaven or things in earth,128 and you hath He reconciled, in the body of His flesh through death. Here the reconciliation of believers through the work of the cross is clearly distinguished from the reconciling all things. They were reconciled. "You hath he," etc. But God was by Him to reconcile all things. That was to be done. This duality is maintained all through the passage. He is firstborn of every creature, firstborn from the dead, Head of the church, His body. This is summed up at the end of Ephesians 1. These two passages in 2 Corinthians 5, and Colossians 1 are mingled together (by Dr. S.) and connected with His going on the ass to Jerusalem; and utter confusion is the natural result.

There is an utter confusion too in all this part, one which has brought in abominable error as to Christ, in the foremost of the evangelical German divines, and in the Dutch reformed in America through them, namely, as if man was being restored. Adam was the image of Him that was to come. But all is utterly fallen and ruined in the first Adam. Now, says the Lord, is the judgment of

this world; and again, now once in the end of the world (sunteleia ton aionon) hath He appeared to put away sin. The head of the blessing is man in a new state, risen and exalted. Man, as in the flesh, has seen and hated both Him and His Father.

As a general truth Dr. Stuart would not, and does not, deny that we all fell in Adam. But there is more than this. Man has been fully tested as to whether as such he could be restored. Without law he was so bad that the flood was needed even in this world; under the law his sin became exceeding sinful; and when God after this came into the world in grace, making Himself of no reputation, to bring love to sinners, and yet shewing divine presence and power in removing every effect of sin here below, they spat in His face and crucified Him. Now, says the Lord, is the judgment of this world. And we shall find that whatever God set up good, the first thing man did was to spoil all, though God went on in grace. Man himself fell the first thing. Noah got drunk the first thing. The golden calf was made before Moses was down from the mount. Strange fire was offered the first day, and Aaron never went into the holiest in his robes of glory and beauty. Solomon, son of David, departed from God; and Nebuchadnezzar put the faithful ones in the fire and became a beast. Finally, in the rejection of Christ it was (after all remedial means which were at God’s disposal) demonstrated that the mind of the flesh was enmity against God. They had seen and hated both Him and His Father. Man must be born again (anothen). It is a new creation when men were dead in sins, connected with the second Man rejected by man, and now raised from the dead and exalted to the right hand of God.

That the blessed Lord was a true real man in flesh and blood is as essential to Christianity as He was God. In this I trust I have no controversy with Dr. Stuart. The Word was made (egeneto) flesh and dwelt among us, and, as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same, made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death. This lies at the root, and is the essence, of Christianity, and a blessed truth it is, unspeakably so to us human beings, that, if a sinless man, He was a true man, body, and soul, and, one may add, spirit. This was called in question by heresy as soon as His deity was.

I think scripture is more guarded than Dr. Stuart here, but he is more guarded than some. Scripture never says, as some have, bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh; and scripture is wiser than we are. This has been used to make union in incarnation, which is quite unscriptural. It issued in Irving-ism; but the seed was under the clod in Scotch Presbyterianism, and is still cherished as a garden plant in the semi-Irvingites of that body. Dr. Stuart only goes so far as to say, flesh out of our flesh, bone out of our bone. Still it leads him half-way into the evil.

A new creation must in its nature leave out fallen man, as fallen, for he is not a new creation but the old one, that which is put off—no doubt the same person; but he is of, and lives in, a new creation, if in Christ Jesus. And what would the new creation have been, as to moral beings, if fallen man was left out as the object of it? The elect angels have not left their first estate. Dr. Stuart is as usual very vague. “The operation was to be in man, already existing, and defiled by sin, which separates while it defiles. It was from our corrupted stock He drew

His holy manhood, because not merely men like us, but of us."

What has this to do with the new creation? Was union in incarnation? Dr. Stuart does not say so, but what do his words mean? "Was Christ a new creation," he says, "casting himself into the head of the existing family, and from it deriving his own everlasting manhood?" He does not say it was union; that he puts differently. But he states it, while admitting He was holy, harmless, undefiled, so as to lead the mind to a connection of Christ with man in incarnation, which, while from its uncertainty and vagueness it almost eludes the grasp, is perilous from the way it leads the soul to the verge of union in incarnation.

Christ assuredly was, as born into this world and ever, holy, harmless, undefiled; but it shews the habitual confusion of thought as to Christ, if we remember that this is spoken of Christ as High Priest (Heb. 7) and carefully presented as separate from sinners, in contrast too, with high priests "taken from among men." When scripture speaks of His taking flesh, a vital truth for us as I have already said, not only is it said "a body hast Thou prepared me": but in stating His doing so, the language is careful not to speak as Dr. Stuart speaks. The children kekoinoneke of flesh and blood of Him; metesche paraplesios is used.

Now I repeat that there may be no mistake—I hold His being truly a man in flesh and blood, and with a human soul as well as a body, to be a vital truth. It is the subject of the adoring joy of my soul; nor do I think it is half enough taught or believed, that He was a true man, while a sinless and holy man. What is false is connecting

this with the idea of union with us. This vagueness as to union with man is so much the more perilous, as Dr. Stuart insists that there is a greater difference between the brutes and man, than between man and God. I suppose he refers here to the low and degraded form of infidelity called evolution. In his horror of this, perhaps for my part I should say contempt, I should heartily join Dr. Stuart. But as to our present point, he leaves out the present condition of man. Man was created for God; but, preferring to believe the deceiver, he did his own will. He has been driven out of Paradise, where he had to say to God, he was without God (atheos) in the world. His adaptation to God was eternal misery as having lost Him, and now this is not all the truth. Man, as far as his will could do it, has turned out of this world God when come into it in grace. The mind of the flesh is enmity against God. In the moral sense he is infinitely farther from God than he is from the brute. If left to himself, he can follow the brute, and worse, and as regards God has no understanding. Christ was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. Man must be born anew to have anything to say to Him, save enmity, sins, and judgment. Conscience—the knowledge of good and evil—acquired by the fall, he has. Nor does gracious invitation restore him. "Wherefore when I came, was there no man? When I called, was there none to answer?" What He had seen and heard, that He testified, says John, and no man receives His testimony. The real question is not, did Christ come in grace to such? but did He unite Himself to them? or are renewed souls united to Him when, having accomplished redemption, He is exalted to glory? Scripture speaks of the latter and positively denies the former.

As to union in life, as I have said, Dr. Stuart is vague, and uses figurative expressions, which may mean nothing or anything. But he is distinct in identifying Christ's uniting Himself to us, and taking sinners into union with Himself. This last was the problem, he says, and solved by His uniting Himself to His people in death. Now Christ's uniting Himself to His people is unknown to scripture. He does not unite Himself to sinners, nor does He even to saints: they are united to Him, by the Holy Ghost, when He is in glory. They are members of His body; not He members of them; members of it when the Head is glorified, and they are created again. The end of Ephesians i and early part of Ephesians 2 are clear as to this point, and how it takes place, and where this is not seen, the real truth of unity is wholly lost. How can the Holy One be united to a sinner, if the union be real and spiritual?

He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit. Is that true of a mere sinner? And scripture is express in denying it. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." Hence in Ephesians, where union is spoken of, He is not seen till raised from the dead and set at God's right hand in heavenly places. And then, we being dead in sins, He hath quickened us together with Him, and made us sit in heavenly places in Him. Then only is scriptural and real union, not in Christ born into this world, united to sinners in their sins; not a Christ on the cross, and when He was most especially alone, united to those for whom He was substituted before their sins we/e cancelled by His precious blood; not even a Christ glorified, united to sinners or to any down here. Scripture never speaks of His being united to us, but, saints being united to Him in glory, in a totally new life

by the Holy Ghost, so that they become risen and heavenly people.

Remark too here that, where the Lord says He abode alone till after He had died He is speaking of the Son of man. Testimony to His being Son of God was given in the resurrection of Lazarus, to His being Son of David in His riding into Jerusalem. The Greeks come up, He says, “the hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified.” But, to take this title, according to the counsels of God He must die. Son of God according to Psalm 2 He was; King of Israel, Messiah, according to the same Psalm He was; and surely, as to His personal title to it, Son of man. But the kings of the earth stood up, and the princes took counsel together. In a word, He must be rejected to take up the place of Son of man according to Psalm 8. So in John 1 Nathanael owns Him, according to Psalm 2, Son of God, King of Israel. The Lord’s answer is, that he should see more henceforth (for Israel, in John, is rejected in the first chapter, to own those born of God alone), “the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of man.”

When Christ’s birth, or His so wonderfully associating Himself with the called and repentant remnant of Israel in John’s baptism, is spoken of, His title is Son of God, not Son of man. “That holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God,” and the Father’s voice, when Heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended on Him alone, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Son of man He delighted to call Himself, but to say, forbidding, when His testimony was rejected, to be announced any more as the Christ; Matt. 16, Mark 9, Luke 9. The Son of man must suffer and be rejected, put to death, and rise again the third

day, that as the risen man in a wholly new position, He might take the place revealed of the Son of man in Daniel 7 and Psalm 8.

This doctrine of union of the Son of God with sinners in their sins falsifies the whole nature of Christianity, a new creation, and man in a new life, united to a glorified man in heaven, by the Holy Ghost dwelling in him, consequent on the accomplishment of redemption. Dr. Stuart says, “Christ united Himself to His people by taking them to Himself in His death on Calvary.” If this be so, all the vague language of Dr. Stuart and the plain language of bolder men, as to union in incarnation, and also the utterly unscriptural doctrine of His bearing our sins all His life is wholly set aside. But what does union here mean? “That He might receive us into oneness He stood in our place.” This I believe, but it contradicts what is said a few lines higher up. That all His people were seen as if they were there, because He represented them, and as He bore their sins, so also they died with Him is true, blessed be God. But this has nothing to do with union. It is another great and precious truth, substitution. He stood in our place, as Dr. Stuart most justly says, but this is not union but the opposite of it. He accepted our penalty; thank God, and blessed be’ the name of Him who has loved us, He did. But that is not union, but standing there for us alone. All that Dr. Stuart says of its effect as to our sins I cordially say Amen to, as a poor sinner profiting by it, though it has done far more also for us and glorified God Himself, so that man goes into His glory. But this is not union. Union with Christ is in living saints when He is exalted as man to the right hand of God, the work of redemption, of perfect redemption, being accomplished when He was alone.

All that Dr. Stuart says as to His being broken in pieces is quite wrong. A bone of Him was not to be broken. In the passage “This is my body which is broken for you,” broken is not really in the text. But on this I do not dwell further. As Dr. Stuart says, “He who was to be the bond of union for ever was left alone, as no other ever was or can be.” With what is here said my heart unites, but He was then alone. Only I must remark the customary looseness as to scriptural truth in the words “The Lamb of God taking away the sins of the world.” This is quite unsound and nowhere found in scripture. The sins of the world are not taken away, or there could be no judgment; indeed all would be saved. The end of this paragraph, in page 15,1 think very objectionable, but it does not specially bear on my subject.

But that which follows, loose and unscriptural though it be in expression, yet true in result, contradicts consequently all the statements as to union before or on the cross. “Through His death the Lord Jesus sends His Holy Spirit into the hearts of His redeemed; and by that Spirit, in the day of our effectual calling, we are brought into a wondrously high and holy union with Christ, and with God.” Now, as I have already said, in the scripture, it is by the Spirit when we have received it, we are united to a glorified Christ. The only true and scriptural union, and we may add, so of all true saints with one another, is by the same one Spirit who dwells in each of them. No doubt Christ had to die to send the Holy Spirit down here: a plain proof, if we are brought into union with Him by it, that He was not united to us in death; but “sends through His death” has really no sense. We were unfit to receive it, save as washed in His blood, and forgiven; but sending “through His death “has really no

sense. “The Holy Ghost was not yet [given] (was not, as known in the New Testament, down here, though as a divine Person of course eternal in His Person, and operative in every work of God), because Jesus was not yet glorified,” is what scripture says; John 7. If He went not away, the Comforter would not come: shewing early the place Christ must come in, as man, before we could be united to Him, He the head (Eph. 1) and we the body: we, sons by faith in Jesus withal, and He, the Spirit of adoption making us, being sons, cry Abba, Father; the power, and giving the consciousness of this new relationship with the Father, and membership of Christ. But scripture never says, “His Holy Spirit.” It is incongruous, though He be called the Spirit of Christ, as present in us, in Romans 8.

Nor is “union with God” a thought known to scripture. A common one, I grant it, but common to the unscriptural carelessness so usual among Christians. All this is loose confusion. And let it not be supposed that these things are immaterial. The true consciousness of our relationships with God, and the Father, and with Christ, is the atmosphere in which our Christian affections breathe and are developed. Communion with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ, and with God, scripture speaks of (and it is our highest blessedness), but of union with God never. It is unintentional blasphemy. Union is with Christ, the man in glory. Speaking of union with God only destroys the very idea of union.

The statements of Dr. Stuart on the Trinity are hazarded, going beyond scripture; but I suppose he means what is truth, and it is not my present subject: so I leave it there. The history of the doctrine of the procession of the Holy Ghost, which professedly divided the Greek and

Roman churches, and which was a metaphysical novelty, forbidden even at Rome, in the time of Leo the Great, ought to have taught Christians in these days, whilst holding the doctrine of the Trinity personally, and unity in the Godhead without wavering, to avoid metaphysical theology in such holy matters, for this question of procession is mere metaphysics in divine things.

I now turn to “some of the great properties of this oneness.” Now in Dr. Stuart’s remarks on these, I gladly recognize piety and personal delight in Christ. But true union is lost in his remarks. He speaks of gathering together in one all the redeemed in earth and heaven. Of this scripture never does speak. It speaks of heading up all things under Christ; and it speaks of dying, not for the Jews only, but to gather together in one the children of God, which were scattered abroad. So that then they had not hitherto been gathered.

The unity of God’s children down here is spoken of in a double way: the unity of children in a family, in their relationship with a holy Father, as in John 17, Christ the pattern among many brethren; and the unity of the body united to Christ, the head in glory. But this scriptural unity and oneness is lost in the vagueness of “all the redeemed in heaven and earth.” That the unity of the saints in the New Testament will not cease when they are in glory, I surely believe (they will then be made perfect in one); that the body will then be complete, also the church of the firstborn, and the just men (the saints of the Old Testament) perfected, I do not doubt, though God has reserved some better thing for us.

But the unity spoken of in scripture is by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. As to the body, by one Spirit we

are all baptized into one body, Jews or Greeks, barbarian or Scythian. This clearly could not be before. The Jew, on the contrary, was strictly bound to keep up the middle wall of partition—sinned if he did not. Now, by the cross, it is broken down, and He has made both one and reconciled both in one body to God, having slain the enmity, and we are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. There is one body and one Spirit. There was the unity of a nation before, the great body of whom were not converted at all. The glorified head, the man in glory, did not yet exist, who is head over all things, head of the body. It is not as the creating life-giving word and Son of God, that Christ is the Head over all things, and to the church His body. It is, as is evident from Ephesians 1, the man whom God has raised and set at His right hand. Then only too the Holy Ghost was sent down from heaven. He could not be (John 7) till Jesus was glorified. And as we have seen from 1 Corinthians 12, then it was by the baptism of the Holy Ghost that the saints were baptized into one body.

So also it is as to known sonship, and the unity connected with it. “The heir so long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant though he be lord of all… But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons; and because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts crying, Abba, Father,” Gal. 4. Thus they are brought into known relationship with the Father, to be fully accomplished in glory, when they will be made perfect in one, Christ the firstborn among many brethren.

Here are unities, that is, of the family and of the body: one a relationship with the Father, Christ being the firstborn; the other true union with Christ, the head formed by the Holy Ghost come down from heaven, consequent on His being glorified as man—unities, of which Christians were bound to maintain the manifestation on earth, according to John 17 and Ephesians 4. In both respects they have failed. The wolf has caught the sheep and scattered them (thank God, he cannot pluck or catch them out of the good Shepherd's hand); and he has set up the travesty of unity in popery, and all sorts of churches, first national, and then free, among those who could no longer bear the corruptions of Romanism.

Scriptural unity and union is lost, nor scarce cared for, save that God is awakening a craving after it in these last days. It is confounded with communion, and union of organizations; which cannot be the unity of the body nor of the family of God. Duty as to it is forgotten, and men are content to leave it to be fulfilled in another world. Let us see what Dr. Stuart makes of it in these last pages of his sermon. The bond of children is confounded with the membership of the body, and this is said to be similar to the union between the Father and the Son, a gross and utter mistake; as if the analogies of John 17 could be applied to the union of the members with the head. Apply only the teaching of Ephesians or 1 Corinthians 12 to the wondrous statements of John 17, and see how it offends every moral sense and feeling.

The rest of this paragraph describing communion, I have not a word to say against. Only in strange confusion, using an account of the state of the world (habitable earth) under Christ's reign, Dr. Stuart makes the

spiritual flock to be a “mingled” one, composed of wolves and lambs together!—a sentence which I profess myself wholly unable to comprehend. If he had merely used it as a vague statement of peace, I should; but he says, it is a mingled flock. I first thought it meant unconverted and converted together, but he goes on to speak of spiritual communion together, and what the mingling is I do not know.

How wholly union, in the scriptural sense, is lost in the thought of the state of the soul, is seen in what follows. That Adam was the head of his fallen race, no Christian denies; but what union to a covenant is, what “as in Adam all die” has to do with dissolving union with his covenant, I know not. Next, it is union to the world in its allurements and power. What has this to do with the reality of union? Then we have union to sin, which has no sense at all. Sin in the flesh we read of, captivity to it, deliverance from it; but union to it only bewilders the mind. It is there always in the flesh, though we are no longer under the law of sin and death, Christ having died to sin once, and He being our life in the power of the Spirit. Then, we read of union to self. Self is self. I do not live to self if I know the power of redemption; but all this has nothing to do with union or unity. It is my personal state as having died in Christ, and the risen Christ being now my new life.

As to crucifying being a lingering death but a certain one, it is all a mischievous delusion. If I am crucified with Christ, I am dead—dead with Christ, dead to the law; ye are dead, crucified with Christ, nevertheless alive, but not me, but Christ living in me. There is no lingering or gradual death spoken of in scripture. I am to reckon myself dead, and then for practice bear about

in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. Only when actually dead, can it be said there is no sin in me. The whole theory here is unscriptural. But this by the bye. Union is lost in the vague use of it for the state of the soul. Union with Christ is not simply life; “as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, so the Son quickeneth whom he will.” This is divine work. Union is connected with Christ, seen as a man whom God has raised from the dead, and of us together with Him. In connection with union He is not seen as life-giving Son, but as a man raised by God when He was dead. Hence, in Colossians, it is also connected with our having been forgiven all trespasses.

As to the vine, Dr. Stuart is contradicting himself, for he has recognized in this sermon that there are temporary branches which are taken away. I believe no member of His body will ever be separated from Him; but the application of the vine does not hold good.

How we get strength from His crucifixion in weakness I know not, save perhaps by moral experience realizing it. Scripture does not speak of it. We abide in Him, if we eat His flesh and drink His blood, and in this sense eating Him, live by Him. But it is never said that we derive our strength from His crucifixion. Joy and fruit are our state. Union is another thing. Such statements deny its reality, and confound communion and union.

The last paragraph is sorrowful—sorrowful that Dr. Stuart’s heart and conscience were not affected by what he speaks of. He recognises that the world’s admiration has been turned into a taunt, with a saying sometimes “Behold, how they hate one another.” “Yet their mutual love is as genuine, and in the same circumstances would

prove as intense as eighteen hundred years ago." This is to be power for the salvation of the world. What is? That it would prove as intense in the same circumstances. Does the world say now, "Behold how these Christians love one another"? Does it not mock at their divisions? Is not corrupt Christianity taunting them with it? Is not the world turning openly infidel? What is this change of circumstances but the worldliness and scattering of Christians? Besides, how is it to be power for the conversion of the world, when, "in the loftiness of his heart, he (the worldly man) would count it despicable in himself to be capable of such an affection "? "It speaks as a living witness in the hour when the Spirit moves on his heart." No doubt, but then it is not by it he was attracted when worldly. It is the individual already under the influence of the Spirit who is attracted by it. "To the world," Dr. Stuart tells us, "Christian love is incomprehensible." Yet it has great power in converting the world! It is "despicable "in the world's eyes, but it is an "attractive spectacle, ordained for the world's salvation! "

The next property or power in it is "in our seen union on earth to Christ in heaven." What this means I know not. Men may see the fruits of it perhaps, but as distinct from these where the affections are set on heavenly things, it cannot be seen at all. There is nothing, in the passage Dr. Stuart quotes, to say to it. The chief priests, etc., took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus, that is, when on earth. The general effect of communion with the Lord, I surely do not question; but this confusion of communion with union, both in its reality and in its forming one body on earth, is one of the great evils of the day. It really denies union and

promotes dis-union among saints. If they can have communion from time to time, shake hands across the hedge, as has been said, they are content.

But there is a craving, and from God. Union has therefore been sought in other ways. Of this even the Evangelical Alliance was, and is, a witness; but the name betrays its true character. For an alliance there must be two or more. They agreed to remain sects, and to meet notwithstanding. Indeed they confessed they had pretended to attain to too much unity, and they must be content with union. In America it has been sought by interchanges of pulpits. But there error and truth are all mingled together, and indifference to truth cultivated. In the English Establishment unity is sought in the same way. The most marked effort at unity is in the Presbyterian body. In Canada they have coalesced; in the United States the new school and the old school, that is Arminians and Calvinists, have joined. Dr. Stuart alludes to the union of the Reformed Presbyterians with what is called the Free Church of Scotland.

As an outward thing, one may rejoice in seeing less division among Protestants. As far as my acquaintance with their statement, the Covenanters were perhaps from their small numbers, and adherence to principle, as a general thing, the most godly living of the Presbyterian bodies. I trust they may not lose it by being swamped in a larger one. But it has nothing to do with the unity of the body of Christ. Imperfect as the views of Dr. Stuart as to unity are, as he sees merely the binding Christians together as the children of their heavenly Father (a blessed union surely, but not the body of Christ: union by the Holy Ghost to the man Christ Jesus in glory, so as to form his body); inadequate and

defective as is his general idea of “gathering into one all the redeemed in heaven and in earth,” of which indeed scripture does not speak, the unity he does know is wholly inapplicable, and indeed contrary, to these unions of ecclesiastical bodies. For they have not the pretension to be all saints.

I do not now discuss whether multitudinous bodies are right or wrong, but they are multitudinous bodies, not a gathering of saints, as such, to Jesus’ name. They are not— cannot pretend to be—the body of Christ, nor a part of it, nor even the true family of God. Further, their object is to impose religion on the state, to make the state act on Christian principles. The gathering together in one the children of God, which were scattered abroad, does not enter their minds, but getting the state to act Christianly; and they insist on the authority and independence of the church exactly on popish grounds, not that of a little despised flock suffering under its persecution, but pressing its own principles on the state. That Christianity has modified men’s habits is quite true. Men do not do in the light what they do in the dark. But making the world Christian in its ways is not gathering together the children of God. It is a return to Judaism, 129 as indeed the Covenanters, true-hearted people as they were, clearly did. They took the sword, and perished by the sword.

As to the unity of the body, it does not seem to cross their minds, formed on earth as it was by the baptism of the Holy Ghost. But the whole Free Church principle was a delusion: Christ is not the King of the church. Where is such a thought in scripture? “King of saints,” in the Revelation, is a false reading for “king of nations,” borrowed from Jeremiah. King of the Jews, scripture and

the world's mockery owns Him to be. That He will rule over the nations is clearly revealed; He will take to Him His great power and reign, when divine wrath comes. The kings of the earth did rise up against the Lord, and against His anointed; they will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is King of kings and Lord of lords. But Christ is not now sitting on His own throne at all, but on the Father's; Rev. 3:21. God has said to Him, "Sit on my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool." And there the blessed One is in glory, gathering now His joint-heirs by the Spirit sent down from heaven, through the gospel, joint-heirs, once all united, and the manifested body of Christ, but whom the wickedness of man and craft of Satan have long ago scattered, caught the sheep and scattered them; yea, made of that which was the church, the most heinous corruption under heaven.

The union of Presbyterian or other bodies may remove partially the reproach of Protestantism; with the unity of God's children as a family it has nothing to do; and, as to the unity of the body of Christ by the Holy Ghost here below, wholly ignores it. "King of the church "is an utterly anti-scriptural thought. When He shall reign, we shall reign with Him. He is now sitting at the Father's right hand awaiting that time. Meanwhile, as children of one heavenly family, in relationship with the Father, as members of one only body, the body of Christ, the church, we should be one by the Holy Ghost. For Christians the crucial truth now is the unity of the body formed on earth. Where is it? As I have often said, if Paul addressed a letter to the church of God which is at Edinburgh, who would get it? It would go to the dead letter office. Alas that it is so! May our hearts and

consciences feel for the ruin of the Lord's once beautiful flock, for the unity of the scattered sheep and the unity of His Spirit manifesting His body on earth. The arrangements of ecclesiastical bodies cannot effect this.

That I have not misstated the link of church and state as desired by free and reformed churches, we have only to read Dr. Goold claiming acceptance of Covenanters' principles, Dr. Rainy, and Mr. M'Dermid, where it is stated in language stronger and more positive than that which I have said. The church claimed to have free entrance into every chamber of the national life. They are to bring nations in their national capacity into religious subjection to God, and conformed to His will. I only notice it now, not to controvert it as a system, a system in which popery has a far better chance, but to shew that their system, and their unity have nothing whatever to do with gathering together in one the children of God, which were scattered abroad, or with the unity of the body of Christ formed by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.

126 Being a review of Dr. A. Moody Stuart's sermon—"Jesus Christ the Bond of the Holy Universe" —preached at the opening of the Free Church General Assembly, Edinburgh, on Thursday, 18th May, 1876.

127 The careful reader of scripture will see that, where rejected. His God and Father took care that testimony should be rendered to Him as Son of God in the resurrection of Lazarus, Son of David in riding into the city, Son of man when the Greeks came up. The last involved death; John 11 and 12.

128 Note here, when it is declared all knees to bow, a third class is added, ta katachonia, infernal beings. They

are gone out of heaven and earth, and are not put in the classes reconciled.

129 For the American war, no suitable hymns, we read, were found; they were obliged to use the Psalms. Then, as Israel, they could sing and fight. So indeed it was in Scotland.

“Higher Holiness”

Editor's Note 125

A Review of Dr. A. Moody Stuart’s Closing Address as Moderator of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland.

The question of holiness has recently stirred up too widely the Christian mind not to give attention to every form in which it is claimed. It has, I believe, usefully roused Christians’ minds to the sense that there ought to be deliverance from the bondage of sin, and more entire devotedness to Christ—self-surrender to Him. As is ever the case, when what is true and important is based upon false principles, it has been accompanied by, or mixed up with, what is false—with the fruit of these false principles. Our part is to separate the precious from the vile, that we be as God’s mouth.

The form in which this demand of holiness or perfection has been put forward, whether by Wesleyans or Mr. Pearsall Smith, has been, pretty fully met, and I do not now recur to their views. The Moderator of the Free Church Assembly has stated his views on the subject; and as they involve some very important principles, and the position and character of Dr. Stuart will naturally command the respect of many, I will briefly weigh his statements. An excellent man, I doubt not, though personally unacquainted with him, and sound in the faith, he will not object to his sentiments being weighed by scripture. His mind, at any rate his statements, are neither clear nor accurate, always a difficulty in reviewing the thoughts of another. They are vague; but

certain great principles are sufficiently clear to examine whether they are scriptural.

But I shall notice some of this vagueness where all is well meant. For the real result is that, with the best intentions, the statements mean nothing: only they ignore the true question.

“Outside the camp (he tells us) we find the Holy One numbered with transgressors. In that same hour his blood purges our conscience from dead works to serve the living God. We are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, in mind, in will, in heart; and sin hath not dominion over us because we are under grace.” This is merely using the general effect for the reality of the state; the question of a new nature or life, and of the law, is carefully dropped. But I add, sin where? If it be in us, the whole man is not renewed. Scripture says, the new man is renewed in knowledge after God—is created in righteousness and true holiness; never that the whole man is. Practically sanctifying wholly is spoken of, and our being preserved; but the old man is said to be put off, not renewed. Scripture makes the division Dr. Stuart objects to. In fact, Dr. Stuart reduces the new birth to being born of water, leaving out being born of the Spirit. Death, not change, is what frees [justifies] us from sin. Our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed [rendered null]. But of this point I will speak farther on.

Dr. Stuart says one stain would occupy the stained person in heaven. I quite agree; and more, it would spoil heaven itself. But what stain? guilt or unholiness? He had spoken of our past stains, and also of the poison of sin, then generally of our stains, as to our qualification

to be in heaven. Scripture says, “Giving thanks to the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light,” speaking of all Christians, and does not refer meetness to progress.

Many would reject this, but it is scripture they reject. Scripture does speak of progress continually, but not in this connection.

“It cannot however,” we are told, “be set forth as within the plan of redemption that perfect holiness should be ours on earth. If we wash our hands with snow water, and make ourselves never so clean, we are quickly plunged into the ditch again, and compelled to cry out, ‘O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?’”

But there is no such thought as this in scripture. Job says, “Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and my own clothes shall abhor me.” Dr. Stuart’s holiness is a very poor thing, plunging immediately in the ditch again when we have cleansed ourselves. But Job is saying that his cleansing himself was nothing before God; he was as a man plunged in a ditch. “We are not, therefore, defeated,” Dr. Stuart tells us; “we have learned that sin is not omnipotent over us, but that grace is omnipotent over sin.” How so, if “we are quickly plunged into the ditch again?” Who plunges us? “There is no sin, no temptation, no obstinacy, no vitality of sin, which grace is not almighty to overcome, and at last to uproot it.” Does this mean a sinful habit? If so, I should not deny this. But sin in the flesh—is that uprooted? Is it in the new man?

“Where sin and Christ met together on the cross, Christ finished transgression for us, and made an end of sin.”

Christ was made sin for us who knew no sin; but sin and Christ meeting on the cross has no truth in it at all. I have no doubt this is a misapplication of the passage, but I leave that aside. But Dr. Stuart adds, “And so in us, when sin and the grace of Jesus Christ meet together, grace triumphs—in the end always triumphs, and over every kind of sin.” What has this to do with Christ “made sin “on the cross? and how do sin and grace meet together in us? What does sin mean here? I suppose a particular lust; but all is vague. The whole man was said to be renewed in mind, will, heart. The man was plunged quickly, it is true, in the ditch, yet not defeated! The teaching is really deplorable, and so vague that no soul can find where it is, save that, with a sense that it ought to triumph, it experiences being “plunged in the ditch,” and cries out, “O wretched man that lam!” And this is holiness!

As to “Job, Daniel, and Paul,” the statement that “the higher any man rises in nearness and in likeness to God, he is always the more deeply conscious of sin,” is entirely unfounded. Job failed exactly in being conscious of sin, and made himself more just than God, and was overwhelmed into abhorrence of himself by God’s revelation of Himself. Daniel never speaks of sin in himself at all, but in grace identifies himself with the past sins of Israel. Of Paul I will speak more fully. But there is no kind of evidence, that the nearer he was to God, the more conscious he was of sin.

Besides, it is the excessive vagueness of all this I complain of. What does conscious of sin mean? of its power actually in us? that there is an evil nature in us always simply bad? How then, is the whole man renewed?

That is the division of nature which Dr. Moody Stuart rejects. That the nearer we are to God the more we judge sin by a divine measure in ourselves, as in nature, is quite true; but that is not being more conscious of sin. All is deplorably vague and uncertain; and he whose whole man is renewed is at the same time, we are told, carnal, sold under sin. All this flows from denying the opposition of the flesh and spirit, and putting the Christian under the law, according to Romans 7, reducing us to Judaism; for in the Old Testament the doctrine as to the conflict of natures was not revealed, and the character of holiness pretty much what Dr. Stuart makes it—integrity of heart, loyalty of heart to God. God has now revealed Himself, and makes us partakers of His holiness. If I take the law as my measure, it is unscriptural to say, when I have the power of Christ, I cannot keep it. It is saying I must sin, which is not true. To say in many things we do all offend, is scriptural; to say that we must, is very evil.

Again, to say that it would be necessary for one child of God, who strives to be in the fear of God all the day long, to live for a day in the measure of hardness and deadness of another, is senseless, because if he were in the deadness and hardness he would not feel the evil.

The teaching then is most vague and unsatisfactory; but I must go to its root.

As to mistaken views, that holiness is in the will, so that we may pass over emotions (or, as the American perfectionists say, suggestions), as not sin, I reject with Dr. Stuart; so also that all is sunshine. These therefore I leave aside.

On his first mistaken view of holiness I shall dwell. As Dr. Stuart states it, I know of none who hold it save the followers of Freulich, and another in Switzerland. It is not forgotten that it is one person by those who hold, scripturally, the division of flesh and the divine life, the contrariety of flesh and spirit; nor is the sinfulness of the old nature accounted little—it is accounted absolutely and always bad; enmity against God; that it cannot be subject to His law. They insist on its absolute and permanent sinfulness as a nature, wholly bad, the source of evil lusts and enmity against God; that practically it should always be held to be dead. They do not believe that bondage to it, “carnal, sold under sin,” is the Christian state.

Dr. Moody Stuart says,” As regards what constitutes holiness in redeemed men on earth, the dangerous opinion has been advanced, which makes a very excessive distinction, or rather division, between the new man and the old, between the flesh and the spirit in the believer, as if the sinfulness of the flesh were to be disregarded on account of the holiness of the spirit: forgetting that it is still one person in whom the evil and the good are found.”

There cannot be “an excessive distinction or division” if there be two opposed natures; still less so, if one be divine, the other sinful. If two, there is division; if one be divine, the other sinful, there cannot be excess in distinguishing them. This is the question which Dr. Stuart ignores or swamps under the general charge of excess.

Let us, see what is plainly declared in scripture.

First, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, that which is born of the Spirit is spirit,” John 3:6. Is not this distinguishing them completely in their origin and nature, carefully so distinguishing, making a division between two distinct and contrary natures?

Man must be born anew (anothen). “Anew” is not a change or purifying what exists, but what, from the beginning onward, is a new birth.

We are born of God afresh; “of His own will begat he us by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures”; we are “born of the incorruptible seed of the word,” and receiving Christ, He is our life. “And this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life. He that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” It is that which Adam innocent had not more than Adam guilty. “Christ is our life.” It is not we that live, but “Christ liveth in us.” Our duty is to manifest the life of Jesus in our bodies.

That this produces a change in the whole man is most true, yet it is not a change, but a new thing given—eternal life that God hath given us, that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us, and is become our life, Christ, the second Man. It is not I, but Christ that lives in me. Nothing can be more distinct than the corrupt first Adam, the flesh, and Christ, the last Adam, who, risen from the dead, is become “our life.”

Let us see if scripture does not distinguish and oppose them one to another. As to the flesh, “it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the

flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be the Spirit of God dwell in you. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, and the Spirit is life because of righteousness," Rom. 8:7-10. Does not this put them in division and formal opposition? Again, in Galatians 5:17, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other." Could there be a plainer or more formal statement of what Dr. Moody Stuart objects to, or contradiction of his objection?

But this contrariety is expressed in the strongest way in scripture. Christians have put off the old man with his deeds; where, note, the deeds, the fruits, are distinguished from the man or nature. They have put on the new man. This new man is created after God. But more: death is the portion of the old man. Our old man is crucified with Christ, dead with Christ. We are dead and our life hid with Christ our life; to reckon ourselves dead and alive to God, not in Adam but in Christ. In us, that is, in our flesh, dwells no good thing, but Christ lives in us. So for practice we are to carry about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our bodies. He that is dead is freed (justified) from sin. And this old man and sin in the flesh is condemned wholly and finally, but, for faith, dead. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."

The doctrinal portion of the whole Epistle to the Romans is divided into two parts. The first part of it tells us how

grace has met our guilt, as having sinned, by Christ's death; and, secondly, from chapter 5:12, how we have died with Christ, and thus sin in the flesh met. All this is ignored by Dr. Stuart, and merged in a renewal of the whole man. The works of the flesh, and the fruit of the Spirit, are contrasted in scripture as flowing from two distinct sources—the divine nature, under the power of the Spirit, and the flesh, in which no good thing dwells, from which deliverance is only by death, actually by actual death, and practically now by reckoning ourselves dead, as crucified with Christ.

This leads me to Romans 7, in which this system of Dr. Moody Stuart's leaves the Christian, just as scripture carefully takes him out of it. And I do not conceal from myself that, quite admitting the personal piety of those who do not see it, this changes the whole nature and character of Christianity. Paul diligently teaches that a Christian is not where this system leaves him, and that he who is in Romans 7 is not in the proper sense a Christian at all.

We must not blink the full assertion of this—it is a question of what Christianity practically is. A soul may be in the way, and He who has begun the good work will perfect it; but he is not yet in the Christian state at all while he is in the state described in Romans 7. The prodigal was converted, repentant, on the right road; but he had not the best robe on till he met his father; Luke 15.

I believe it often happens that the mind is in Romans 7 through bad teaching, when it is really delivered in its relationship with God; many are so. But this does not affect the fact that there are two states entirely distinct,

one the Christian state, the other not; not merely knowing it or not (of this I have spoken), but two distinct states.

Israel out of Egypt and brought to God's holy habitation, as in Exodus 15, was in a different state from Israel in Egypt, though God had visited them. The prodigal converted and repentant, without the best robe and having never met his father, was in a different condition from what he was with the best robe on him, and fit, and then only fit, to go into the house. Before, it was his own thoughts of what might be his state when he arrived; but when come, all was wholly and solely and actually according to his father's revealed mind.

Dr. Stuart, with alas! thousands of others, puts the Christian in the experience of Romans 7, and consequently treats him as carnal, sold under sin. I affirm that the whole object of the apostle's reasoning is to shew that a Christian is not there, but delivered from it, and that deliverance from it is the only true Christian state. Indeed I say more, namely, that what the apostle insists on is the absolute incompatibility of the two states—that a person can no more be under the authority of the law and that of Christ at the same time, than a woman have two husbands. This makes the issue definite and plain enough, and I state it so because I am persuaded that it is a question of what true Christianity is, and in these days is of vital importance. Many, many years I have taken the same ground for the deliverance of individual souls; but things are come to a crisis, and all is inquired into, and it behoves us to know what the word of God teaches.

I have already stated that the doctrinal portion of the Epistle to the Romans is composed of two parts, which divide at the end of chapter 5:11. (Chaps. 9, 10, 11 are an appendix to reconcile the promises made to the Jews, with his no-difference doctrine.) The former part treats the question of sins or guilt; the second, sin, or the evil nature—the flesh. With Dr. Moody Stuart, stains of guilt and stains of unholiness are all thrown together, and all is vague.

Let us now see how the Spirit of God treats the question of sin and the flesh. He leaves the ground of individual responsibility and works, on which we are guilty, and exposed to judgment, and leads us up to the great heads, Adam and Christ, the law coming in, by the bye (pareiselthe), between. But by one man's disobedience the many (all connected with him, oi polloi) were made sinners, by one man's obedience the many (all connected with Him) should be made righteous. The objection of the world rises up at once; if one man's obedience constitutes me righteous, I may live on in sin. The answer is not to put man again under law, as is done so unscripturally in a flesh which cannot be subject to it, but to deliver man from sin in a wholly new life which does not come from the first Adam at all, but from Christ, the last Adam, so that He should live in this life: but more, His death to the old Adam-life also—not physically of course, but by faith, in that Christ, who is our life, has died. We have been crucified with Him, nevertheless we live; but not we, but Christ lives in us.

Let us see what is said of this in Romans 6, which is the full statement of this great truth. Let my reader remember that this part of the epistle does not treat of sins and guilt, but of sin; of the tree, and not of the fruit.

How have we part in this righteousness of chapter 5? In having part in death— Christ's death. How then live on? That is the apostle's thesis. "How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" The very profession we make, what we are baptized to, is to Christ's death; and we know that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed (katergethe). In that Christ died He died unto sin, and in that He liveth He liveth unto God. "Likewise reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in Jesus Christ our Lord" —not in Adam: as to that, we are to reckon ourselves dead.

Then comes our yielding ourselves to God (the practical walk of godliness in its root principle) as those that are alive from the dead. Thus the Christian is placed on a sure and fixed basis for his walk. He has died in Christ, and he lives in Christ, since he is justified from sin. You cannot charge evil lusts and a wicked will on a dead man. This shews the importance of distinguishing sin and sins. While alive he may have committed all manner of sins, and have to answer for them; but you cannot charge a dead man with sin as a present thing.

How does this affect the question of his being under law? He is not under it at all; Rom. 6:14. Law has power over a man so long as he lives; but we have died. We have become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that we might be married to another, to Christ that is raised from the dead; (chap. 7:4). The metaphor is changed in verse 6 (not indeed in the text, which makes the law die as the first husband); but the marginal reading is, I may say, universally accepted as true, as indeed it connects itself with the whole reasoning of the passage. We have died, and are freed from the first husband, the law; we

(katergethemen) have been set aside from the law, having died in it. As he says in Galatians, I through the law am dead to the law by the body of Christ. If a man had died simply by the law to it, it was condemnation too; but being in Christ, He has taken the condemnation of sin in the flesh, and we have part in death to it.

The first husband then, the law, is done with, and we are married to a risen Christ, and cannot in any sense or form be under the authority of two husbands at a time. It is adultery. It is, we alive in flesh (and if not wholly lawless) under law, or we dead as to it with Christ by faith and married to a risen Christ, and the law in its authority in every sense gone as to us, for it reigns over a man only as long as he lives. Hence it is said, “when we were in the flesh, the motions of sin which were by the law.” I cannot say, “when I was,” if I am in a place. I must be out of it to speak so, as is yet more clear in Romans 8:9. The doctrine then is, that we have died, and are thus wholly delivered from the law and its authority, to have another husband.

Then the apostle gives the experience of a renewed soul under the first husband. For of the law only there is question here. Christ and the Spirit are not mentioned, save for deliverance from that state. It is solely and simply a renewed soul under the first husband, the law, learning there what flesh is— that flesh is not subject to it, nor can be, and that we have in this case no power to fulfil it, even if we love it. Verses 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 each shew it is the law that is in question as to experience. Deliverance only comes in verse 25, and is developed in chapter 8; the full reasoning on it is in verse 14, in 16, and in 22. We Christians know the spirituality of the law, and so it is felt to be by the renewed man, and his

conscience consents to it as good, his heart delights in it; but he never performs it, does not find how to perform it, learns what sin (not sins) is, that there is no good thing in the flesh (sin becomes exceeding sinful), that the flesh is contrary to it all; but he also learns that he has no power to fulfil it. Sin, as a law in his members, makes him captive. He never does the good he would, but practises the evil he hates. Deliverance and power is what is in question. He is the slave of sin, sold under it, captive to it, learns to distinguish what Dr. Stuart will not have divided, but learns that under law the sin he hates is too powerful for his delight in the law; and that being in the flesh, not dead and alive in Christ, he is captive to the law of sin.

Christianity, besides forgiveness and righteousness before God, is just deliverance from this state by death to it in Christ, and power, the power of a new life in Christ, in which the Holy Ghost works, we being set free by the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Colossians and Ephesians go farther, but I confine myself to this one point now. This holy liberty is developed in Romans 8:1-11 on to actual resurrection. Perfectionists have taken this deliverance for perfection; Dr. Stuart and Evangelicals deny the deliverance, and would keep us in Romans 7. Scriptural Christianity rejects both, because it shews that sin dwells in us on the one hand, and has power over us on the other, but that there is deliverance from that power.

Dr. Stuart takes merely the outside change, which, if consistent, should go on to Wesleyan perfection, denying deliverance from Romans 7, and the fact of the flesh being totally distinct from the new life, the last Adam as life in us from sinful flesh, and makes all Christians

carnal, sold under sin! Christianity shews we cannot say we have no sin, but that we have died in Christ to it, are to reckon ourselves dead, and alive to God in Christ, and so delivered from the power of sin, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; for the Christian is not in the flesh in which the law could not be fulfilled, for it was not, and cannot, be subject to it. Dr. Stuart, in terms, makes the Christian carnal, sold under sin, and holds he cannot fulfil the law. Christianity dehvers him from that state that he may fulfil it. It does a great deal more, but it does that. The Christian is one who lives by the power of spiritual life in Christ, a totally new thing which he has received—life in a risen Christ, God having given His only-begotten Son, that we might live through Him, His death and resurrection having set us free; so that, while this holy freedom is realised in the power of a new life, we have the title and duty to count ourselves dead in Christ's death, our old man (the flesh) crucified with Him.

Let us briefly see how this liberty is depicted in Romans 8. "There is no condemnation for them who are in Christ Jesus"; not whose sins have been borne by Christ, which clears and justifies us, but who are in a wholly new place in Christ; not in Adam or fleshly standing (for then they could not please God, and there they were when under the law, responsible for themselves for righteousness), but now redeemed wholly out of that place; not merely God met perfectly as a judge, like the blood on the lintel and door-posts, but as Israel out of Egypt, redeemed out of the place they were in (God being a Saviour or Deliverer) and in a new one, not in the flesh but in Christ.

This involves the corresponding truth of Christ in us. (Compare John 14:20.) The blood is the strongest motive for walking, but this is a nature, a life which walks. Redemption and a new state of holy liberty go together. I am not seeking who shall deliver. “The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death,” Rom. 8:2. I am not captive, sold under sin. My status and condition is exactly the opposite of chapter 7.

The question here is not if I act up to it—of course I should— but what is the status I am in? I am “not in the flesh,” not in my Adam standing before God at all, but in Christ; “not in the flesh, but in the Spirit,” redeemed into connection— living connection—according to the power of His resurrection, which is both the seal of redemption and the power of life with a risen Christ; and, besides that, I have received the Holy Ghost, that I may both know it (John 14) and have the power of it, the old man being condemned and dead; “for what the law could not do (chap. 7) in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.” A new life is there in the power of the Spirit; but the old has been condemned in the death of Christ, so that there is no condemnation, and it died when condemned. I have death to sin, and no condemnation for it, through Christ’s death. I need not, 1 trust, say here Christ had none. He could do that, being made sin for us, because He knew none. But sin in the flesh is condemned (yet so that there is no condemnation for me) but for faith is dead: my old man crucified with [Him], I am dead with Christ. The realisation of this in walk is found in 2 Corinthians 4:10-12.

The new life is a new creation in me: I belong to the new creation by it; but as to my body, and in fact, I am in the old: only the Spirit reveals the things not seen, that we may live by them. Romans does not speak of the new creation, looking at the Christian as here on earth, but the mind of the flesh, enmity against God, is contrasted with the mind of the Spirit, life, and peace. The living presence and power of the Holy Ghost in us is clearly stated, and in formal opposition to the flesh in its nature. And we are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if the Spirit of Christ dwell in us. It is a new standing, characterized by the Spirit being in us; if He be not, one is not in the Christian state.

This brings out the truth of Christ being in us, as before our being in Christ was spoken of; and the ground is stated on which the great truth we have spoken of is based. If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit life because of righteousness. Through the Spirit dwelling in us we hold the body for dead; for if alive, it is the evil flesh, enmity against God; and the life which we have is in the power of the Spirit—its fruit is righteousness. This is pursued to the resurrection of the body, which will be full deliverance.

It is not merely knowing our position, as some have said. We are not in the flesh but in Christ—in the Spirit, the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us, the only recognized Christian state. In chapter 7, though converted, the man as to his standing was in the flesh, under the law, captive to the sin he hated. The motions of sin were by the law, he living in the flesh. Now he is not in the flesh but in the Spirit—in the place redemption has brought him into, the Spirit of Christ dwelling in him. The fruits are a consequence. What is stated is the entire change

of status and position: a man under the law, the first husband, and in the flesh; a man delivered from the law and married to Christ, in the Spirit, not in the flesh. A man is not captive or a slave, and set free, at the same time. Falling into sin carelessly when free is not captive to the law of sin in my members.

I only add a notice of two false translations which theology has introduced, and for which there is no excuse. “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other” —the opposition which I insist on, and which Dr. Stuart denies. But then comes the theology: “So that ye cannot do the things that ye would.” This is nonsense; for if I cannot do what the Spirit would, nor what the flesh would, I can do nothing. But it is used simply to mean, we cannot do what the Spirit would, shewing the practical state of souls. But there is no such statement; it is merely “that ye may not do” (ina me). They seek to hinder the working of the contrary natures.

The other is, “Sin is the transgression of the law.” This is really, I must say, a wicked subjection of the word to theology. The word (anomia) is never used for “transgression of the law” anywhere else in the English translation of the holy scriptures; another expression is, parabasis nomou. I call it “wicked,” because by it a human system denies what the word of God carefully insists on. Not only so, but it is the word rightly translated elsewhere “without law.” Sin is not transgression of the law; to say so, universal as it may be, is a wicked anti-scriptural perversion. Sin is the evil nature which produces lust, the enmity of the heart against God. It is written, “Sin by the commandment became exceeding sinful,” which could not be if sin was

not there before the commandment. Again, the contrary is expressly stated. “Until the law sin was in the world.” There is no transgression without sin. Further, it is said, “They that have sinned without law,” the same word as an adverb (anomos), in contrast to sinning under the law. That is, the word of God puts it in direct contradiction to what this false translation does.

These gentlemen believe men are born in sin. I do not blame them for this, surely; but are men born in transgression of the law? It is false theological perversion, and nothing else; and it is time that false theology gave way to the word of God: for this affects the whole nature and character of Christianity. Patience has its just place; but, after all, souls are more precious than false theology.

The grave question is—Is there not a new divine life given in Christ (connected with the delivering power of redemption and the presence of the Holy Ghost), which is wholly contrary in its nature to flesh? Can there be an excess in the difference I make between them—the one being enmity against God, the other Christ as my life? Are they not divided, opposed, and contrary to one another? By one, children of God; by the other, of the devil: one of which cannot sin, because born of God, the other never doing anything else, mingled (it may be) in our life, but opposed in nature. However misstated in detail Dr. Moody Stuart’s objection, it denies this. I do not call in question his genuine piety; but the question, whether in the Christian there be two entirely opposed and contrary natures, is too important to be smothered up.

125 Recent Awakenings and Higher Holiness: the Opening and Closing Addresses in the Free Church General Assembly, 1875. By the Moderator, A. Moody Stuart, D.D. Third Edition. Edinburgh: Maclaren and Macniven, Princes Street.

Summary Of The Epistle To The Romans

I fear the following brief opening up of the structure of the Epistle to the Romans will be very dry; and, with a view to edification, I should prefer to add more by way of application to the heart and conscience. At present that is not possible; yet I think what I may be able to give on the structure of the Epistle, with some passing remarks, may supply materials to those who study the word for their own edification through grace, with the ever-needed but ever-ready help of the Spirit of God. I think I shall be able to set out the structure of the Epistle more perfectly than I have ever myself done it, though latterly I have often partially referred to it in oral teaching. And, first, this is the structure as a scheme: chapters 1:1-17; 1:18 to 3:20; 3:21 to 5:11; 5:12 to chap. 8; chaps. 9 to 11; chap. 12 to the end.

The first 17 verses are an introduction: only the writer states the subject of the gospel, Christ accomplishment of promises and Son of God in power.

Then comes the ground on which the righteousness of God therein mentioned has had to be revealed, namely, that the wrath of God is revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness. Then follows the demonstration of the sin of both these classes. This second part begins with chapter 1:18, and ends with verse 20 of chapter 3, whereupon the apostle returns to the unfolding the righteousness of God. Chapter 1:18 is the thesis of the part I now refer to, the rest is the carrying out of the proof: chapter 1:19, to the end of chapter 1 as to the

heathen in general; chapter 2:1-16 as to moralists especially, such as philosophers, but whoever they may be; verse 17 to the end of the chapter, the two: only that there is introduced in connection with the hypocritical judgment of the moralist the sure judgment of God to those without law, and those under law. It is the reality of this judgment, and the immutability of God's estimate of good and evil, which introduces the judgment of the Jew (verses 11, 17-29). Did this set aside the advantages of the Jews? In no wise. They had many, specially the possession of the oracles of God. The apostle now therefore takes them up upon the ground, not of God's true and righteous judgment of men's hearts and acts in the day of judgment, when all will be brought to light, and God must have realities; but on the ground of the revelation which they had, and in which they boasted, and, by a selection of passages from that, proves them, for that revelation was theirs and applied to them, utterly guilty; and thus every mouth was stopped, the Gentiles confessedly already, and now the Jews by their own scriptures which they boasted of as exclusively theirs. The world was guilty before God.

Verse 20 stands in a certain sense alone, and is a connecting link of what precedes with what follows, touching a subject which was an urgent one with the apostle. By the works of the law no flesh could be justified; for the law brought the knowledge of sin, not sins. Natural conscience often gave that, but of the state of sin in which men were. And that is what is described in the preceding verses quoted.

In verse 21 of chapter 3 we come to the remedy, the great revelation of the gospel. And first as to sins. Apart from law, which was the rule of man's righteousness,

God’s righteousness has been manifested, the law and prophets having borne witness to it. Hence, as apart from law, and being God’s, universal in its character, God’s righteousness to all—Jew or Gentile; and upon all those that believe, for it is the righteousness of God by faith in Christ Jesus. It is dia pisteos eis pantas, by faith to all; epi pantas tons pisteuontas, on all who believe consequently. All who return take up God again in grace by Jesus Christ, for all have sinned. They are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Him. God has set Him forth as a mercy-seat through faith in His blood. We have redemption, or here ransom, justification of the believer freely by God’s grace, but through the ransom of redemption and so righteously, and God is approached at a mercy-seat; that is, blood-shedding on the throne of judgment according to the holiness and righteousness of God. God is approached according to this perfectness as well as man delivered. This is through blood. It has a double aspect. It proves God’s righteousness in the remission of Old Testament sins, when He had shewn forbearance. It is divine righteousness itself declared now, as fully just and justifying him that believes, so that he is in righteousness before God. Thus a man is justified by faith without work of law, and God is the God of the Gentile as well as of the Jew. He justifies the Jew on the principle of faith; and, if the Gentile has faith, he is justified through it. Law is established thus. It convicts him who is under it of guilt, and is given all its force too in this respect, and its claims are met by the blood of Christ. This then reveals justification by blood for those who have sinned. He has closed with Gentiles and law.

But what of Abraham, the root of promise (chap. 4)? He believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness. How does a simple narrative provide, because of an eternal Spirit, the deepest principles of truth for all ages! And this David confirms, shewing the blessedness of the man whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sins are covered. As regards then not imputing sin, forgiving, and imputing righteousness are all the same, for actual sins are in question, judicially in question. It is not holding a man to be innocent, but the non-imputation of what he has done; he is judicially held to have no charge against him, he is justified or accounted righteous. It is added from Abraham's case that it comes on Gentiles as on Jews, for Abraham was uncircumcised when he got it; and he got it by the power of resurrection, believing in God's power to accomplish it, as we by believing that He has done so. Thus the resurrection of Christ, God's raising Him out of the place where He had gone because of offences, as satisfied as to those offences, and bringing Him into a wholly new place where He was accepted. And as it was all done for us, we say He was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification. All this applies Christ's death and Christ's resurrection to our sins. Only, having suffered for them, He came into a new place.

Chapter 5:1-11 gives the glorious conclusion and consequences of Christ's dying for our sins and rising again: peace, present favour, hope of glory. Our complete actual place before God. But we glory in tribulations also on the way, because of patience and its fruits; and we have the key to all in God's love shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given to us. The

perfect ground of this is there stated, and the conclusions drawn to our security in that love. Nor that alone, we glory in God Himself through Christ, by whom we have received this perfect reconciliation with Him. Verse 11 closes the whole subject of our reconciliation by Christ's death and resurrection. God has cleared us, commended His love to us, so that we joy in Him; and all that He does by the way is only a means of blessing.

The whole question of our actual guilt has been settled, but our state has not been touched. The apostle shews that it was not a mere question of law but of sin, and so applied to man and not merely to the Jew; for sin was there from Adam to Moses, when law was not, and death proved it. Thus the rest is traced up to Adam, and it is shewn that grace must be of as wide an application; and Christ refers to all, to Gentile as well as to Jew. Chapters 3:20 to 5:11, inclusive, treat then the question of sins; chapters 5:12 to the end of chapter 8 that of sin, and our condition through the disobedience of Adam and the obedience of Christ. If it be a question of sins, each has his own; if of sin, we are all one lump. This is the ground taken from chapter 5:12, though of course the sins come in as fruit. Hence justification is not seen as justification from sins but sin, and our living place in Christ—"justification of life." We are constituted righteous, and it goes to a fuller presentation even of this truth: "There is no condemnation." Nothing of the sort can apply to one who is in Christ.

Thus though God is not so fully presented in sovereign grace, our state before God is much more fully entered into, and that connected with death, life, obedience and connection with Christ. This flows on from the consideration of the common objection of flesh. If by the

obedience of One I am constituted righteous, no matter what I do! I may live on in sin! But this obedience was unto death; by my public profession of Christianity I have gone down to death, been planted together in the likeness of death. If, as alive through Adam, I have taken my place in death, where Christ's perfect obedience for me was, I cannot live on in that life. A dead man cannot continue in sin, nor can he be charged with sin. A dead man cannot be said to have lusts or will. Here then Christ is looked at as having died, not for our sins, but to sin. Our old man crucified with Him, that henceforth we should not serve sin. The believer is to reckon himself dead consequently to sin, and alive to God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

This, let me remark in passing, has a very full character; for Christ in the sense of personal walk and perfectness always lived to God; but while down here had always to deal with sin, to be tempted, to be exercised in obedience, and keep His feet from the paths of the destroyer; and, finally, knowing no sin, to be made sin for us. All testing and trial only brought out His perfectness; still He had to do with it, live above it, not let in what would have been sin and disobedience, or want of absolute obedience. Blessed be God, we know He did not and could not fail; nor was there the smallest answer or movement in Him to answer to incessant temptations from without; but He lived in the sphere in which He was moving, as the air around Him, and died to it. Now in that He lives, He lives to God. All that He had to do with sin in this world was to die to sin. He died and suffered rather than not accomplish absolute obedience to, and glorify, His Father. But now as man, God is the one sole object filling, satisfying, occupying

the life in which He lives. There is no other object to claim its movements, no movements which turn towards anything else. “In that he liveth, he liveth unto God.”

So we reckon ourselves dead to sin as crucified with Him, and alive only to God—a wondrous word. Our old man is crucified with Him, for the destroying the body of sin; and if I am alive at all, it is through Jesus Christ our Lord, and so alive to God. Life has no other object nor produce of thought and feeling. Hence I have not to serve sin. He does not say continue in it (this supposes life of and from it, that is, pure flesh), but not to serve or submit to it as a master even: a different thing, and which more directly concerns the Christian. And I have a right to speak, for it shall not have dominion over me as if I was under law (in which case it would, even if I hated it), but under grace. Thus I am set free, and in a happy and good sense my own master. Whom am I going to serve, to whom yield myself? To God, and my members as instruments—that is, all they are now—of righteousness to God. It is an absolute yielding ourselves up to God. Blessed privilege! And here I get fruit; in the slavery of sin, none: only it ended in death (guilt and judgment are not the subject here, but state); but now I have fruit unto holiness; walking in obedient righteousness, I learn God, His ways; I have fruit in separatedness and affections of heart to Him. So Moses says, “If I have found grace in thy sight, shew me thy way, that I may know thee, and that I may find grace in thy sight.” There is added one word which brings all back to grace, lest living to God might be wrongfully reckoned to man. “The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” But

it is a blessed thing to be allowed to yield ourselves to God: so did Jesus; so in His life are we privileged to do.

Chapter 7, as often studied and commented on, applies this principle of death to law. The law has power over a man as long as he lives. But we have died in Christ; the bond with our first husband, if we have been under law (and being born of God, without the knowledge of redemption, put us under it in spirit, a state described at the end of the chapter), is dissolved by our death, and we are to another, Christ raised from the dead. We have therefore, besides death and a new life, the bond of relationship in which we are, wholly to Christ and no longer to the law to which we have died.

The state of a soul knowing, as quickened, the spirituality of the law, consenting to it, and delighting in it, but unable to keep it, and looking for deliverance, is then described, and deliverance found to be in Christ. The natures still remain the same.

This state of deliverance by death and resurrection is then unfolded in chapter 8. The man is in Christ. No condemnation is therefore possible. Such is the result. He is in the place into which Christ's perfect work has brought him, in that state in Him. The manner of the whole thing is then stated—its ground as to our status down here. The power of divine life in Christ Jesus, the raised One, in Him, now alive, who was dead, has set me free from the condition in which I stood, the law of sin and death under which I was in the first Adam. But I have died out of that, and am alive in Christ, and so freed from it. But this is not all. The law had the pretension to set me in righteousness, in a righteous place and standing before God; but it could not succeed.

It was weak through the flesh, which was not subject to it, nor could be. The sin and flesh remained independent and unsubdued. But God has set us before Him. He has sent His own Son in the likeness of this sinful flesh (Himself sinless) and as a sacrifice for sin. Thus sin in the flesh was condemned perfectly and fully according to God (for there is no forgiveness of a nature), and He perfectly glorified as to it, but by death, in Christ's dying; so that, while sin is righteously condemned, Christ died as regards the state in which He was in the likeness of it and had to say to it (though perfect Himself and as perfect) and we in Him. Thus, while the sin has been condemned, so that God has no more to say as to it, I have passed wholly out of the state in which I had to say to it, and was in it, before God, because I have died in Christ; while the efficacy of His sacrifice secures the glory of God and the putting away of sin.

A few words will give the close of this part of the epistle. The first eleven verses unfold this deliverance and the natures concerned in it, but with the additional truth of the presence of the Holy Ghost which gives power and liberty; the effect of this, not merely as life and resurrection, even of the body, already noted, but as leading, guiding, bearing, personally witness, first for that we are children and heirs, then for the joy that belongs to us, but this giving a divine yet human sense of the sorrow and bondage of corruption around us in which yet our bodies have a part. But this leads to sympathy and the expression by the Holy Ghost in us of the sense of this sorrow in a divine way. He who searches the hearts finds there the mind of the Spirit and the Holy Ghost Himself interceding in it. Such is our blessed place as regards present evil. Read "according

to God." We do not know what to ask for, but we express the need according to God, a groan sure to be heard. What a place as in us the Holy Ghost has here.

The rest of the chapter is the conclusion of all this part of the Epistle. If God be for us, who can be against us? For us as to gift, He has given His Son; for us as to justification, He justifies us; in us as to all the difficulties, nothing separates us from His love in Christ in them. They have been or are the scenes of His love. All difficulties are of the creature. His love is divine, yet has gone down to every depth and is exercised at the highest height. This is all the proper doctrine of the Epistle.

Chapters 9 to 11 meet the Jewish question and reconcile the doctrine of the difference between Jew and Gentile with the promises to the Jews. Chapter 9 shews that their own history forces them to accept the principle of sovereign grace, otherwise the Ishmaelites and Edomites must be admitted, and they would have been cut off because of the golden calf. God will use this sovereignty to bring in the Gentiles. Chapter 10 shews they stumbled at the stumbling-stone, and all had been predicted; chapter 11, that the stumbling was not final, but for the bringing in of the fulness of the Gentiles, and that, if the Gentiles did not continue in God's goodness, they would be cut off and the Jews grafted in again.

The rest of the Epistle consists of detail of exhortation, founded on our offering ourselves up to God a living sacrifice to God, proving what His will is. The doctrine of the body comes out here; each is to fill up the measure of his own gift, and not to pretend to more. We have also the instruction as to Christ, that He was a minister of

the circumcision (that is, to the Jews) for the truth of God to confirm promises (this is not law), and that the Gentiles should glorify God for His mercy; and, lastly, that the mystery now revealed was hidden in all the ages of time, and now made known to the nations by prophetic scriptures.

Thoughts On Romans, Colossians, Ephesians

There are two great subjects treated of in scripture in connection with man's relationship with God—purpose in God, and responsibility in man. The former is in the second Man, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. This purpose was established before the foundation of the world. (See 2 Tim. 1:9, 10; Titus 1:2, 3; Prov. 8; 1 Cor. 2:7.) Many passages refer to details of this. Ephesians especially fully develops it. But God did not begin with this, nor with the second Adam in whom these promises were to be accomplished, but with the first, placed in responsibility before God and in blessings dependent on faithfulness in his position.

Christianity begins when this question of responsibility is closed. I do not mean, of course, that Christians are not responsible. But their responsibility is that of children of God, redeemed by grace from the condition of ruin in which man was fallen. Individuals withal have to pass through in their own souls experimentally the results of this condition of responsibility; but in Christianity it is not to ascertain whether they can meet judgment, but to arrive at the clear discovery that they cannot, that they are guilty and lost; to have judgment realised in their consciences that "there is none righteous, no, not one "(every mouth being stopped, and all the world guilty before God); that they cannot themselves get out of this condition, but that Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost; that "when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."

I do not now enter into the details of this redemption, nor of what the purpose connected with it is. I only refer to it now to shew that it is when the divine development as to the first man's responsibility is closed, and man viewed as guilty and lost under it, that Christianity begins. The question of responsibility was gone through in the first Adam. First, he failed being innocent; then displayed his lawlessness in corruption and violence, bringing in the flood; then under law broke it; and when (all this being already true) God came into the world in goodness, the full character of sin was developed in enmity against God by the rejection of the blessed Lord. This closed the probation of man. Now, says the Lord, is the judgment of this world. Hence we read, "He appeared once in the end of the world (the consummation of ages), to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," and "these things … are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."

Christianity then comes when the question of man's standing in responsibility is closed, not only as being a sinner, but when God having tried all means of recovery saying, "I have yet one Son," had tried them in vain as regards the discovery of good in the first Adam, or his recovery as such. He is already guilty and lost, and proved so.

Besides his state of innocence, inalienable life for ever and responsibility were attached to the two trees in the garden; but man took the wrong road in connection with responsibility, and forfeited life. In the law the question was again raised as to both; but satisfying responsibility was put before life. "This do and thou shalt live." Christ meets our responsibility in bearing the consequence of

it, our sins, and, being made sin in that place, perfectly glorified God, and becomes our life (of which more hereafter). Thus and thus only the two are reconciled for sinful man—life and responsibility.

Now, from the beginning, the coming of Christ was intimated in the judgment pronounced on Satan; and then, when God began to deal with man in the new world when it had wholly departed from Him into idolatry, in the promise of the Seed in whom the nations should be blessed, to Abraham called out from it. But the promise was never fulfilled till Christ came; and He being rejected, though the promised Seed had come, the result of purpose was not fulfilled; but the ground of it was laid according to grace abounding over sin, and in righteousness, Christ having perfectly glorified God as made sin, and gone as Man into glory according to divine righteousness, so that man's being there was the demonstration of righteousness. Thus propitiation for sins was made, which met the responsibility, and the ground laid for the accomplishment of purpose, and then the Holy Ghost comes down on earth, the witness of these things, and the present power of that Christianity in which through grace we enjoy them.

Hence we have the responsibility and state owned and demonstrated, and man met in it in grace; and the purpose revealed and ourselves associated with Christ in it; but the old creation and the first Adam state judged and lying in wickedness and alienation from God; and the new creation, connected with the Second Adam, raised and glorified, revealed; while as to life we are brought into it, with the Holy Ghost dwelling in us.

Now the Gospels give us Christ come into the old creation, and in diverse characters, His passing into death as so coming; and all give the resurrection, which is the essential beginning of the new as to man in every respect, for example, life and acceptance; not all, His ascension. There is this difference in them, that while the three first (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) give us His rejection historically, and in prophetic testimony, more or less, what was to take the place of His presence; in the first (Matthew) as Man, and according to promise, that is, in the first creation, and in Israel; the last of the four (John), being the revelation of His Person, that the Word was God, precedes all dispensation and creation itself, and begins by the world He had created not knowing Him, and His own rejecting Him, and then unfolds His Person, and what was proper to Himself and His service and the coming of the Holy Ghost when He had gone to the Father.

All this is assumed in the Epistles, and in Paul's and John's our being in the ascended Christ; in Paul's also the doctrine of the "assembly," and the purposes connected with it. This leads me to our immediate subject.

Paul, in the Epistle to the Romans, does not enter on the ground of the new creation, but treats of man on this earth as a responsible being, only in one word as an abstract doctrine shewing him as he will be, and that only personally: "Whom he justified, them he also glorified." Here alone (chap. 8) purpose comes in, but only as to the state of individuals. God's sovereignty is asserted in chapter 9, but only to give God title to let in the Gentiles, in contrast with a national election claimed by the Jews.

But the purposes of God, or the new creation which is in purpose, are not in view. Man is a responsible creature in this world, dealt with as such, though in the end glorified. This responsibility is met by the work of Christ, and the coincident fact of having life in Him. With this the great fact of present Christianity is recognised—the Holy Ghost down here. By this we know that we are in Christ, but as down here. It is the believer's state down here in virtue of the Holy Ghost coming here. He sheds the love of God abroad in our hearts; but all this is my state down here, not the new creation. Its being so indeed gives it such value, though from other scriptures I know all this involves a part in the new creation. But I am saved in hope, I rejoice in hope of the glory, I am a joint-heir with Christ as a son; but my present place is suffering with Him. Though promising thus personally the glory, likeness to Christ according to the purpose of God, the Epistle treats the question of the divine ground of righteousness and the standing of a Christian in this world through the removal of sin. This it does in a double way, having respect first to the conduct, and then to the state of man as a child of Adam. Romans 1:18 to chapter 5:11 treats of his conduct, and the perfect grace that has met his case. Every mouth is stopped, and all the world guilty before God. But God has set Christ forth a propitiation, through faith in His blood, whether for remission of past sins (as to which God had shewn His forbearance in the times passed before Christ's work); or now to justify him that believes in Jesus. "He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification." So that by faith we have peace with God, stand in present favour, and rejoice in hope of the glory; yea, rejoice in tribulation as working good; yea, joy in

God Himself through Christ, through whom we have thus received a perfect reconciliation.

But in all this, through knowing God's love by the Holy Ghost given to us, we have our personal standing before God here; it is not new creation, though the life we have belongs to it. But the Epistle meets the whole question of our personal relationship to God. First, Christ is a propitiation through faith in His blood, and being risen again, the ground of our justification is shewn to be perfect, and being justified by faith we have peace with God. God imputes no sin to the believer, Christ having been delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.

Then, from chapter 5:12, the apostle takes up our state. Adam, by his obedience, has brought all connected with him into the condition of sinners; Christ, by His obedience, ail connected with Him into that of righteousness.

But with this another truth is connected. If it be by one Man's obedience, we may five on as we like and be righteous by Christ's obedience, says the world. But I have this righteousness by having part in His death; the having part in it is the very profession of Christianity; but death is not living on! Thus delivery from the state and power of sin is by death, and our death is in the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Romans, even in the first part, recognises the Christian's personal state on earth; the Holy Ghost is given to us, we are in Christ, live in Christ. The assembly itself also is assumed in the hortatory part; chap. 12. What is treated of, this state being assumed, is the divine way of grace as to it. Meeting our responsibility by bearing our sins I have

already spoken of. The second part treats, we have seen, of our state.

But if we are alive in Christ, and Christ is in us, it is Christ who is risen and even is glorified, after having died. Such a Christ being our life, we are esteemed dead, for He who is our life, our true I, has died, and this is valid and effectual for faith. It is the profession of our common Christianity: we are baptized to it.

But in its effect (save the statement in chapter 8 of the effect of God's being for us) this is not pursued beyond death; so that, Christ risen being our life, we are set free. "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, and the Spirit is life, because of righteousness." Christ is looked at as our life, but we are not viewed as risen with Him. He has been a propitiatory victim, and delivered for our offences, and died to sin once, all alone. He is not looked at as gone down into our place, and Himself and we raised up together. In this case He is not life to us, but a dead Man raised up, and this involves not merely life in Him but a new estate into which He is entered, and involves a new creation, though it may be and is considered apart.

But in fact He has died to this creation, and been raised to be, as Man, head of the new creation, and head of the body. There is, however, in the teaching of Romans deliverance, for He has died. Hence, not only we live in Him, but "our old man is crucified with him," but we are still alive in this world with Christ's life— "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus"; but dead to sin in it, and to the law. Risen with Christ involves the purposes of God, Christ being viewed as the object of those purposes, and the power which brings them about; and hence we are

associated with Him in them, and hence it leads on to our union in the church with Him. Not but that Christ is viewed as risen in the Epistle to the Romans: we find it thus in the first part, where it is applied to our justification, our clearance from guilt. But this is the acceptance of the victim; if not risen, I am yet in my sins. In the second, we are stated "to be (married) to another," even Christ, that is raised from the dead. But we are not raised with Him. This introduces by the power of God at the next step into the new creation, as a state of things, and into the assembly. Christ, our life, or living in Him, is another thing from Christ viewed as a dead man raised, yet it is a risen man who is our life.

But being alive in Christ, that is not all; but we are alive in Him who was crucified, and we have died with Him, and this frees from the old man and from the law. Thus we are baptized to Christ's death, buried with Him by baptism unto death; but called upon, therefore, only to walk in newness of life, for we are here in this creation as to our place. "We know that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed," for "He that has died (which is our state through the cross) is justified from sin." You cannot charge a dead man with evil lusts and a wicked will. "Now, if we be dead with Christ, we believe we shall (also) live with him." Thus we are distinctly reckoned as dead; but living with Him is spoken of as a consequence of this, not as a state we are in. Christ died unto sin once, and now lives to God. His death is essentially identical with His dying to sin. "In that he died, he died unto sin once"; so we are to reckon ourselves "dead to sin" (for we are physically alive here), and "alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

A living Christ is our life here; but we are not looked at as raised up with Him. It is still the same responsible man, but all sins put away, one who will be like Him in resurrection, who is not to serve sin; it will not have dominion over him; it is not to reign in his mortal body, for there he yet is; but being set free to yield himself to God as alive from the dead, and his members as instruments of righteousness unto God; freed from sin by Christ being our life, and sin in the flesh condemned in Christ, a sacrifice for sin, and we, He having died, reckoning ourselves dead.

But everlasting life is the end, salvation is in hope, while we have fruit unto holiness here, sin in the flesh condemned in Christ's sacrifice; and that being in death, and available for us, we see the condemnation gone, and ourselves dead to sin. The great point is that we have died. Only it is in the cross, where sin in the flesh was condemned, and are now alive in Christ, called to walk accordingly here; not put, according to purpose, in Christ in the new creation.

This death is then applied to the question of the law. Now the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives. But we have died, and consequently have ceased to be under it. We are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that we should be to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead. Still we are looked at as here, but married to Christ, who is raised, but not we raised with Him. We are delivered from the law, having died in that in which we were held. And then the state of the renewed soul under the first husband is given at the end of the chapter, where our death in Christ is not known; not the power of life in Him who is raised, and

the presence of the Holy Ghost in us giving energy according to Christ's place to this life; chap. 7.

Then the whole truth is summed up in the first three verses of chapter 8, the effect on the walk of the man down here in verse 4, which is man's responsibility as such, but the spring and power of the walk quite different, as are its effects (end of verses 4 and 5), with the judgment of man's condition when in the flesh.

But we are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit; if the Spirit of God dwell in us, our place and standing are not in the flesh before God. But note, the Spirit is come down here; it is still man down here, but in Christ and in the Spirit, and that by His Spirit dwelling in him, but that is down here. If he have not the Spirit, he is not Christ's; but if Christ be in him, for now it is Christ in him, and not he in Christ (compare John 14:20), the body is dead, a mere lifeless instrument of service; if it lives, it is a spring of sin only, flesh. But, Christ being in me, who did die,, because of it dead, it is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness; for that is what is looked for in this world, and that is what is found in the fruit of the Spirit, the fruit of righteousness, which is by Christ Jesus to the glory and praise of God. Still we are here, sons of God indeed, and so heirs— joint-heirs with Christ —but not in the new creation, but in the suffering one, and suffering with it, though that suffering be not worthy to be compared with the glory to be revealed in us.

But we suffer, having the Spirit, as taking up these sorrows according to God, and expressing them by groans produced by the Holy Ghost, and understood by God as those of His own Spirit, though in our hearts,

even when we do not know what to ask for. Just as Christ here could groan in sympathy with a suffering creation, and even Himself in the days of His flesh offer up His petitions with strong crying and tears, only not imperfect as we are, in it. The Spirit is the power of life, the Spirit gives us consciousness of sonship and our joint inheritance with Christ, and the Spirit groans in our hearts, we being such in the sense of all that is around us, we being joined to it as to our body, Christ our life in the inner man, and the Spirit dwelling in us. We are saved in hope, and know our place in the glory to be revealed, and hence feel the sorrow of our actual position, according to the Spirit of God, according to God Himself., We are sons and know it, but the sons of God are yet to be manifested. For the responsible man triumphantly asks, “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect?” and knows that nothing can separate him from the love of God in Christ Jesus. Everything works together in this poor world for the good of those who love God. Hence the exhortation of the Epistle is to present—we being thus here—our bodies a living sacrifice (that is, not in actual death, as Christ).

In Ephesians they are sent forth from God to manifest the divine character on earth. Here they are set forth as actually subsisting men on the earth only set free, and to offer themselves to God as a living sacrifice. It is the responsible man justified and set free, with a new life in Christ to live to God, reckoning himself dead to sin, as having been baptized to Christ’s death, as having died with Him.

The Epistle to the Colossians goes farther still. The believer, indeed, is not seen sitting in heavenly places in Christ. A hope is laid up for him in heaven, and he is to

set his affection on things above, where Christ sits at God's right hand, not on things on the earth. But he is not only dead with Christ, but risen with Him; he is dead, and his life hid with Christ in God. When Christ appears, he will appear with Him.

And here it is of moment to notice two distinct aspects of man's state, taken up in these epistles. He is viewed as living in sins and the indulgence of evil, and he is viewed as dead in sins. It is one and the same state; if he is alive in the sins, he is dead toward God. In the former case death must come in to deliver, for there is no mending of the flesh; in the latter it is a new creation.

Romans takes up the former view, Ephesians the latter. The new creation is wholly the purpose of God. The former, living in sins, is connected with responsibility; the latter has the second Adam risen and glorified for its centre. The former deals with man as he is; only life is found in the second Man, and so death for the first; for the Second has died and is risen, and become the believer's life. Colossians practically takes in both as to the state of man; only it does not put him in heavenly places, nor speak of a new creation; it is only we "risen with Christ." Hence also the "one body" is alluded to, and they are warned against not holding the Head; but the doctrine of the body is in no way developed, nor the purpose of God revealed.

It is important to notice that the death is always the same, for it is Christ's death. Death there was death. He died, and therein died to sin once. That death, ours by faith, is the only death spoken of. His death as a person who had been alive in this world was His death to sin. We are dead with Him in Colossians, dead with Him in

Romans. It is death to sin, in Him and in us; only He had none, and we do not literally die but appropriate His death through grace.

But in Colossians we are looked at as having lived in sins; chap. 2:12; chap. 3:7. This coincides with Romans. But (chap. 2:12; chap. 3:1) we are also risen with Him, and we are also viewed as having been dead in sins (chap. 2:13), which so far coincides with Ephesians: only it does not go so far—not seating us in heavenly places, nor, as I have said, develop the doctrine of the body, nor the purpose of God. But the being risen with Christ takes the believer himself into a new state. It is not merely life in Christ. Christ having come down and borne his sins, coming into his place of death, the sins having been put away and forgiven, he is raised with Him, and thus enters on a new sphere of existence. He has done with all the elements or principles of this world; he is not to walk as one alive in this world subject to ordinances, as in a religion suited to the flesh; but to have his affections on things above, where Christ sits; he is dead, and his life is hid there, for Christ is his life, though he be not sitting there as yet himself. Hence he has put off the old man and put on the new, and this is renewed in knowledge—has his knowledge according to a wholly new sphere of existence, after the image of Him that created him.

Here “new man” is not exactly the same as in Ephesians. There it is new in kind and nature—kainos; here neos; that is, he starts afresh, as just born with this, but renewed in knowledge in anakainoo, a wholly new kind. In Colossians we are not spoken of as dead to sin nor law; but ourselves dead and risen; that is, more definitely associated with Christ in the matter. It looks

onward, and not backward, as Romans does. The death is always Christ's own death; but in Romans it is viewed as delivering us as in this world from sin in the flesh and law; in Colossians, as associating us with Christ in death and resurrection. We are not dead to anything in Colossians, as living here, though by Christ; but have died from one system and begun (neos) another. We are not alive in the world, nor manifested, nor sitting in heavenly places. Our life is hid above with Christ, and our heart and hopes are to follow after.

Hence too we have indeed the purposed reconciling of all things as to their state, but not the place in which all things are brought into one in Christ. Only the now accomplished part of the mystery is noted, "Christ in you [Gentiles] the hope of glory"; not the crown of glory here to Jews, as He will be; but in the Gentiles, and the glory a hope.

In Romans then we have the believer alive in Christ in this world; but dead with Christ (chap. 6:8); and being so dead, dead to sin, as Christ died actually to sin, and is alive to God, and being dead, dead to law also (for law has power over a man as long as he lives), we are to live in newness of life; and shall be in likeness of Christ's resurrection. He is viewed as a man in his responsibility, as forgiven and justified (this to chap. 5: n), rejoicing in the hope of glory, in tribulations, and in God Himself; and as regards state and sin in the flesh and law, he has died and is free. There is no condemnation for him; sin in the flesh was condemned in the sacrifice of Christ. This is all negative, save that he is free, and has the Spirit of God dwelling in him. He looks for the redemption of the body, the quickening of his mortal

body; for he is yet in this world the responsible man: only he is now to walk in newness of life.

In Colossians he is risen with Christ, and as such has a hope laid up for him in heaven; he has died, as in Romans, but is risen with Christ. The rudiments of this world—not only philosophy (which is the wandering of the old man's mind), but any religiousness which supposes a man alive in the flesh—are passed for him. He is not alive in this world; but, being risen also with Christ, he has his life hid up there with Him.

But another element comes in; not responsibility, nor living and walking in sins; but, as towards God, dead in sins, which precludes the question of responsibility; yet God has quickened him together with Christ, having forgiven him all trespasses.

Remark too that in Colossians we have no mention of the Spirit. Once it is said, "your love in the Spirit" as a fact; but in the doctrinal part it is not spoken of. It is life. We lived in sins, but have died; we are risen also, and, as dead in sins, have been quickened with Christ. We are not to be subject to ordinances as if we were alive in this world; we are dead with Christ from all its principles. Christ is said to be in us, which is by His Spirit; but not the Holy Ghost as a Person given to us. That is a seal and an earnest to us here. In Colossians we are dead and risen with Christ. Christ is our life.

Another expression may be noticed. This is connected with our having in Christ all that was shadowed out in figures of the law. The body was of Christ, and we are complete in Him; that is, in Christ risen. The expression, "circumcision of Christ," is similar to "we live by the faith of the Son of God," "have the faith of God," "the

body is of Christ." It is what characterizes the thing spoken of. It is not Jewish circumcision, the sign of putting off the old man, but the reality of it in Christ, namely, in His death, being buried with Him in baptism. What is put off is the body of the flesh, the body of sin destroyed, planted in baptism in the likeness of His death, our old man crucified with him. Christ after the flesh, as Gentiles, we have never known; Christ risen we put on. We have nothing to do with Christ as to coming to God, till the cross. There He draws all men. As alive, we can go back and feed on the bread that came down from heaven. We have no justification in the Colossians, but a new state; only that, that state being resurrection with Christ, all sins have been forgiven through what preceded. The old man is put off, the new man put on. In Romans the body is dead, the Spirit life in us down here.

In Ephesians we have purpose fully as to ourselves, as to Christ and His place as head over all things, and to the body. Hence we are only looked at as dead in sins, and there is a new creation. It begins (after shewing the relationship with God and the Father in which we are placed in Christ, and God's purpose to gather all things together in Him, our joint-heirship with Him, and the earnest of the Spirit till we have the inheritance), (that is, after shewing our calling and inheritance, and dealing for it) with Christ, known first as dead, but raised from death, and set at God's right hand, far above all principalities and powers, and given to be Head over all things to the assembly, the fulness of Him that fills all in all; and us also, once dead in sins, quickened and raised by the same power from that state together with Christ, Jew and Gentile also together, alike by nature children of wrath, and made to sit together in heavenly

places in Christ. It is not, as often remarked, with Him yet, but in Him, for this is operation of power for the accomplishment of purpose, not purpose itself. We are God's workmanship created again in Christ Jesus.

This is simpler than Romans or Colossians, because it is wholly and simply a new creation and our actual state with new life, and flesh is not in question at all. God is shewing the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us in Christ Jesus; only, of course, redemption and forgiveness come in. But, as I have said, there is no death to sin. I am not at all looked at as a living man here. The fact is recognized that we once walked in them; but we have put off the old man and put on the new, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness. In Colossians we are only renewed in knowledge after the image of Him who created us. We are not born and have not died, but, being dead in sins, have been created in Christ Jesus—God's workmanship. Hence, as to conduct, having put off the old man and put on the new, and having been sealed with the Holy Spirit of God for the day of redemption, we are called to be imitators of God as dear children, and shew God's character as Christ did, not to present, as from where we are (as in Romans), our bodies a living sacrifice to God as our intelligent service, but to give ourselves up in love as Christ gave Himself for us to God a sacrifice and offering. We are to walk in love, one essential name of God manifested in Christ, and walk as children of light; and if unable, Christ, who was the light of the world, will enlighten us.

Remark the perfectness of affection presented in chapter 5. We may look up in affection or look down. The higher the object, if we look up, the nobler the affection.

Here it is to God Himself; if we look down, the more unworthy, the greater the love. So Christ for us; and Him we are to follow.

The subjective measure of our path is the truth as it is in Jesus (namely, the having put off the old man, which corrupts itself according to the deceitful lusts, and the having put on the new man, created after God), and not grieving the Holy Ghost. The objective measure is the blessed Lord, Christ manifesting God in this world as love and light. Only remark that we are said to be light in the Lord, not love; though we are to walk in it. For we have the purity of the divine nature in the new man, and, as born of God, cannot sin. But love, after all, is sovereign goodness in God. Thus the Ephesians has nothing to do with the doctrine of Romans, that God justifies the ungodly; nor with death to the old man, learned in the death of Christ, by him who felt (as born of God) its power and bitterness, though this be recognized in that we have put off the old man; but with the new creation, and the purpose of God revealed to those who have part in it.

Romans deals with the old thing: only we have life in Christ. Ephesians reveals the new, and sets us in Christ by the same power which raised Him from the dead and sets Him at God’s own right hand. Hence we are sitting in heavenly places, and there is union.

Colossians does touch on Roman ground: only sins are looked on as wholly gone when the divine action begins in Colossians, as is true of the old man in Ephesians (“having forgiven you all trespasses”), whereas their putting away is positively treated in Romans. But it does speak of putting off the body of the flesh, having died

with Christ, and adds, “risen with him,” which leads to “the body,” and puts in a new place, yet not in heaven, but that place looked to; and when this is treated of we are looked at as dead in sins, not dying or having died to sin, but dead in them. But heavenly things are a matter of expectation, as newness of life here was in Romans. There is not new creation which involves God’s purposes, in which nothing old is, and so new creation, and the full purpose as to our acquired place, our place in Christ, though not yet with Him.

The Colossian is renewed in knowledge (anakainoo) after the image of Him that created him; the Ephesian created after God in righteousness and true holiness, and renewed (ananeoo) in the spirit of his mind, made fresh and new continually.

Galatians and 2 Corinthians require a few observations.

And first, of the latter, in chapters 4 and 5, we have the two points of death to sin and dead in sins referred to, confirming the explanation given. The former is the reducing to practice the death to sin.

Colossians 3 is God’s view of all Christians: “Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” Hence he will not recognize a Christian to be alive in this world at all. He has members upon earth, his life is hid with Christ in God, he walked in evil practices when he lived in them.

Romans 6 is faith’s acceptance of this; a man recognizes himself to be dead.

In 2 Corinthians 4 he realises it, always bearing about in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus may be manifested in his body, and nothing else.

There was the constant application of the cross, of the dying of Jesus, so as not to allow sin in his flesh to stir at all. He held the cross to it, and there is a realisation of this in which all link with the world and the will of nature is broken, and confidence is in Him that raises the dead; so that, death working in a man the sentence of death in himself, not to trust self, only the life of Christ lives, and thinks, and works in him. Death was applied to all that was nature in Paul, so that only the life of Christ in him worked in others. It was much to say, but Paul could say it of himself, and God put him to the test to see if it was made good. He was delivered to death that only the life of Jesus might be manifested in his mortal flesh.

We must compare 2 Corinthians 1 to understand this properly. (See verses 8, 9.) Only chapter 4 comments on and explains what is there historically stated. This was death; the sentence of death realised is always bearing about the dying and suffering in the flesh, ceasing from sin: only, being thorough in his path, it was for Jesus' sake he was delivered to death. There was no flesh or lust at work, and the dying of Jesus, borne about in what would have been the seat of sin, prevented the motions of them. I repeat, it was a great deal to say, but so it was. Christ was perfect in never allowing sin to enter; we practically, as far as may be in us, in never letting our will and lusts move when sin in the flesh is there, by applying His dying to hinder its even stirring. The Lord grant we may do it constantly! In chapter 5 we judge that all were dead. If we live, then we belong, as we have seen in Ephesians, to a new creation (w. 16, 17). This belongs to a wholly new creation; it is not "he is";

but [there is] “a new creation.” This much 2 Corinthians affords us.

A word now on Galatians. The comparison of Galatians 2:19-21 and Romans 6 is full of interest, and much clears up the operation of law and our being crucified with Christ. In Romans 7 we read, “I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.” The law brought death on my conscience; for it is a ministration of death, and a ministration of condemnation. But in Romans 7 we have not the man delivered (save the last verse), but the process by which the soul learns what the flesh is, and our need of deliverance. Sin in the flesh is there, and the law comes and forbids it in its first movements in lust. It brings death on the conscience; sin rose up alive, which was dormant in indifference, nothing being done which affected the natural conscience; but “thou shalt not lust” brought in death. Then comes the experience under law — “no good in me”— then “it is not me” —then “it is too strong for me,” and then deliverance. The law of the Spirit of life in Him, and sin in the flesh condemned in His sacrifice. In a word, the process of discovery of sin and its power in us, and the deliverance through Christ.

In Galatians, in contrast with legalists, we have the matter viewed from the Christian point of view. In that very work of the law which Romans owned brought in death, that death is viewed as a sentence judicially executed on me. I am dead to it by being dead. But if it had been the direct application of the law to oneself, it would have been condemnation as well as death. Still the apostle gives it its full effect; he “by law was dead to law.” The law had judicially killed him. But this was as alive in the flesh. But how was this really done? Christ

had been crucified: he had been crucified with Him, nevertheless lived, but not he, the killed Saul, but Christ lived in him. Thus the law had killed him: he did not exist any more. But the condemnation did not come in with the death, because it was really in Christ's death. It had taken place so that the condemnation was all gone, taken by another; and he dead by that which effected it, and Christ now lived in him. This death the law itself could effect and did; at least it did in the conscience of the renewed man: only it was done in the crucifixion of Christ, that the condemnation might not accompany it. For death is always my death, but it is thus deliverance from flesh.

There is another word in the Galatians we may notice, chapter 6:14, 15. This leads us not to the new creation exactly, but that that alone was of any value. He gloried not in a worldly religion, what the world and self could recognize as done in the flesh; he gloried only in the cross. This is the shame of it more than death, though death it was, but a death of shame by which the world was put out; that which morally was all his glory, but made an end of every worldly glory. All that was glorious for him was the world's deepest shame, and where he had been crucified to the world, he looked down at it from that which closed all connection with it.

"Dead to the world" is not a scriptural expression simply as such: only we are not, having died to its principles in Christ, recognized as being alive in it. But it is not like sin, or the law, which, as far as we are concerned, have ceased to exist for us if we have died. They are either in us ending in death, or that which has ceased to exist for me altogether if I have died. Not so the world: I have done with it, but have to remain in it and be kept from

the evil, and overcome it, as Christ did, as dead to its principles. It never was “I”: sin, or the flesh was; and the law ceased to exist for me when I died, for it had power over me as long as I lived only. We have died to the world’s rudiments, its principles, which were in us; still having died, I do not reckon myself alive in it. Death is always our death, and that only, whatever it makes us dead to, and this is always in the cross, and we are dead to all He died to there, for we were crucified with Him. But one thing this passage shews, that there is only the alternative— either fleshly ceremony and legal righteousness, which is none, or a new creation.

One thing remains to consider—the types which relate to this. If we look at the history of Israel up to the Red Sea, it is in itself entirely complete, for we have actual judgment on the one hand, and complete deliverance on the other; death and judgment on the one hand, and salvation by them on the other; that is, death and judgment for man in rebellion, or in Christ—delivering by them. When we come to experimental application, the state we get into by faith in this redemption, we must go farther, and take in the wilderness and Jordan and what followed. In this aspect the Red Sea begins the Christian course. The blood of the passover had met God’s eye as righteous Judge, and His love can freely and righteously deliver, and they are delivered at the Red Sea. Christ’s death and resurrection are a perfect redemption and deliverance. “Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed; thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation.” God has “borne them on eagles’ wings, and brought them “to Himself. In a word, it is redemption, making us thus strangers and pilgrims indeed in this world, bringing us

to God Himself. The wilderness thus becomes the place where God exercises men, and brings out what is in their heart. (See Deut. 8:2, 3 and 15, 16.)

Another part of Christian life (Canaan) is added to this, which, though not at the same moment perhaps in exercise, yet is part of the same life, for the Christian is always in the wilderness, and always in heavenly places in Christ, that is, whoever has the Spirit of Christ dwelling in him. His intelligent realization is another thing; his enjoyment of it in faithful carrying out still another; but both are his place. He is sitting in heavenly places in Christ, he is walking on this earth as a pilgrim in the wilderness.

I proceed to consider the type of Jordan and what follows. Jordan is death, and still Christ's going down into it; but it is not God's rod smiting the sea, so that by that judgment was salvation, and no ark was there. In Jordan, in this passage of death, the ark goes first, or man could not pass; it is not defence and salvation and deliverance from their Egypt condition, their coming out free, but their going into the place of promise. It is the same death of Christ, but going down before His sheep, so that, He having taken away its power wholly, they should pass over dryshod; there was no barring river—the waters were gone—but an entrance into Canaan, yet an entrance into Canaan, not for rest, but for conflict as Jehovah's host in the good fight of faith against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places.

The ark there is the efficient cause; that is, Christ going into death, but we going down there with Him though after Him; so that it is not His being delivered for my offences, wounded for my transgressions, nor even

deliverance from bondage, sin in the flesh condemned on the cross, and I free as to a divinely given title by redemption; but I have gone through death with Him, and am come up out of Jordan into the heavenly places; not Christ dead for what I was, but my dying with Him, yet in His death.

Then I eat the old corn of the land, not the manna. Christ, as food for my pilgrimage and my wants, is not the character He has now, but Christ the food that belongs to the heavenly places. I sit there as to my title and standing without combat, and then combat to put my foot on and possess all. There it is that I am circumcised; that is, I have put off the body of the flesh. The rudiments of the world are done with, the reproach of Egypt is rolled away. Our politeuma (citizenship) is in heaven; but this does not hinder my running on to attain Christ and the resurrection from among the dead, but the contrary.

The Jordan then gives us death with Christ, and coming up out of it, resurrection with Him, as we find it in Colossians. This introduces us into the heavenly condition personally; then, where they were, they were circumcised, which does not belong to wilderness condition. There the heart and flesh are tested as down here for flesh is in us. But once passed the Jordan—dead and risen in Christ—there is circumcision—the putting off the body of the flesh; we have done with Adam, and have put on Christ. It is “the circumcision of Christ,” because it is the true force of that typical rite as we possess it in Him. We have put off the old man and put on the new. Then we eat the old corn of the land, do not recognize ourselves in this world, nor know any man after the flesh. Then we eat the passover; recognize,

being circumcised (dead with Christ and that realized), the full force of His death as full of deliverance as well as forgiveness, the close of all connection with Egypt, as Christ in death. Not now as blood on the doorposts, but as death to all the old scene, as seen of God.

Both the Red Sea and Jordan are Christ's death; but one is deliverance by sins put away and sin condemned in His death; the other, our dying and resurrection with Him. Ephesian teaching (though connected with this, as to the having put off the old man and put on the new, which is the experimental part of it, that is, our state before God and our sitting in heavenly places in Christ) is not found in the types. That is a wholly new creation when we were dead. There is no type of that. The types give the experimental knowledge of the redemption and deliverance of man.

2 Corinthians 4:10, 11 gives us the practical carrying out of this. (Compare chap, i:8, 9.) Verses 14-18 take Ephesian ground. Death is simply death and Christ's death, of which it is expressly said, "In that he died, he died to sin once."

I may add another point which comes before us as regards death, both doctrinally and in the experience of the apostle. In itself death is always simply our being dead with Christ. Its application or effect may vary. It always applies to our relationship with God in nature. But this may be sinful nature in me, so as to be death to sin, or to the law, which was God's measure of conduct or rule of life for us as alive, as children of Adam. This death too closes; or it may apply to the principles of the world, the system that Satan has formed for the scene of the natural life's development and satisfaction without

God. Of these we have spoken—and these are the material points, because these are either contrary to God, or that which, applying to man alive in the flesh, brought in death and condemnation; because as God's law it must be such to sinners when brought to bear upon them.

But Christianity is connected with a power, brought into this world of sin, and not belonging to it at all, the power of the Spirit of God, which, besides freeing us from the power of evil as dead in Christ to sin and alive to God, associates us with Christ in the new creation, whether as revealing it in hope, or as setting us in it in Him. "If any man be in Christ (it is) a new creation." There is one to which,as such he belongs. "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new, and all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself." God has "wrought us," for our "house which is from heaven." "We are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained."

Now the old creation has a double aspect: nature as God made it, and natural relationships which as His own creation God maintains the obligation of, and sustains as good; or, on the other hand, as fallen and in an evil state. Of this last I have spoken. We are delivered from the power of the evil that is in it. But while he who condemns creation in itself, and the relationships God Himself formed (as marriage, parental authority, or the like), or resists what He has established in the midst of evil as authorities to repress it, is an enemy of God, and is led by spiritual evil; yet, supposing power and gift and calling from God, a person may live out of all these by the power which connects him with the new creation. The being in the natural relationships of God's old

creation is not evil. It is very evil to say so. I do not speak of authorities now—it involves other questions—but of natural relationships.

But a man may, as a special vessel of the power of the new creation, be disconnected with the natural relationships of the old. Paul knew no man after the flesh. Not that he did not daily need grace, diligence, and even a thorn in the flesh, as others might; but that there was positive power in which he lived above the whole scene through which he moved. He did not merely live as a Christian, keeping his body under, and, we may say in a general and very full sense, out of the evil which corrupted the old creation; but, as to human relationships, out of the old creation as to his course and walk. He was before the world exclusively as a minister of God. But this is a question of power, and even of gift. It is not unconnected with deadness to the whole scene around; but still it is a matter of power and service. It was for the gospel's sake to carry out the activities of God's love more undistractedly in the midst of the evil; he insisting carefully on the other as established of God, being good. A man may live to God in them, acting up to them as of God, though, the power of evil having come in, he has to sit loose to them; 1 Cor. 7:29. He may in a legal way dread them, as not free to God; or he may, as outside of them, if really free, have nothing to say to them, yet recognize them in their place, because he is free.

The Lord says, "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" in His service (John 2:4), and goes down (12), He and His mother, and His disciples; and on the cross owns her when His service was accomplished, and commits her to the care of the disciple He loved. He could shew that He

could appreciate the beauty of the lilies of the field, love the young man who ran up to Him as lovely in character; though He could not occupy Himself with lilies, and detected the sinful root which governed the young man's heart. He could take up children and bless them, though fully recognizing they needed One come to save that which was lost. He could recognize, in a word, what was in nature of God, and manifest what was sin in it, because He was perfectly free from all evil, and it had no power whatever over Him; subject to Mary and Joseph, though conscious He was the Son of the Father. If we have such a place, it must of course be as dead, because sin is in us; but as free, though watchful, because Christ is our life.

Hence we can rejoice with those that rejoice and weep with those that weep, without a human cause save in others for joy or weeping, but in divine and gracious sympathy. But we must be wholly with Christ to do it truly, yet man to feel it truly as He was. Only in us this supposes us dead to self, for in us self is selfishness. I am "free from all," says the apostle, "that I may be the servant of all."

But this is not Gilgal nor circumcision. That rolls away the reproach of Egypt, puts away the body of the flesh, and deals with sin in ourselves. It needs this that there may be the free activity of God's love, not hindered by it; but there is more in it, the free power of the new creation, based on the cross of Christ; and we being such as we are, and where we are, always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our bodies, and delivered to death, too, to test and keep it thorough and effectual, and this where the free power is, and the call of God to

it, in having the sentence of death in ourselves, the practical power of the cross, the dying of the Lord Jesus. The first power of this respects sin and the flesh, and the rudiments of the world (compare 1 Pet. 4:1-3, connected with chap. 3:18); but, where this calling and free power is, it may go on to being loose from all that might impede its exercise. Where this is not, the attempt to take it up is only monkery, which may be sincere, and will prove that we are not free, but slaves; sometimes with disastrous effects. Where that power is, it is indeed blessed, and the freest fullest service. If we are in the relationship God owns and approves, the duty attaches to us which belongs to us, according to God, with the affections too, only as to self, our own state of soul, the passage quoted from I Corinthians 7:29 is our guide. As to mere natural objects sought, they turn us away (self is then the centre); enjoyed as of God when free, and not sought: God is owned in them. Honey could not be in a sacrifice; on the top of the rod, while pressing on doing "one thing," it may lighten the eyes. But we must be as the true Gideonites—lap the water with our tongue, as a dog lappeth, and not stoop down on our knees to drink. The times too are straitened.

Judgment-Seat of God and of Christ

131

I am not aware that this expression, “the judgment-seat of God” or “the judgment-seat of Christ,” is found anywhere else than in Romans 14 and 2 Corinthians 5: in the first of these two passages with a view to prevent individual judgments; in the second with a view to provoke to do good. The subject in itself is one of the most solemn and at the same time most blessed, and this so much the more as we understand it rightly. I believe that each act of our lives will be manifested then before the tribunal, according as the grace of God and His ways with us in connection with our own acts will be known then. We read (Rom. 14) that “every one of us shall give account of himself to God”; and the word, in this passage, mentions the tribunal in connection with the exhortation to brethren not to judge one another in respect of days, meats, or any other such thing.

I am disposed to think that the acts alone will be subject to manifestation; but all the private acts of our life depend so intimately upon our inward feelings, that it is, in a certain sense, difficult to distinguish the acts from the simple thoughts. The acts manifest the power of the thought or of the feeling. I believe that the whole of our acts will be detailed there, before the judgment-seat, not for us however, as if we were in the flesh, and thus to our condemnation, but to make evident to our own eyes the grace that occupied itself with us—regenerate or unregenerate. In the counsels of God I am elect before the foundation of the world; hence I think that my own history will be detailed before the judgment-seat, and,

parallel with it, the history of the grace and of the mercy of God toward me. The why and the how we did this or that will be manifested then. For us the scene will be declarative, not judicial. We are not in the flesh before God; in His eyes by His grace we are dead. But then, if we have walked according to the flesh, we must see how we lost in blessing thereby, and what loss we have incurred"; and, on the other hand, the ways of God towards us, all ways of wisdom, of mercy, and of grace, will be perfectly known and understood by us for the first time. The history of each one will come out in perfect transparency; it will be seen how you yielded and how He preserved you, how your foot slipped and how He raised you up again, how you were drawing near danger and shame and how He by His own arm interposed.

I believe this is the bride making herself ready, and I consider that moment as a wondrous one. There will be no flesh then to be condemned; but the new nature will enter into the full knowledge of the care and of the love, which, in true holiness and in righteousness and even in grace, have followed us step by step all through the running of the race. Some parts of our life, till then entirely unexplained, will be fully disclosed and become altogether plain; some tendencies of our nature, that perhaps we do not judge to be so pernicious and deadly as they are, and for the mortification of which we are perhaps now subjected to a discipline that we may not have interpreted aright, will be then perfectly explained; and, what is more, the very falls that plunge us now into such bitter anguish will be seen then to be that which God used to preserve us from something more terrible. I

do not think that until then we shall ever have had a full knowledge of the badness of our flesh.

How blessed for us to know that then it will be not only all over with the flesh in the counsel of God, but that the flesh will no longer be attached to us! On the other side, I doubt not, the manifestation of God's grace toward us individually will be so magnificent that even the sense of the perversity of the flesh that we had, if it could possibly enter there, would be excluded by the greatness of the sense of divine goodness. Why do we not deny and mortify the flesh when we think of that hour? The Lord grant that we may do so more and more to the glory of His grace. This great subject of the judgment-seat brings the soul to a very full knowledge of our individual standing.

131 The best editions read in Romans 14:10, "judgment-seat of God."

Letter On Original Sin

My Dear Brother,

I find in general, that people do not know what they mean by original sin. Is it a taint, an evil in nature, or a relative state with God? For instance it is said, By one man's disobedience many were made sinners.

But it is never said, Christ has put away sin in any sense. He came once in the end of the world to put away sin. But the result is not yet produced. Faith knows it is effectual and rejoices. But the Holy Ghost convicts the world of sin because they believe not in Jesus; so that there they are, sin increased upon them by the death of Christ. But, I repeat, it is never said Christ has put away sin. He has done the work that does it, so that in the new heavens and new earth righteousness will dwell.

Hence my first answer must be the question, What do they mean by original sin? If it be the nature (as for instance in the thirty-nine Articles), it is not put away at all, but condemned in the cross. If it be the relationship and standing of the sinner, it is not changed till he believes. Only the cross is the adequate and glorious ground on which, God being glorified and the blood before His eyes, He can send to every sinner beseeching him to be reconciled; but this proves he is not till he answers to the call.

If it be meant that sins are put away (which is not original sin in any sense), and we remain guilty of unbelief, it is wholly anti-scriptural. The Lord says, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins"; and Paul, "Let no man deceive you; for because of these

things the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience.” And men are judged according to their works for the deeds done in the body. Only remember with the vague word “original sin” we must know what they mean. The text generally, I suppose, applied to it is Romans 5:19. But this says nothing as to putting away. And it is never said Christ has put away sin at all.

Your affectionate brother in Christ,

J.N.D.

I cannot answer for letters put in by those who have received them, because the inquiry to which they are an answer may be met most justly by that answer, but does not appear in the answer. But I have more to say. Original sin is theology, and not scripture, and the fruit of men’s minds, which have not to be explained but refuted as not the expression of God’s In this case it has no really ascertained meaning at all. My explanation of it would be merely my thought; and it is constantly used and said to be put away and used for children’s salvation, entirely out of the bounds of scripture; and those who use it do not know what they say or whereof they affirm; and it is very useful for them to know this.

Such I judge is the case of your correspondent, though I have no wish or reason to complain of his note. If your correspondent uses the statements of scripture which he quotes and drops the theological expression of original sin, he will be all right. But his letters shew that he has everything to learn on the points he speaks of. He confounds, from the outset and all through, sin and sins, being born of God with forgiveness and divine favour. Speaking of sin in contrast with sins, scripture never speaks of its being forgiven at all, and carefully makes

the difference between the two. It is just the vagueness and confusion which is on your correspondent's note which leaves so many souls in confusion and uncertainty, and hinders their progress. Many of your readers know that the Romans treats distinctly, and with diligent care, in two different well-defined parts the question of sins involving guilt, and sin, as the state which is the subject of deliverance, not of forgiveness, giving to each part a statement of resulting blessing. The last phrase of your correspondent's note I totally deny, as wholly erroneous.

J.N.D.

Connection Of The Cross With The Entire Development Of God’s Ways With Man

Whatever brings out the perfectness of the blessed Lord’s work, and the way in which it is adapted to the whole moral condition of man, while glorifying God in respect of that condition, and thus bringing man into association with God’s glory—whatever shews the connection of the sacrifice of the cross with the entire development of God’s ways with man confirms the faith of the saint, and enables him to admire the wisdom of God with increased intelligence and a deeper spirit of adoration. I send you therefore a few, I trust, plain thoughts as to the way the cross bears on the previous history of man, the manner in which it is linked up with it all, in connection with some of the statements of Galatians 3 as to the order in which law and promise came.

In the first place, to say nothing of the eternal counsels of God or of the promise of eternal life given us in Christ Jesus before the world was (precious as the consideration of it is, as founding our hopes on the sure thoughts of God Himself), we have from the outset, when sin had entered, the blessing and the deliverance established in Christ, the second Adam, not in any promise to the first.

“The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent’s head.” The Seed of the woman was the second Adam, and, as is evident, not the first. The first is quite passed by. Man, the first Adam, was neither righteous nor holy.

He was innocent, which excludes both righteousness and holiness. He had not the knowledge of good and evil. Righteousness discriminates between good and evil in the relationship in which we stand towards others, whether God or the creature, and acts in the sense of responsibility, according to the claim which such relationships have on us. Holiness hates evil intrinsically in itself; delighting in purity, in God's nature, it abhors all that is discordant with it. God is righteous, because He appreciates infinitely all that is due94 to every relationship in which any being stands to another, and, above all, all beings to Himself. The highest manifestation of righteousness, the absolute manifestation of it in perfection, was His receiving Christ to Himself. He is holy, because He perfectly knows good and evil, delights in good, and abhors evil. We should at once be morally shocked if one spoke of God's being innocent (that is, ignorant of good and evil), and justly so. Now man was innocent. He enjoyed the goodness of God with thankfulness, alas! how short a time, and his ways towards others would have been the fruit of natural relationship where no evil was. Affection and loving care would have flowed out, without being cast on a sense of duty, because affection had ceased to prompt what the relationship in its perfection supposed.

But this was not to last; he soon fell into the knowledge of good and evil, and a bad conscience, which feared to meet God. He was no longer innocent. Conscience has a double character, which we do not always distinguish; the sense of responsibility to another; and the knowledge of good and evil in itself. The latter element was absent from Adam's mind before his fall. The sense of responsibility was there, the debt of obedience; it was

in the nature of his relationship with God; but distinguishing things as good and evil in themselves had no place in his mind. To have eaten of the tree was no evil whatever in itself: he would have eaten of it as innocently as of any other in itself. God had forbidden it, and all depended on that command. Adam innocent was formed to understand responsibility to obey. To avoid a thing, where there was no command because it was evil, was unknown to him. He was innocent, ignorant of evil to be avoided. In his mind nothing evil in itself existed to be avoided.

He got conscience by the fall, which made it a bad one. Henceforth he distinguished things as wrong in themselves. He was in many things a law to himself, his thoughts accusing and excusing one another. If he forgot God even—it is hard to forget Him altogether when passion is over, natural when passion acts; for passion is forgetfulness of Him and of duty— but if he forgot God, conscience was there to tell him of wrong done. Righteousness, however the maintenance of it might be dreaded, had now its place and claim in his mind; and holiness, however absent it might be from him, had a meaning and a name through his knowledge of the evil it abhorred, which made it terrible in God in whom it could not but be found. Such was fallen man, lost, ruined, by his perverse will. He had listened to Satan, and trusted and believed him rather than God, whose favour he had willingly sacrificed for the pleasure of eating an apple, and the presumptuous hope of being as God in His knowledge of good and evil. As a principle, he got that knowledge in subjection to the evil he knew, and with the loss of his sweet natural relationship in innocence to God and all around him.

He was fallen, sinful, disobedient, guilty, and under judgment. To such a sinful and rebellious being promise could not be, and was not, made. It would have been sanctioning evil with blessing.

But a blessed hope is set before him as the object of recovering faith. The second Adam is set up; to him the promise (if promise we should call it) is made. He is announced as the destroyer of the serpent's power, as the first Adam had been the victim of its subtlety. The Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head.

Thus, the first dealing with man after the fall was the setting up of the second Adam, the Lord Christ, as the destroyer of him who had subverted the first. The first was passed by. He was neither the vessel of promise, nor the heir of blessing. Individually he may have laid hold on the hope of the second Adam, but there was no restoring promise to himself. Another was set up in his place, to whom and for whom faith should look.

Such, then, was the position of man; sin, conscience in the sense of knowledge of good and evil, and (sin being there) a guilty and defiled conscience, and the revelation of a deliverer. The perverse will which had brought in the sin was not corrected by the conscience of evil, nor the revelation of a deliverer. It expanded itself with the expansion of humanity, and corruption and violence filled the earth.

And here I must distinguish, without enlarging upon it, between God's government of the earth and the result of sin as to relationship with Himself, and the salvation and deliverance which is the remedy for it. As regards government (that is, present effects upon earth—the ways of God), man, instead of paradise, finds an earth of

toil and pain, and woman sorrow and grief of spirit in that which was natural joy to her. As regards the full effect of sin, both are alike driven out from God's presence, and the way of the tree of life closed to them.

They themselves dread the God who should have been the spring of joy to them. The deluge which closed the scene of antediluvian wickedness was the judgment of the earth, the display of God's government of it. Eternal salvation and glory is quite another thing, as is everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power. All, it is true, will be in Christ's hands. He will judge and govern, and He is the eternal Saviour; but the two things are quite distinct, though brought into connection in His Person, and so in the saints when the glory comes. The just distinction of the two will clear the mind on many points.

But God pursued the development of His ways in grace for the instruction and blessing of man.

Having called Abraham, and led him out from his country, kindred, and father's house, and appropriated him to Himself as His own, so to speak, in the world, as taken out of it, He gives him the promise. He becomes the father of the faithful, and the root of the olive-tree of God. The chosen and called one becomes the depositary and stock of promise.

Here positive promise begins, not merely the revelation of a deliverer who should destroy the works of the devil on the one hand, and a conscience knowing the evil in which it walked on the other, but a positive promise to a given object, "in thee"; so that the grace which called him out of the world singled him out also as its heir, and the vessel of the blessing of God in it.

The promise was unconditional and absolute. God gives it as the revelation of a purpose He will accomplish, and addresses it to Abraham, so as to fix the person in whom it was to have its accomplishment. God interferes in blessing, reveals His intention to confer it dependent on His own faithfulness alone. He blesses because He is pleased to bless, and blesses him whom He calls out to enjoy it. The promise extends out too, remark, to the whole world as to the sphere of its application. “In thee shall all nations be blessed.” It is universal in the sphere of its application, absolute in its character, and its accomplishment dependent on the sole faithfulness of God.

In figure there was a development of this, which casts fresh light on the ways of God. Isaac is offered up, a remarkable type of the offering of Jesus, of the Father’s not sparing His Son. He is received again from the dead in a figure, and presents a risen Christ after the accomplishment of His sacrifice. Thereupon the promise is confirmed to him. The promise of the blessing of the nations was not given to Abraham and his seed. It was made to Abram alone in Genesis 12; and so in Galatians 3 we read in the original, “And to Abram were the promises made, and to his seed.” So again, the promise which was confirmed before of God to Christ (not in Christ). Hence it is the apostle insists upon its being one, for the promises to Abraham, as father of the Jews, were made in common to him and to his seed together; and it was promised that his seed should be as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is by the seashore, innumerable. Whereas the promise of the blessing of the nations was given to Abram first, and then confirmed to the one seed, Isaac, figure of Christ sacrificed and risen

again, with no mixture of anyone else, nor mention of a numerous posterity.

But to return. The promise was absolute and unconditional, the announcement of the accomplishment of blessing on God's part through the one promised Seed, an accomplishment dependent on His own faithfulness alone. The question of righteousness in those who were to enjoy it was not raised. God's grace in blessing was revealed, and, we may say with the apostle, in Christ; but the sin of those who should enjoy it was untouched, conscience left without resource, or without raising a question indeed about it. The revelation of a deliverer and the promise of God were now brought together, but the state of him who was to be blessed was not entered on in any way. Such was the force of the unconditional promise made to Abraham. It made the blessing of the nations certain: the question of righteousness was not raised. God had promised to Abraham, and confirmed it to the one Seed. His faithfulness would perform it.

After this came the law, redemption having been prefigured in the exodus and the passage of the Red Sea. The law raised the question of righteousness—it claimed it on the part of God. The promise was addressed to those under it on condition of obedience. "If you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people, for all the earth is mine, and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation… And all the people answered together, and said, All that Jehovah hath spoken we will do."

Here then the blessing was made dependent on the obedience of man. The mediator was not of one, but between two parties; and the covenant rested not simply on the infallibility of one who promised, but upon the obedience of another party also. For God is one: a mediator implies two parties; and here the accomplishment of the blessing rests on the condition of the obedience of the human party. The law then raised the question of righteousness which the promise had not at all. But on man's part there was utter failure as to it, and the law worked wrath and brought men under a curse.

Thus, up to Christ, we have conscience, promise, and law— law coming in by the bye (pareiselthe), after the certain and infallible promise to the Seed, to raise the question of righteousness on God's part with man, stating the rule of it if man was to accomplish it for God, what creature-righteousness (if such there were) ought to, and must be. It came in between the promise and its fulfilment for the necessary and important object, an object which could not be passed by, of righteousness before God being laid down as needed, to make good God's claim of it against man, but against man already a sinner.

I may add, before speaking of Christ's death, that He came as a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises to the fathers (for circumcision was not of Moses, but of the fathers); that is, He presented Himself as the accomplishment of the promises made to them in connection with men living in the flesh; so that, if received (that is, if man had not been utterly and wholly alienated from God), the blessing was there, both for Israel and all nations to be

blessed also in the promised Seed—the gathering of the peoples to Shiloh come in Israel—the staves of beauty and bands would not have been broken. But the truth was, man was an utter sinner, his carnal mind enmity against God; and Christ, whatever grace He came in, could not but be God manifested in flesh, and light in the world. Without law man was lawless, under law a law-breaker; and when light and grace came, yea, God Himself, in loving-kindness and truth, he was the rejecter of all in which blessing was.

Thus, however, promise also was rejected by the Jew who had it, and all was utterly lost for man; there remained no link between him and God; or rather the proof was now afforded that there was, and could be, none between God and man in the flesh. This—for He was perfect love—was, I doubt not, the sense of what was expressed by Jesus in the words, “I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!” The love was there, full, perfect, active in His heart. He shewed it in all that He did, in all it could be shewn in; but as to the proper effect of its power, its true object—the reconciling man to Himself, it was, so to speak, driven back into Himself; blessed be God! unweakened, but driven back, finding no response in man’s heart, nothing to which it could attach itself there, in the selfish enmity which reigned there. For His love He had hatred.

But the death of Jesus opened the full flood-gates to reveal all God’s love, and accomplish all God’s purposes. He was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. He glorifies God about sin there, and accomplishes righteousness in the highest and divine sense; that is, He meets the fullest claims,

and secures and makes good the perfect display of the divine nature and character, and this in respect of sin. So that grace reigns through righteousness, and not merely to present blessing but to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. And now see how the death and present position of Christ95 meets the whole previous unfolding of the grounds on which man stood with God. Sin is put away by the sacrifice of Himself; conscience is perfectly purged according to God's own knowledge of good and evil; righteousness is established before God, the accomplishment of the promise is established in His Person. Man had no righteousness for God, but Christ, dead and risen again, is of God made unto us righteousness.

The true heir of promise is there, and can take all the promises up in righteousness, which gives us also a title to enter into them, His position answering to Isaac's when the promise was confirmed to him after his being offered up in figure. All the promises of God are Yea and Amen in Him, and we are in Him. God having established us in Him who has taken His place in the power of a new life, as the Head of a new race belonging to Him by faith, righteous in Him, as we were sinners in the first Adam. And this reaches out (according to His promise) to sinners of the Gentiles as to the Jews, through the putting away of sin, and the communication of a life as new to one as to the other. There was no link between God and the old man, nor union between a sinless Christ and sinful flesh, though Christ was a true man come in the likeness of it. But there is a link between a believer and Jesus risen, in a new life given to the believer, in which, by the Holy Ghost, he is united to Him who in righteousness is before God in heavenly

places. Christ's death writes death on all, absolute death —all are dead. There is nothing in man, as he is in himself, in common with divine life in Him (hence the apostle knew Christ no more in that way, present in the world, alive in the midst of men in the flesh, the Messiah of promise alive here below); but in that same death there is the answer to the whole condition of man in the flesh as a sinner; and, in taking the new position of life in accomplished righteousness in resurrection, Christ lays the ground of righteousness in a new way (God's righteousness, not man's, though wrought out in Him who was, and is, a man, and recognized by setting that man at God's right hand), so that grace can go out according to it to the glory of God by us.

Thus sin is put away, conscience purged, the curse of the law gone for them who were under it, righteousness wrought out, that the blessing and the promise might come in all fulness on believers through Jesus Christ. All that was brought out in need before on man's part, or promised on God's, was such, on the one hand, and finds its accomplishment, on the other, in Christ; and all the moral elements, on the ground of which God had dealt with man, are brought out, and established in grace in Christ—promises which man could not take up in righteousness, nor God righteously confer on him, yet which He surely must fulfil, as His own promises now run freely in all their fulness, on the ground of an everlasting and divine righteousness, and flow forth from divine love to believers, found as sinners among Jews or Gentiles, according to the import which is given to these promises by the death and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. The order is: sin96—conscience (death and separation from God)—promise— law, raising

the question of man's righteousness (law broken, and promise despised)—Christ's death (sin put away, the law's curse removed, conscience purged, righteousness divinely wrought out), and then He risen, as the head of a new race, in the power of the Spirit and eternal life—the promises enjoyed according to the divine counsels and divine righteousness; Christ being Himself the heir, after the pattern of the offered and risen Isaac, and believers in Him cleansed from sin and divinely righteous by that which was wrought before they were graffed in Him, after the power of a new life, and in the energy of the Holy Ghost.

[end of doctrinal vol. 6]

94 Hence, in sparing Mary in her supposed fault, it is said, "Joseph, being a just man." For righteousness estimates the claim another may have on us, the weakness of another, of ourselves, the feelings of a good towards a fallen man, so that summum jus summa injuria. Cruelty, or hardness of feeling, is not righteousness more than die allowance of evil would be.

95 Of course the believer alone has an actual portion in it j I speak of the value of the work in itself.

96 Here Christ is already announced, and Adam passed by, looked at as head of the race.